

Title: Friday, September 24, 1993 Designated Subcommittee

Date: 1993/09/24

[Chairman: Mr. Magnus]

Time: 9:01 a.m.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, is everybody here? I think so. I am going to sit here because I'm a little bit deaf and the only way I can hear is to come straight down this table. If I sit on one side or the other, I'm never going to hear half of what's going on.

In the interests of saving time and in the spirit of co-operation that these committees have shown – this is the third one I've chaired personally, and we've had very, very good co-operation – I'd like to ask somebody for a motion that gives a distinct period of time for the organizational process. At the previous four meetings that I'm aware of, they spent 15 minutes. In fact, both sides agreed that they didn't think they'd need 15 minutes. So can I have a motion that limits it to that?

MR. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, I'll give you that motion. I move that this committee spend 15 minutes on organization and then proceed to the subcommittee of the Committee of Supply.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thanks very much. All those in favour? Any opposed? None opposed.

I'll start out with just a couple of minutes of remarks and explain what we've done in the past, what we hope to do in this one. As I said, both sides have agreed that we've had a very, very fair process in the two that I previously chaired. What we've done, essentially, is allowed one main question and two supplementary questions. We want everybody to have an equal opportunity to speak, although Mr. Decore may wish to speak to this point. What we've done, as I say, is allowed the one main and two sups. Nine people get a chance to speak. If all nine people have asked a question within one program, what we have then done is allowed a second question. If any single member of the committee wishes to ask a second question, then all nine members get another shot at it.

This is a subcommittee of supply. If we were sitting in the House, we would not have people coming up to the table, researchers or what have you, helping either side. We'd ask that if you wish to discuss something with somebody sitting in the gallery here, you pass notes. We just don't want to be distracted from the business at hand. This subcommittee was set up between the two House leaders and is in fact enshrined in the Standing Orders at this point in time.

We're here to discuss the budget, and the budget we're here to discuss today is the Executive Council budget. If somebody gets away from that budget, frankly, I will pull them back to the budget. I would like the questions basically attached to the budget process and what's within the budget. If somebody asks a question that gets into the philosophy of all this, I will frankly put the question to the minister. If he chooses to answer it, he can answer it, if it's purely philosophical. If it is attached, then of course he would answer it.

I don't think I've missed anything here. We've talked before between the two House leaders, and I've certainly had a lot of chats with Grant Mitchell about the process and how we wish to go through the budget. The Liberal side wanted to be able to move around within the budget; the Conservative side of course wanted to go program by program. We may wish to alter that as well. I'll stop talking now. If anybody's got any questions, please ask them.

Mr. Dalla-Longa.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: First of all, I'd like to thank Mr. Klein and the other hon. members for coming this morning and also the other people that are here.

I wonder, Richard, if we might be able to start off – I always have such a soft voice – by being introduced. Being a new member, I'm not familiar with the roles of each of the people here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Good idea, Mr. Dalla-Longa. I did that the last time. I'm Richard Magnus, Calgary-North Hill MLA.

Hung, do you want to start down this side?

MR. PHAM: Hung Pham, MLA, Calgary-Montrose.

MR. HAVELOCK: John Havelock, MLA, Calgary-Shaw.

MR. SMITH: Murray Smith, MLA, Calgary-Varsity.

MRS. GORDON: Judy Gordon, MLA, Lacombe-Stettler.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Stan Woloshyn, MLA, Stony Plain.

MR. KLEIN: Ralph Klein, MLA, Calgary-Elbow. You can introduce yourselves as we go along.

MR. MacNICHOL: Vance MacNichol, Deputy Minister of Executive Council.

MR. DIXON: Jim Dixon, Public Service Commission.

MRS. LENNIE: Oryssia Lennie, Deputy Minister of FIGA.

MR. LOVE: Rod Love, executive director of the Premier's office.

MS SINGLETON: Linda Singleton, managing director, Public Affairs Bureau.

MR. SLOAN: Rick Sloan, executive director of the Northern Alberta Development Council.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Dan Dalla-Longa.

MR. DECORE: Laurence Decore, Edmonton-Glengarry.

DR. PERCY: Mike Percy, Edmonton-Whitemud.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Bruce Collingwood, Sherwood Park.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Louise Kamuchik, Clerk Assistant.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, folks.

There was a question that Mr. Decore put to me as I walked in the room. It was basically that as I stated before, we want all nine members to have an opportunity to be able to speak to each program fairly. We're all MLAs in this room, rather than leaders of the opposition, with all due respect. The request from Mr. Decore was that he be allowed to take someone else's question, and I'd like to ask the committee how they feel about that.

MR. SMITH: Well, I can speak from the last committee meeting, when we did Treasury last week. I think there was some switching in the order. If somebody, you know, was on a set, established speakers list, and then there was some negotiation as to, "No, you go first; no, after you" – which worked fine, but I think everybody had individual questions.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: We're not proposing that some of us not have questions. It's just in order to get a rhythm, to keep a flow of topic going that we're proposing that Mr. Decore go first and have several questions in succession, and then I would go or whoever.

MR. CHAIRMAN: How do you mean several questions, Mr. Dalla-Longa?

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Well, alternating, but we would not alternate amongst ourselves.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You're fine with one main and two supplementary questions?

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Oh, yeah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I mean, I don't care how the order comes out on either side here as to who speaks.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Okay. That's the issue, the order.

MR. DECORE: The order is still, Mr. Chairman, that after I do my question and two supplementals, it goes to the Conservative side, and then it comes back to me for another question and two supplementals and then goes back to the Conservative side. That's what we're talking about.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What about the other three members on your committee?

MR. DECORE: Then they'll pick up later on on some different themes.

MR. SMITH: What we did before was have a speakers list. I think, Mike, last week there would be three Liberals in succession, and then it would go to anybody on the speakers list as it was established at the front.

MR. HAVELOCK: So it wasn't actually alternating back and forth.

MR. SMITH: No, and that kept the flow going.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'll ask the committee what their wishes are on this thing. Essentially what we're saying is that Mr. Decore would like the opportunity to take someone else's place on the Liberal side of the table for some of those questions.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: And then I would take his place.

MR. WOLOSHTYN: This is a committee, and in committees we go on rotation. If nobody else on the other side wants to take it and Mr. Decore wants to wait for five questions from this side to get his second question through, I don't have any difficulty with it, but to take and readjust it so that we're going to have two sides with four people sitting there and one spokesman and five people sitting here and five spokesmen I think takes away from the committee process. We're here as individual MLAs, and I think that would be the proper way to do it. You maintain a speakers list, and at your discretion, who's up next is up next.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Chairman, it's solely for the purpose of maintaining a rhythm and ensuring that a theme is pursued by a

particular MLA instead of hopping around from me to somebody else on the Liberal side. All I'm suggesting is that I be allowed to pursue a couple of themes; then it will go to somebody else on our side that pursues a couple of themes. But for us to allow for that and then to give up - I mean, it's still a rotation. I'll still ask one question and two supplementals, then it will go to the Conservative side, and then it will come back to me until that theme is finished. When I finish the theme, my colleagues will pick up on different themes. This is exactly what happened yesterday in the Health subcommittee, they tell me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry. I wasn't at the Health subcommittee, but I have chaired two of these previously. You will get an opportunity by either method to ask as many questions on the same program as you would like to ask. As I said before, we'll go around: nine people, nine main questions with the supplementaries, of course. You'll have the opportunity to ask those. If we decide to do a second round within the same program, then all nine people get an opportunity to speak again.

Mr. Havelock.

MR. HAVELOCK: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Not having attended one of these as yet, I'd like to ask you: in the meetings that you did chair, was there any problem with theme or rhythm being interrupted if various members from either side were asking questions?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't believe so, frankly. It was simply a question that if somebody wanted to ask more than one question on a single theme within a program, we simply went back and did a second round. On one of the programs that we did in Treasury, we did four rounds, which is 12 questions anywhere within that program. If you want to do six on one program and get stuck on a program, that's the option of the committee.

Mr. Smith.

9:11

MR. SMITH: Well, Mr. Chairman, what we did the last time that I found worked was that we stayed on each program and we beat it to death from a thematic examination standpoint. It went down particular party lines, and it seemed to work without any great difficulty. In the interest of continuity I suggest that we maintain the same scheduling format.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'll take one more set of comments, and then I'm going to ask for a motion of sorts.

Mr. Collingwood.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think really the request is simply to allow, not necessarily just Mr. Decore, but all members the opportunity that if there was a question and two supplementaries that they might want to pick up on again, Mr. Havelock or Mrs. Gordon might have the opportunity to have a member pass off their question to allow that theme to continue. This isn't in any way an attempt to single out a situation. If any member of the committee is working on a theme, we would build in the flexibility to allow the next person on the list to say, "Well, I'm prepared to defer to the last person who was the questioner if they want to continue on the theme they were working on." All I'm suggesting is that that perhaps then gives us (a) the flexibility and (b) may in fact be the most efficient way to get through any particular program or area.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, what are the committee's wishes at this point?

MR. SMITH: I would move that we stay with the same format as we did last week and remain consistent with committee procedure.

MR. MAGNUS: I have a motion on the floor. All those in favour? Any opposed? Thank you.

Our 15 minutes are pretty nearly up. The last thing I'll explain to you is the way we start this. The clock starts the moment the Premier starts his 20-minute talk. He has 20 minutes, at which point we then have three hours and 40 minutes to complete. The Premier has about 100 people waiting for him from the Pacific-Asia conference, I believe, at noon and is quite willing to come back. It's been discussed with Grant Mitchell, and I think we're fine there. With that, unless there are any other questions, we can start.

Mr. Decore.

MR. DECORE: I take it that the Premier would have to leave before 12 o'clock; is that correct?

MR. KLEIN: About 10 to.

MR. DECORE: I would propose, then, that if we don't finish, Mr. Chairman, we simply reassemble for the other 80 minutes that are necessary.

MR. KLEIN: That's fine, but not today.

MR. DECORE: No, not today. That's understood.

MR. KLEIN: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Are there any other questions on the process?

Mr. Premier.

MR. KLEIN: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman and hon. members. I'm pleased to participate in the first round of hearings held by this subcommittee. These hearings are an important part of our new committee system in our legislative reforms designed to bring MLAs and Albertans closer to the decision-making process. I guess that's what the government of Alberta is all about. We have an agenda for change, a plan to provide open, accessible, responsive, and affordable government. Our plan is based on a goal, a destination that Albertans endorsed on June 15. That destination is a balanced provincial budget within four years through a reduction in the size of government and government programs, with an emphasis on reducing spending. Given that Albertans have agreed on the destination, and they did on June 15, our discussions here, as in the previous four hearings, concern the route we are taking to get there.

Today it is my privilege to appear before this subcommittee on behalf of Executive Council, which also includes the personnel administration office, and that is represented today by Jim Dixon; the Public Affairs Bureau, represented by Linda Singleton; and northern development, represented by Rick Sloan. We also have with us my ministry and the Deputy Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, Oryssia Lennie.

These organizations are prime examples of putting our plan for change into action, and I will speak briefly to each of them in turn, starting with my own department, Executive Council.

Executive Council, as you know, consists of the Premier and his cabinet, and our job is to translate the wishes of Albertans into policy decisions and programs under the authority of the laws and the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. As such, Executive Council

is responsible for the overall implementation of the agenda, the agenda for change set by Albertans. Reflecting the view of the people that government should get out of rather than into their lives, Executive Council has set the tone for leaner and more efficient government. Cabinet is almost 40 percent smaller today than it was a year ago. Following that lead, we reduced the salaries of ministers and the size of ministerial staff. We have consolidated several government departments, reduced the number of deputy ministers, eliminated the MLA pension plan, reduced the number of government vehicles, and we have taken many other measure³.

We saved \$130 million this year by our first line of attack, and that was eliminating waste and duplication and streamlining government for greater efficiency. The total operating budgets of 12 departments were reduced, and two department budgets remain flat. Every department, every single department in government, has been told to look at new ways to cut costs and bring an entrepreneurial management style to public administration. Every department, agency, and organization receiving government funds will develop a three-year business plan, and we are going to eliminate programs that don't meet priority needs.

Soon the Government Reorganization Secretariat under the Hon. Ken Rostad will present its first review on changes to streamline the structures of government agencies, boards, and commissions. We opened up the decision-making process with a new streamlined committee system. We replaced 26 caucus and cabinet committees with four standing policy committees. Our government has a more streamlined and focused legislative agenda than in former years, and working in co-operation with members of the opposition, we have introduced free votes, shorter but more concentrated work weeks in session, elections by secret ballot for the Speaker, and other significant measures.

We're considering privatizing government services which can be operated more economically in the private sector. We are privatizing delivery of the Alberta registry services to provide one-window services to Albertans and create opportunities for small businesses across Alberta. We have taken the bold step of privatizing retail liquor sales. Our government is proceeding to implement one-window provincial offices across the province, offering services by departments such as Labour, Advanced Education and Career Development, and Economic Development and Tourism to better serve Albertans and achieve savings. To date we have reduced the public service by almost 2,700 positions, a reduction of 7.8 percent this year.

We initiated comprehensive and meaningful consultations with Albertans in important areas like our economic development strategy, our health care system, and our budget. On the financial front we listened to Albertans telling us loudly and clearly to put our financial house in order. Our first step was to open up the books. We instituted quarterly financial reporting to Albertans. We appointed a Financial Review Commission to provide an independent public report on Alberta's complete financial situation. We have accepted virtually all of the key recommendations in that report as well as those of the Auditor General dealing with improving the accounting and public reporting of the province's finances, and we are taking action on them.

When Albertans told us to get our financial house in order, we responded with a reasonable and achievable plan to balance the budget by 1996-97. During the last election campaign they told us to stick to that plan and make it work. We will balance our budget based on targets set in the Deficit Elimination Act and take the steps necessary to ensure that government will never again live beyond its means.

9:21

Mr. Chairman, those are some of the important initiatives that Executive Council has been working on in the last few months, but there are numerous programs under Executive Council. In addition to its cabinet responsibilities, the present Executive Council is responsible for 14 programs. We're responsible for administration, and that is providing administrative services to the Executive Council and its members and clerical services to the Lieutenant Governor. Executive Council is responsible for northern development and supporting social and economic development in northern Alberta.

We're responsible for the Energy Resources Conservation Board: appraising Alberta's energy resources, advising on policy, considering production applications and industrial development permits, and monitoring production. We're responsible for the Natural Resources Conservation Board, just recently established under the ministry of environment, which is responsible for reviewing proposed projects to determine their suitability in terms of social, economic, and environmental impact.

We have the responsibility also for the water resources advisory service: assessing water resource plans and projects, co-ordinating programs, monitoring intergovernmental negotiations, and advising cabinet; the Alberta public safety services, which helps government departments and municipalities deal with peacetime emergencies and provides financial help to victims; the personnel administration office, which provides policies, programs, and systems to government departments for the management of our employees; Access Network, which funds the Alberta Educational Communications Corporation; the Public Affairs Bureau, which provides support to government in its communications with Albertans.

The Premier's Council in Support of Alberta Families provides advice and information as to family issues and programs. The Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities reviews issues, policies, funding programs, and services affecting disabled people and advising government and the public. The Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission provides treatment, prevention, and education services and funding locally. Workers' Compensation provides funding to offset the cost of compensation for accidents occurring before 1974. The Metis Settlements Accord provides support to the eight Metis settlements and their general council in developing local government structures and resolving related disputes; I might add, the only program of its kind in this country.

This year's total budget estimate for Executive Council is almost \$148 million. This represents a reduction of 11.7 percent from last year's budget estimate of over \$167 million.

Mr. Chairman, the Liberal opposition did not ask that the ministers responsible for all of these programs attend, so I will not speak to each in detail because I simply don't have that information. However, I will do my best to answer questions that you may have on them. I will address the three programs administered by Executive Council that report directly to me, namely the personnel administration office, the Public Affairs Bureau, and Northern Development. I will also speak on my own ministry, which is the Ministry of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs.

With respect to the personnel administration office, the PAO is the human resource arm of the Alberta government. Its job is to ensure that we manage our employees with fairness and consistency. It is PAO that designed one of the most successful voluntary work force reduction programs in the country. Using a severance allowance negotiated with the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees, the early voluntary options program

attracted 1,847 employees. Of these, 1,806 left their jobs, while the rest chose one of the alternate work arrangements. Due to budget reductions a further 104 employees were notified that their jobs would disappear, but through the work of the departments and PAO only three of these people were given position abolishment notices. I understand efforts are continuing to find positions for them. It's worth noting that the budget for PAO has been reduced by 6 percent from last year to \$9.2 million. In fact, all of our downsizing has been accomplished with fairness and compassion, without large-scale layoffs and without a day being lost to labour strife.

In managing our employees, PAO administers a revolving fund on a cost-recovery basis to pay for the development and delivery of educational and training courses. Such courses include workshops on total quality management and rethinking government, which help support our new way of doing business as a government. Through PAO I stay in contact with our employees through regular letters, keeping them up to date on all of our initiatives and welcoming their suggestions.

The next organization on the agenda is the Public Affairs Bureau. The bureau was created 21 years ago to provide a unique and centralized approach to government communications. Because we are entering a period of tremendous change, there has never been a greater need for effective communication between an Alberta government and the people it serves. The need for change is urgent, and the need for Albertans to understand what we are doing and why we are doing it is critical to our success in serving the public. What's more, Albertans are demanding a bigger role in the decision-making process in this province, more information and communication, and an open and ongoing dialogue with their government.

The bureau plays a key part in ensuring our dialogue with Albertans is conducted efficiently and effectively. It provides government departments with professional communication services, such as the planning, creative development, co-ordination, writing, editing, and implementation of information programs; purchasing advertising, graphic design, print, and other services; and frontline customer services like our toll-free regional information telephone, the RITE network, and the publication and sale of Alberta laws. The bureau brings a strong co-ordinated approach to communications with Albertans, its various client departments across government, and its employees. As a central agency, it offers advantages like efficiency and innovation by pooling communications specialists and better customer service through one-window contact for clients in both government and the public. As well, it is continuing in its efforts to streamline and privatize, with a 9.3 percent cut in its budget from last year to \$10.7 million.

How much time do I have, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: About five minutes.

MR. KLEIN: Five minutes? I think I might be able to get through it.

Northern Development. The next organization on my list is the northern development branch. This branch consists of the Northern Alberta Development Council, or NADC, and the administration of two development agreements that are cost shared between our province and the federal government under the western economic partnership agreement. The council's purpose is to address and advise government on special issues affecting northern Albertans. Based in Peace River, it is an important vehicle through which government policies and programs are implemented in the north.

Northern Alberta contains 60 percent of the landmass of our province but only 10 percent of the population. Because of its vast distances, its small population, and its cultural diversity, the north presents some unique challenges but also some unique opportunities. In fulfilling its mandate, NADC holds town hall meetings in various communities across the north and receives about 175 briefs a year from Albertans relating to social and economic development. Since 1973 the council has received over 2,600 briefs, and government has resolved wholly or partly over 60 percent of the issues brought before the council.

Northern Development is involved in some highly successful projects such as the nationally recognized Peace Arch local employment benefits project, providing on-the-job contact and job matching between residents and employers in the area north of Slave Lake; and the northern recycling project, which will focus on finding markets for recycled materials in helping northern municipalities minimize waste. I take a tremendous amount of pride in being one of the initiators of that process when I was minister of the environment.

Reflecting our aim to do more with less, Northern Development is submitting reduction options that exceed the Provincial Treasurer's requests. Because the development agreements will be phased out over the next four years, this program as a whole will reduce its budget substantially in that period, including a reduction of over 10 percent this year, to \$6.9 million.

9:31

Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. This brings me to the last item on my list today, the Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, known as FIGA. The department's budget will be dealt with in the House at a later date, but I would like to make a few comments as the responsible minister.

Although FIGA is probably the smallest department in government, it has some wide-ranging responsibilities. Its job is to develop policies and strategies for Alberta's relations with other provinces, the federal government, and the international community. The department is responsible for negotiating the elimination of interprovincial trade barriers and working toward global free trade and investment. Because international agreements are expanding far beyond tariffs to cover aspects of provincial jurisdiction, our government has become involved in managing trade disputes to prevent the hindering of our exports.

Closer to home, FIGA is in charge of working to make our federal system more efficient. FIGA co-ordinates our efforts to remove intergovernmental overlap and duplication, and this helps us to eliminate red tape, provide better co-ordinated programs, services, and regulations, and of course save time and money. As well, the department will be working toward a major overhaul of existing federal/provincial fiscal arrangements which blur responsibilities and fail to give provinces enough money and flexibility to administer their own programs.

Finally, FIGA is responsible for managing the challenges of national unity, challenges like developing self-government for aboriginal people and responding to pressures created by Quebec separatism.

The department's budget has been reduced by 12.7 percent, or \$955,000, from the 1992-93 estimates.

Mr. Chairman, all of this is just an overview of the government organizations for which I am responsible. I would be pleased now to elaborate further in responding to questions from this distinguished subcommittee or, if I don't have the answers, at least have my officials answer.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Premier. I was just about to give you a 30-second warning, so your timing was excellent.

Ladies and gentlemen, we did talk about going through this process, but we didn't actually get a motion on the floor. We possibly should have done it before. We have about three minutes left in the organizational if someone would like to suggest an order for programs.

MR. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, in light of the Premier's direct responsibility, I move that we cover programs 1, which is Executive Council; 2, which is Northern Development; 7, which is Personnel Administration; 9, which is Public Affairs; and the Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs.

DR. PERCY: I would move that we do look at programs 2, 3, 4, and 5.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I have one motion on the floor at this point.

DR. PERCY: Okay. I would amend that motion to include those programs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's 3, 4, and 5?

DR. PERCY: Three, 4, and 5.

MR. CHAIRMAN: An amendment is on the floor.
Mr. Dalla-Longa.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: I didn't pick up Mr. Smith's first.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I believe that he said 1, 2, 7, 9, and FIGA. Now, did you wish to do 3, 4, and 5, Mr. Dalla-Longa, after the other ones?

MR. DALLA-LONGA: I'm just trying to figure that out right now.

MR. SMITH: I'm making that motion in light of the Premier's direct responsibilities as put forth in the government estimates book.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In the interests of hurrying this along, the motion is on the floor for 1, 2, 7, 9, and FIGA. We can just make it so that 3, 4, and 5 follow in sequential order throughout the rest of the programs, if that meets everyone's approval. Are we good? Do we have consensus? All those in favour? Any opposed? None opposed.

Questions on Executive Council Administration. Mr. Decore.

MR. DECORE: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'd first like to acknowledge this new process. This is a process that was determined as part of the reforms of this Legislature. There are some steps we're going to make that are going to be perhaps the wrong ones which will be finessed as time goes on, so I think we just have to adjust accordingly. I'm pleased that the Premier is here. This is a long time coming, where we see in a much more detailed way the process of being able to probe and look at and ensure that taxpayers' moneys are being well spent, which is our responsibility as opposition members.

Having said that, Mr. Premier, I look around the room and I see that there are five of us that were previously in municipal government. One of the things that I think I'm correct in saying is that when we handled budgets at the municipal level, there was plain language and there was lots of detail in terms of how

taxpayers' moneys were being spent. When I look at this first program that we're debating now, general administration, there are five lines that deal with almost 3 and a half million dollars worth of expenditures. I wonder if the Premier will agree with me that there has to be a better way of showing detail and putting detail into these estimates so that MLAs don't have to go on fishing expeditions and so that we can more properly do our job.

MR. KLEIN: Well, I don't know; I guess detail is important to some and less important to others. I would put it back to the hon. Leader of the Opposition. You have a research budget of almost \$2 million. I'm not interested in the detail and the breakdown as to how you use that research. There are numerous things in my office. What kind of detail are you looking for?

MR. DECORE: Let me put it another way then, Mr. Premier. Can you break down in terms of more specific programs the expenditure of 3 and a half million dollars? Is there some list, some chart of accounts that allows us to more easily work through these figures?

MR. KLEIN: Well, yes there is, and that normally is tabled in Public Accounts, where there's a complete examination as to how the moneys were spent.

MR. DECORE: Could we have something like that now so that we don't have to waste time and we simply look at the breakdown of this total expenditure here?

MR. KLEIN: Well, okay. Let's look at Office of the Premier, okay? That is \$799,000. If you want a further breakdown of that, that includes salaries of \$473,000 . . .

MR. DECORE: Is there a list, Mr. Premier?

MR. KLEIN: . . . supply and services of \$248,000.

MR. DECORE: Sir, I didn't hear that.

MR. KLEIN: Supply and services at \$248,000; that represents 31 percent of the budget. Salaries are 59 percent, and payments – that includes my salary. Minister without Portfolio . . .

MR. DECORE: The point is, Mr. Chairman: is there a more complete breakdown that we could have so that we don't have to waste time on that?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Decore, when we all came into this room, as we did on the other committees, frankly this was the information that is available to us, other than the public accounts information. We're dealing with this budget, and I appreciate your comments, but without advance notice or anything else, obviously it's fairly difficult for the Premier to walk in here with all of this information at the same time.

If I may, just to add a little clarification, when we're couching our questions, would you mind just using the word “supplementary” so I don't get scattered all over. There were quite a few questions there. The second one was for clarification. I would appreciate it if we could stay pretty much in order.

MR. DECORE: Well, Mr. Chairman, in order to save a little time, would it be possible to get more detail, splitting of these numbers? The Premier is reading from something, and it would save us a little time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I believe the Premier has mentioned, and I sit on Public Accounts, that the information is available in there. I suppose we could all have brought our blue books from Public Accounts, but at this point in time I'd suggest that what we're working with is what's available.

Your second supplementary, Mr. Decore.

9:41

MR. DECORE: The point is: is there a way, Mr. Premier, that we can work towards a better document that's plain language, that's much more detailed so that when a member of the public picks up this document, they can look through much greater detail and see exactly where moneys are being spent? Is that possible?

MR. KLEIN: Anything's possible, I guess, and I'm willing to share whatever information I have, but I just want to know how much detail you want. Do you want it down to every paper clip, every pen, every pencil?

MR. DECORE: No, I want it down to every program.

MR. KLEIN: Well, okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Decore, I believe that's why we're here: to get this information.

MR. KLEIN: To get the information; right.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Premier, this is a problem for the whole of the budget, not just your department. All I'm asking is: is there some way that you would agree and commit to a process where we could make the budget much more meaningful to the public, much more understandable, and much more detailed, so that when they pick up this kind of a document, instead of four lines for general administration, they know exactly what's going on?

MR. KLEIN: Well, again, it's a very subjective thing as to what detail. I'll be glad to discuss it further with you and see what we can work out in terms of presenting a budget format, but as I say, everything is spelled out in public accounts; you know, that kind of detail. But certainly I'd be glad to . . .

MR. DECORE: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Decore.

Mr. Smith next, and Mr. Dalla-Longa after that.

MR. SMITH: Mr. Minister, can you describe how spending has changed by \$380,000 in your office over the last year? That would be on program 1.0.1.

MR. KLEIN: Well, the overall budget has been reduced by \$384,000, and basically it's due to lower salary costs and no severance costs. As you know, there was a fairly dramatic change in government, and some of those in the former administration are no longer with us. They were rightfully given severance. Three of them, I believe, went under the voluntary program, and seven were terminated. As a result, we have been able to reduce our budget by something like \$384,000 from last year's spending.

MR. SMITH: A supplemental. It may be more appropriate to have your deputy minister answer, Mr. Minister, but how do they

do the budget that separates General Administration from Office of the Premier?

MR. KLEIN: Well, as a matter of fact, that has been a significant change this year. That was to take a lot of those expenditures that were in administration, in what was then Dr. Mellon's office, and rightfully put them in Executive Council.

Vance, you might want to supplement.

MR. MacNICHOL: Mr. Chairman, previously Office of the Premier just reflected salaries, where now Office of the Premier reflects all expenditures.

MR. KLEIN: Yes, such as travel, housing, postage, equipment rentals, telephones, contracted services, materials and supplies.

MR. MacNICHOL: So everything is in the Office of the Premier now, where before it was in administration.

MR. SMITH: Final supplemental. But that doesn't include a charge for cost of office space and general overhead. In all of this we don't charge . . .

MR. KLEIN: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Smith.
Mr. Dalla-Longa, then Mr. Havelock.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Thank you. This may be a question for one of your assistants, Mr. Premier. Just so I can get it clear in my own mind, how does the budgeting process occur in this first program, understanding that you've got two or three different categories? If I could have explained to me, assuming we're at the beginning of the year and now we're going to prepare the budget for the upcoming fiscal year, who's responsible, who reviews the budget, who has final approval, that sort of thing.

MR. KLEIN: Well, I have final approval, ultimately.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: I sort of thought you did.

MR. KLEIN: The budget is basically prepared by those who are held responsible for their various departments. Vance? You can go ahead, then Jim.

MR. MacNICHOL: The process, Mr. Chairman, is of course that we receive directions from the minister or the Premier, whom we work for, general guidelines on the preparation of the budget that's set out by the government. Then we prepare detailed budget estimates, which are considered by our ministers or the Premier, whoever may be involved. From there it goes to Treasury Board for another examination. Then, of course, finally it ends up in the budget document.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: That's a brief outline.

MR. KLEIN: It's a brief outline, but each department – as a matter of fact, each and every minister, each and every deputy minister – has been required to prepare a business plan which demonstrates fully the implications of the budget and the impact on programs. That's all part of it, and that's a new part of the process.

MR. MacNICHOL: The three-year plan is new.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: The first supplemental. Could you provide us with this business plan and the detail that goes to working up to these final numbers here; in accounting terms, the subledger or the specific chart of accounts? Would you provide that to us?

MR. KLEIN: I'm sorry, Danny, what is it you really need?

MR. DALLA-LONGA: The detail that the deputy minister talked about that goes to each department in finalizing these numbers, along with the business plan. In accounting terms, if you want to go back and ask your accountants, it would be called a subledger or the chart of accounts. I mean, obviously we can't just have, I don't think, one number for Office of the Premier, \$799,000. It's made up of a bunch of different categories.

MR. KLEIN: Right; yeah. This goes back, I guess, to the question I was asking your hon. leader. How much detail do you want? If you want to question me right now relative to some of the breakdowns, I'll provide you with that information, but I wasn't asked to bring that information here today; right? The hon. leader honestly questioned whether we should have that in future years. I'm willing to discuss that.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: I don't want to interject, but I haven't asked you any specific questions. I'm just asking for the detail. I appreciate the fact that if I ask you detailed questions and we didn't bring it here today, that's my responsibility, but right now I'm asking for the detail and the business plan.

MR. KLEIN: Do you want it now, or do you want it down the road?

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Well, I would have thought that maybe you would have had some of it here today.

MR. KLEIN: Well, I have some of the detail now. If you ask me specifically what you want, perhaps I can provide it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If I may, Mr. Dalla-Longa, as far as I'm aware, all the members of this committee have essentially the same information in front of them, which is the budget and the programs within the particular departments, in this case Executive Council. Now, I haven't been on public accounts – as a matter of fact, you and I have both done two meetings of Public Accounts – but I believe the detail is within public accounts, if I'm not mistaken, is it not?

MR. DALLA-LONGA: You were on city council, mayor.

MR. KLEIN: Right.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: I've been involved with budgets many times. A budget with a number of \$799,000 has to have some detail supporting it.

MR. KLEIN: Right. Okay; I'll give you some detail.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: You've given us some summary numbers.

MR. KLEIN: That's right. Salaries account for \$473,000, 59 percent. Now, if you want to know who's employed and who collects those salaries, I can probably get you the names.

9:51

MR. DALLA-LONGA: No. It was explained . . .

MR. KLEIN: Or do you want to know how much each and every one gets paid?

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Excuse me. The process was explained to me of how you go about preparing these budgets.

MR. KLEIN: Right.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: All I'm asking for are the documents that were put together to accumulate this \$799,000, and the other reference numbers as well. I don't see that that's that difficult a question or that difficult a thing to produce.

MR. KLEIN: Well, it's not, but I wasn't asked for that kind of detail.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: I'm asking for it now. I realize you weren't asked for it. I'm not disputing that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Excuse me for one moment. Order please. I mean, we can get into a big debate about what's here and what isn't here, but the information that all of us have is, I would suggest, fairly equal. I understand what your question is, but the information is not available right now, as has been stated. If we choose as a committee to waste our time in a debate asking the same question 20 different ways, I suppose we can do that. We are here for essentially that period of time, but can we get on to questions, please?

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is your second supplementary.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: I'll pass.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

I have Mr. Havelock and then Dr. Percy.

MR. HAVELOCK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Premier, there's been a lot of discussion about the need for restraint and cutting back. My concern as I look at General Administration – and I'm not entirely sure what that entails. The first question I would have, though, is: why has that budget, based on the comparable actual for '92-93, actually increased when we're out there reducing expenditures dramatically? I agree with those reductions in areas of health care and social services, for example.

MR. KLEIN: Well, it was actually reduced by some \$388,000 from last year's actual. Again, I can give you a breakdown. Salaries accounted for \$1.8 million, supply and services for \$485,000, and the MLA salary, which is my salary, for \$69,860. Again, I have to allude to the severance package that I guess was not anticipated in the previous year's budget, but nonetheless had to be made good.

MR. HAVELOCK: Mr. Premier, I'm referring to the \$2.35 million in '92-93 versus the estimate of \$2.365 million. It's program 1.0.2, General Administration. That's actually increased, based on the documents I have.

MR. KLEIN: Well, no, I would beg to differ. I think we're looking at different lines, because last year it was \$2.7 million and now we're at \$2.39 million.

MR. HAVELOCK: Okay. I guess I'm concentrating on what we actually spent in '92-93, and I'm reading from the same document Mr. Smith was referring to, the government estimates.

MR. KLEIN: Right.

MR. HAVELOCK: If I look under Comparable '92-93 Actual under General Administration . . .

MR. KLEIN: Right. Which was \$2.7 million.

MR. HAVELOCK: I'm looking at what we actually spent, Mr. Premier, as opposed to what was estimated, and then I'm comparing that with the estimates for the coming year, and there seems to be an increase.

MR. KLEIN: Vance?

MR. MacNICHOL: Well, I guess the confusion is this: first of all, in previous years, we mixed the Premier's office and General Administration.

MR. KLEIN: We've taken administration out, yes.

MR. MacNICHOL: Now, this year, we've got two budgets. We had the one from April 1 until the election, and reflected in this year's estimates are costs of some committees that existed previous to the election. They were disbanded after the election, and savings were made known on August 11. It would have to show in the budget that we spent that money between April 1 and the election. These committees have been disbanded, and in future years there will more savings. That's why the increase in costs. We're talking about two different situations, up until the election and afterwards. That's why the increase is there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you have a supplementary?

MR. HAVELOCK: Yes; thank you. Following on what was said earlier and looking at the number, I don't have a good understanding of what is involved in \$2.3 million of administrative costs. What are those costs?

MR. MacNICHOL: Well, there's the deputy minister's office, the correspondence unit, communications, the Calgary office, and administrative staff.

MR. HAVELOCK: Second sup, I guess: will we be able to have that? You'll be able to file that with us later?

MR. MacNICHOL: Yes.

MR. HAVELOCK: Thank you.

MR. MacNICHOL: You see, there were four committees done away with, Mr. Chairman, since the election. That's the big savings. In the August 11 communiqué we put that on the table. That's where the savings are.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Havelock.
I've got Dr. Percy and Mrs. Gordon.

DR. PERCY: Mr. Premier, last Friday in the Treasury subcommittee we discussed with the Treasurer the criteria used to assess and evaluate loan guarantees, grants, and the like. In that subcommittee the Provincial Treasurer said there was really no consistent framework used to assess such loans and guarantees across departments, that there was really not a consistent set of criteria. In the Legislature in response to questions you noted that you were assessing six or seven loan guarantees that are outstanding. My question is in terms of allocation of time and as Premier. What are the criteria that you're going to use, and how are they discussed? What is the process by which these six or seven loan guarantees that are outstanding are going to be evaluated?

MR. KLEIN: Well, with all due respect, Mr. Chairman, this has absolutely nothing to do with my budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That was just what I was about to say, Mr. Premier.

MR. DECORE: A point of order, Mr. Chairman. Surely the Premier spends staff time or resources out of his office to work on and look at and determine the issue of loan guarantees. As soon as staff time, his time, anybody's time is spent on that, that becomes something I think we're entitled to look at, under *Beauchesne*. I think we're entitled to probe in that area.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I do appreciate that, and I assume that somewhere within these programs we will actually get to that area, assuming we don't waste a whole bunch of time on the philosophy of what the government is doing, but as I stated . . . [interjection] If I may, please.

As I stated when we first came in here, we're here to question this budget on Executive Council. This is not a philosophical debate. We had an agreement between the two House leaders that we would essentially go with the rules, which were a cross between question period and what is within the Standing Orders and tradition on subcommittees. Now, I'm trying to be very, very flexible here. It certainly worked with the last two committees that I've chaired, and I was hoping it would work this time, but there's a point where flexibility becomes a brick wall. I'd suggest, as I said before when I first opened this up with my remarks: please keep the questions connected to the budget and the program we're on.

DR. PERCY: With respect, Mr. Chairman, I would note that in *Erskine May*, section 27, Expenditure: Supply, relevancy in debate, it says, "On a main estimate it is in order to discuss the general policy which lies behind the demand for that particular sum of money." What is being asked by myself is really a very specific question: in Executive Council what are the criteria used to discuss these issues? In *Beauchesne* 953 it states, and I will read that:

The whole management of a department may be discussed in a general way when the committee is considering the first item of the Estimates of that department, which reads as follows: "Vote 1 - Administration."

So I feel that the issue of criteria is relevant. Let me just elaborate on that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, before you elaborate, as I said before - and I mean, we could spend four hours debating with myself as chairman about how we're going to go through this process, but this is on this budget, so I would ask you to make sure that your

questions are at least related to the program we're in. I don't read anything about loan guarantees in the first four line items in this program.

10:01

MR. HAVELOCK: Mr. Chairman, would it be appropriate for me to stand on a point of order? It sounds like we're in the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I made a ruling on the last one, so another point of order would be in order.

MR. HAVELOCK: Why don't we simply move on, Dr. Percy? Quite frankly, I have a lot of questions I want to ask, and I don't want to get stuck in a bunch of bureaucratic wrangling about what we can ask and can't.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Chairman, I don't want to leave the impression that I'm not willing to answer the question. If Dr. Percy wants to ask me that question in the Legislature, I'd be more than happy. Or if any of the news media want to ask me that question after this session, I'd be more than happy. Or if you want to ask me this question after this session, I would be more than happy to answer it, but it has nothing to do with my budget.

MR. DECORE: Sure it does.

DR. PERCY: Let me rephrase it then, Mr. Premier. In light that under Executive Council lie a number of agencies such as the Energy Resources Conservation Board, the Natural Resources Conservation Board, which have in place very consistent criteria for evaluating projects which have both a private profit dimension as well as social implications - those processes are there in place under Executive Council - my question is: in assessing the allocation of your time in trying to determine whether or not such loan guarantees and the like are desirable from a developmental or social perspective, is there a process in place by which you rely on those types of agencies?

MR. KLEIN: Yes, of course there is a process in place. But, Mr. Chairman, I guess my frustration is that I was prepared today to have every single minister here, and when the hon. House leader for the Liberal Party brought forward his list, he requested specifically, and to the exclusion of all the people who could be here to answer those questions, Mr. MacNichol, Mr. Love, Mr. Dau, who is sitting over there, Mr. Olson, and myself, and that's it. Now, the Energy Resources Conservation Board is directly responsible to the Minister of Energy. The Natural Resources Conservation Board is directly responsible to the Minister of Environmental Protection. Yes, I guess eventually they're all directly responsible to the President of Executive Council, but I think in all fairness, if you wanted to ask those specific questions, you should have subpoenaed those ministers, and you didn't.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I might add that the questions on the two programs that have come up in this debate thus far are, I believe, the fifth and sixth items that we have agreed to through a motion put to this committee; as a matter of fact, at the request of Mr. Dalla-Longa to have Energy Resources Conservation and Natural Resources Conservation the fifth and sixth programs that we debate today. So if we could wait till we got to those programs to ask that sort of question on that particular line item, I would appreciate it.

DR. PERCY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My second supplemental, then, is to the Premier, and it's with regards, then, in the

budget, related again to expenditure and allocation of time. In the context of being involved in the federal campaign, as you are in terms of campaigning for certain federal candidates, how is the distinction made in the budgeting process between that which is allocated to the election as opposed to duties as Premier?

MR. KLEIN: Well, you know, some people like to spend part of their time in church or in other places. I really don't think in those terms, Mr. Speaker. I guess I could put it to Dr. Percy or to Mr. Decore: how much time are you devoting to Jean Chrétien?

DR. PERCY: It's with regards to aircraft, et cetera, and time: expenditure of the office.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, you know, the Premier just gave me a promotion to Speaker, which I appreciate.

Again we're into philosophical questions. We've been through this, and I don't want to sound like a broken record. Could we stay with the budget, please?

MR. DECORE: Well, how could it be philosophical, Mr. Chairman, for us to ask the Premier to explain how the whole business of loan guarantees is handled in his office? How is that philosophical?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Decore, the last question was a comparison of a federal election program. It just isn't connected in here.

MR. DECORE: The Premier's running off and saying, well, you know, it's somebody else's responsibility. He's the top guy. He's the man who talked in the Legislature about him reviewing this business of loan guarantees. One is clearly left with the impression after question period that he's working on it in his office. We're entitled to ask about it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Excuse me. Can I get a word, please?

MR. KLEIN: Well, actually, the minister – and you could have had that minister here today had you asked for him – who is really working on this is the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, because those previously committed loan guarantees are in his portfolio.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Excuse me. I have a point of order here.
Mr. Pham.

MR. PHAM: We have many people who want to speak here; I believe you have a list of speakers. So, Mr. Decore, if you want to speak, please follow that list. I have several questions I would like to ask.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I believe the question has been answered.
Mr. Gordon, Mr. Collingwood, and then Mr. Pham.

MRS. GORDON: Thank you, but it's Mrs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sorry. You got a promotion too.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh.

MRS. GORDON: Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, I'll apologize and withdraw that one. I believe that's the appropriate method.

MRS. GORDON: In an attempt, Mr. Premier, to get this subcommittee back on track, are there any salary provisions in programs 1.0.2 or 1.0.1 that are directly related to evaluating loan guarantees?

MR. KLEIN: Directly related, no.

MRS. GORDON: Thank you. My supplemental. While your office has reduced spending from what was spent last year by \$380,000, the total Executive Council budget is only reduced by \$150,000. Where are the increases to offset the reductions you have made?

MR. KLEIN: Well, we have taken out of administration, as I mentioned before, a number of items and put those legitimately under Executive Council. Those are travel, housing, postage, equipment rentals, telephones, contracted service, materials, and supplies. These were formerly in administration; they're now in Executive Council.

MRS. GORDON: Thank you. You mentioned that the Office of the Premier reflects all expenditures. Can you tell me how much of your budget – and I realize it's an important part of your job and good for the province of Alberta – has been allocated for travel?

MR. KLEIN: Specifically for travel? About \$80,000.

MRS. GORDON: Thank you.

MR. KLEIN: If you want that kind of detail, I'll be glad to provide it if you ask me the specific questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mrs. Gordon.
Mr. Collingwood, and then Mr. Pham.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Premier, my thanks to you for allowing this process to occur and for taking the time to be here today so that we can go through some details on Executive Council.

Mr. Premier, you had made a comment previously in answering a question that in the preparation of the line items, your particular departments prepare a business plan, and that is developed through into a budget. I'll assume that that probably happens in each and every department, not just Executive Council. To try and work a series of questions here, my first question to you, Mr. Premier, would be: is the preparation of the business plan by departments done under the direction of Executive Council in creating I guess what I would call a master plan?

MR. KLEIN: First of all, those officials who are directly responsible to me are charged with preparing their business plans in concert with Treasury Board, and eventually those plans come back to me. I sit down with my officials, we review those plans, and as the minister in charge, I either say, "That is a reasonable plan," or, "It's not reasonable; go back and fix it up."

10:11

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Mr. Premier, again, just because I'm not sure where it's going to be established in each of those four line items, or certainly at least three. Your throne speech has talked in some detail about the master plan, and I'm assuming that each of the budgets is developed under that master plan as you've referred

to in the Speech from the Throne. Is there, in fact, an overall business plan of government under which the departments do that?

MR. KLEIN: Yes. Not that everything has been brought together, because this is the first time there has been specific direction to all deputy ministers and senior officials and those in charge of various boards, authorities, and agencies to actually prepare three-year business plans. Those plans will all be brought together. There will be a document prepared. There will be a summary of all those plans, and indeed that will be tabled at our earliest possible convenience for all the public. Vance advises me that the timing is now for sometime in December. It's a matter of bringing all of these plans together, summarizing them, and then preparing a document that demonstrates how each and every department proposes to address its individual expenditures over the next three years.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: A second supplementary, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Premier, again, if you could just help direct me, whether or not we're on line item 1.0.1 or 1.0.2, on where direction is given to the various departments of government in developing those business plans and coming together to a master plan that is reflected in the throne speech.

MR. KLEIN: I'm sorry; you want the specific amount that we have budgeted in my department in General Administration, or it could be in either one of them?

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Well, I'm not sure where. What I'm getting at, Mr. Premier, is: what resources of Executive Council are allocated to the overall master plan through its direction to individual departments through Executive Council? I'm assuming that it's going to be a significant amount, and I'm not trying to pin you down on the question.

MR. KLEIN: Well, no, it's not going to be a significant amount out of my budget, because each and every department of government has been charged with preparing a three-year master plan along with all the boards, commissions, authorities, agencies, and so on. The preparation costs would come out of those individual budgets.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Perhaps I could just rephrase the question.

MR. KLEIN: In terms of my time, you could probably ask Ms Singleton how much it cost her; I don't know.

How much, Linda, did it cost Public Affairs to prepare the business plan? Do you have an idea? Did that cost quite a bit?

MS SINGLETON: It would be staff costs, wage costs, perhaps one man-hour week.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Perhaps just for clarification, Mr. Chairman. Really all I'm getting at, Mr. Premier, is that while I appreciate that each department prepares its budget, not just within Executive Council but all departments of government, the direction on the development of that budget – the reduction in expenditures, any increase in expenditures – will come under your authority through Executive Council. How much of this budget is allocated for your direction to each of your departments in government in creating the master plan identified in the Speech from the Throne?

MR. KLEIN: I just don't have that breakdown.
Vance.

MR. MacNICHOL: I think, Mr. Chairman, everybody should be aware, of course, that the Premier's salary is in here. He sits on Treasury Board; he sits in cabinet. I and a couple of other staff in Executive Council sit on Treasury Board, so it's part of our salaries, part of the whole administration. How much time we spend on each one of those activities: it could be done, but it's part of our job to participate in these things.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Chairman, the question is asked: how much of my budget do I devote to specific items? Well, this is my agenda for the next month. I mean, I am doing a thousand different things. Do you want to know how much I devote to participate in the Calgary ArtWalk?

MR. COLLINGWOOD: No.

MR. KLEIN: Okay. Do you want to know how much . . .

MR. DECORE: How much on the plan?

MR. KLEIN: On the plan? Okay. It's every day.

MR. MacNICHOL: Mr. Chairman, if it's part of cabinet and part of Treasury Board . . .

MR. KLEIN: Okay. Well, here we go. We'll talk about Treasury Board. I was in Treasury Board from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday. All right? That represents probably about one-tenth of my day. So we'll take that day and we'll say that one-tenth of what I earned that day was devoted to Treasury Board, and probably one-half of that one-tenth was devoted to the plan. Now, following that I had a courtesy call from the ambassador to Brazil, so we'll say that was all part of business too. Then I had caucus; then I had my workout. Okay; so we'll deduct that, all right?

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Can I just interject, Mr. Chairman? There's no need for the Premier to be facetious.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: The question was a legitimate question. He stated to us that each of the departments is responsible for a business plan, and I accept that. All I'm asking of the Premier is: what of this budget is used to develop his overall business plan? That's all I was asking. How much time and resources of this budget are used for the development of the overall business plan of the running of provincial affairs in the province of Alberta?

MR. KLEIN: I have not taken a specific figure out of my overall budget, Mr. Chairman, and dedicated it totally to the development of the plan. It's all part and parcel of what I do for a living.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I believe that answers the question.

Ladies and gentlemen, members of the committee, if I can point out that I've just been looking for this within – forgive me if I pronounce this wrong – *Bourinot*.

The rules that obtain in other committees of the whole apply to the committee of supply. Debate must be strictly relevant to the proposed grant under consideration.

What we have under consideration today is this budget. If we could try and stay a little bit closer to it so I don't have to keep warning people to stay closer to it rather than getting into philosophical debates, I would certainly appreciate it.

I have Mr. Pham, next. He's my eighth speaker; I have no ninth speaker.

MR. PHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Premier, when I look at item 1.0.1, the expenditure for your office, there is a saving of \$380,000. You mentioned that most of that came from cutting staff. I understand that it is very necessary for us to reduce expenditures, but at the same time, accessibility to your office is also very important. Will this cut have any impact on the service that your office provides now to the public?

MR. KLEIN: No, I don't think so. I think that again we have identified new and better ways of doing things, and I'm quite convinced that we're providing the same level of service from my office as certainly we have been previously. I think we're answering our letters and answering our phone calls and responding to constituents' inquiries and complaints. You have to understand that we get a tremendous number of phone calls and a lot of letters, but I think we do a very good job responding to them.

10:21

MR. PHAM: My supplemental question. There are many programs under General Administration. Would you have any programs that evaluate the success of these programs?

MR. KLEIN: Well, I don't want to sound flippant, but I guess the ultimate evaluation of our success will be at the polls, as to how we respond to constituent concerns. Again I don't have the breakdown as to how much money is spent on this, but I do get a breakdown every week of the number of phone calls that were received, the number of letters that were received, who has responded to those letters, who has responded to those phone calls, what the general nature of the inquiries were, what people were saying generally, if there were comments. For instance, I think this week the phones were going off the hook over the Edmonton Oilers, believe it or not. That was the hot item. I don't know how many phone calls, but I understand about two or three hundred phone calls. You know, this is recorded, and we try and get an assessment as to what is topical and what's on the minds of the public. What happens in this office here in Edmonton does not necessarily reflect what is happening in Calgary or in other parts of the province, because different MLAs throughout the province get different phone calls, but we try and get as accurate a handle as we possibly can on the kinds of things that concern people.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A second supplementary, Mr. Pham.

MR. PHAM: My last supplemental question is related to Office of the Lieutenant Governor. There is a saving of \$11,000.

MR. KLEIN: I'm sorry, Hung?

MR. PHAM: There is a saving of almost \$11,000 compared to the budget for last year for Office of the Lieutenant Governor. Again, how would that impact the service that the office of the Lieutenant Governor provides the public?

MR. KLEIN: Well, again it simply reflects what we're trying to do generally, and that is to achieve reductions overall. With respect to the Lieutenant Governor's office the budget has been reduced from \$9,000. I would imagine that just comes out of the general administration and hosting and protocol functions associated

with the LG's office. I just don't have the detailed breakdown of what has contributed to that reduction, but I would assume it's in line with the general direction of government to scale back, find ways to cut across.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Pham.

Mr. Woloshyn, did you have your hand up? Thank you.

Mr. Decore, you wanted to speak again on the same program, at which point we will then go through the nine members of the committee if they all have questions, depending on where they are. Is it the same program?

MR. DECORE: I'm still on program 1.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. You're on.

MR. KLEIN: We'll be here for a while.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Premier, I'd like to go to 1.0.4; that's Mrs. Mirosh. Under the last budget and under the last administration, to deal with health care planning, the government had Mr. Thurber working at \$1,155 per month doing the health care planning. That's been removed, done away with, and the taxpayers are being expected to pick up a greater cost now for a minister without portfolio. I'd like to ask Why.

MR. KLEIN: Well, this minister also has the responsibility for the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission, and that amount has been assigned to my portfolio.

MR. DECORE: Well, under the previous administration the taxpayers paid out a few thousand dollars for a backbench MLA to look after alcohol and drug abuse.

MR. KLEIN: Right.

MR. DECORE: Even those two previous backbench MLAs working saved a lot of money for the taxpayers. Why do we need to spend \$225,000 to pay somebody to be a minister without portfolio when it was nicely looked after before?

MR. KLEIN: Well, first of all, there are the costs associated with AADAC, and there are the costs associated with the roundtable process. This minister is responsible for co-ordinating some 10, perhaps even up to 15, roundtables throughout the province. Then there's travel involved; there are expenses involved in this.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Premier, you're telling me that it's absolutely essential, for the taxpayers to get value for their money, to have somebody being paid, a minister without portfolio, plus all of the money she's getting, when it could have been done by two backbench MLAs?

MR. KLEIN: I think this is a significant enough responsibility to warrant a portfolio. You'll have to understand also that this minister receives half a regular minister's salary and does, I think, just a tremendous amount of work, virtually working night and day, around the clock, to put this thing together.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Premier, this looks like a complete and total waste of money and a scam to the taxpayers.

MR. KLEIN: Well, that's an opinion and one that I don't share.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Decore, that was your second supplementary, sir.

I have Mr. Havelock next and no one else on my list at this point.

MR. HAVELOCK: Mr. Premier, just to clarify. As you indicated, Mrs. Mirosch, the minister, is receiving half the regular salary, or I guess bonus or whatever you call it, that a minister receives.

MR. DECORE: Bonus? Bonus?

MR. HAVELOCK: Well, I didn't mean to stretch it that way.

MR. KLEIN: The Leader of the Opposition also receives it, so let's not just talk about ministers.

MR. HAVELOCK: Prior to that you had two backbenchers working on those issues, and they were being paid what, approximately an additional thousand dollars a month?

MR. KLEIN: Yes. They were being paid about the same.

MR. HAVELOCK: So I guess the simply stupid question I have is that if you multiply 12 times 2,000 bucks, isn't that a little more expensive than actually having a minister assigned to this? A minister actually will be doing other things.

MR. DECORE: That's \$225,000.

MR. HAVELOCK: Supplemental question. Obviously, the minister's not receiving \$225,000. Aren't all the costs associated with the roundtables, et cetera, included in there?

MR. KLEIN: And AADAC as well.

MR. HAVELOCK: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Second supplemental? Thank you.

I have Dr. Percy next and no one else.

DR. PERCY: Working from the throne speech, which comes from the Premier's office, there was a note about the creation of the review panel for the Alberta heritage savings trust fund. Is that going to be funded out of Executive Council, or is that in another department line?

MR. KLEIN: It's not in mine; I can tell you that for sure. I will attempt to find out where that is going to be funded. I would suspect Treasury.

DR. PERCY: I didn't see it there.

MR. KLEIN: Right. No, we have not budgeted for that.

DR. PERCY: Supplemental. With regards to polling, which I take it is taken out of Executive Council, I would be curious: would it be in 1.0.2, then, that we would find the expenditures for polls undertaken by the government?

MR. KLEIN: No, you would probably find it in public affairs.

Linda, could you maybe elaborate?

MS SINGLETON: Yes. Public affairs has the budget for benchmark surveys that we've done over the last couple of years. We do have that budget in our elements.

DR. PERCY: My final supplemental. Since this, I've now been informed, comes out of that department, is it then likely that these will be released and available to all Albertans in a very expeditious, timely fashion, as opposed to a year or two lag?

MR. KLEIN: I'm sorry. What?

DR. PERCY: The polls that are undertaken from the public affairs information office.

MS SINGLETON: Excuse me. The last poll was released through the office about a month ago.

DR. PERCY: I'll pursue this when we come to public affairs. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The only name on my list is Mr. Dalla-Longa.

10:31

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Having completed my first question, I wanted to clarify that you will be forwarding the business plan, the details of that budget.

MR. MacNICHOL: Mr. Chairman, the hon. Leader of the Opposition and the Premier hadn't dealt with that issue.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: I just wanted to clarify. I realized after having passed on my first question that I don't think I had assurances that I would be getting the detailed business plan and the detail of the budget that we keep talking about forwarded to us. We hadn't asked for it, but you were going to provide it to us.

MR. KLEIN: I said that what is happening right now relative to the business plans is that these are all now being brought together.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Fine; give us what you have that arrives at the \$799,000.

MR. KLEIN: I'm sorry.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Well, I'm sorry. I mean, maybe I'm just a backwoods accountant here, but somewhere we've got some numbers that were put together.

MR. KLEIN: Well, I can give you . . .

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Give us what you've got in terms of the detail and the business plan that you talked about.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It sounds like the question's been answered.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: I'm just getting clarification; okay?

MR. KLEIN: The business plans will all be tabled in December.

MR. MacNICHOL: As I understand, Mr. Chairman, just as an interjection, the member is asking for two different things. First of all, the details on this year's budget, which . . .

MR. KLEIN: I can give some detail on this year's budget. Again, I ask the question: how much detail do you want? Tell us what you want, and I'll get it for you.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Well, it is a bit difficult to ask specifically for what I want when I don't know what's out there; okay?

MR. KLEIN: Good lord.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: I'm asking for the details to arrive at the \$799,000, the General Administration numbers, the sub-account . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Dalla-Longa, I think what the Premier has said was that he would get you some detail within this budget: what he has, as you put it. We can keep beating this to death.

MR. KLEIN: First of all, I want to know the extent to which this detail is required or the specifics relative to the detail that is required. Do you want to know, for instance, the salary of each and every employee in my office? That's all public information. It's just a matter of getting it together. Do you want to know how much I spend on pens, paper clips, paper?

MR. DALLA-LONGA: I'd like the kind of detail that you were familiar with, in all likelihood, at city hall with the city of Calgary.

MR. KLEIN: Well, I never got involved in that kind of detail.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Whether you got involved with it or not is irrelevant.

MR. CHAIRMAN: May we move on a bit here? I think it's been expressed that he would give some detail, what was available. The question has been answered.

MR. KLEIN: You know, the breakdown that I have here – and this is where I thought that perhaps we would go – is that in the Office of the Premier, again, we have salaries of \$473,000; supplies and services, that's all the paper and phone calls, \$248,000; and my salary at \$67,000 as the Premier. In Executive Council Administration, Vance's department, we have salaries of \$1.8 million, we have supplies and services at \$485,000, and we have my salary again at \$69,800. This is the administration portion of Executive Council; right?

MR. MacNICHOL: Yes.

MR. KLEIN: The Lieutenant Governor: we have salaries of \$126,000, supplies and services at \$51,000. The office of the minister without portfolio: the \$225,000 to which the hon. Leader of the Opposition referred; we have salaries of \$113,000; supplies and services at – what? – \$61,000; and the minister, MLA, \$50,000.

Now, if you want a further breakdown of those three categories, I guess I can provide that to you.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Please.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Smith.

MR. SMITH: Well, I guess with all due respect to Mr. Peter Drucker, perhaps we should have him in to conduct a time and

motion study and then come up with an adequate job description for the Premier that would satisfy the business details.

Mr. Premier, I think what seems to be coming out of here is a requirement for this committee or certainly the opposition party to have the government estimates broken down one step further: from programs to elements to actual line-item detail. Would we be prepared to undertake an analysis for all government departments that would get us in a position where we are publishing in one giant document a line-item roll-up of budget that starts from department, includes salary, supply and services, travel budget, and I guess what would be an assorted category so that it rolls up by department, by ministry, and then through to the complete government?

I guess the supplemental to that, which you can take at the same time: is that information not already available and accessible? Is that really what you guys have been trying to ask for the last hour?

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Yes.

AN HON. MEMBER: Maybe we should switch sides.

MR. KLEIN: Well, it's an interesting exercise.

MR. MacNICHOL: Mr. Chairman, if I can just add one thing. What's happened in the past in the House when the estimates were debated: these kinds of questions would be asked, and the ministers normally would get back with a written statement to give the details for these items to the member that asked for them. That's the way it used to happen when items were discussed in the House.

MR. KLEIN: In fairness to the hon. Leader of the Opposition, he said at the outset that this is a new process. Perhaps as we get further into this process, I know that of the five departments this is – what? – the third now.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: The fifth.

MR. KLEIN: This is the last one, okay. Perhaps next year we can refine the process and be prepared to answer in detail the kinds of questions you've been asking.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: So we have your commitment that next time you would get the details.

MR. KLEIN: Well, I'll be prepared and armed, and if you ask me those specific questions, I'll be able to tell you.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: We would have your commitment that we would get the detail in advance?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think the question's been answered.

MR. KLEIN: What kind of detail?

MR. DECORE: What he's talking about.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: The kind of detail he was talking about.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Excuse me, Mr. Dalla-Longa.

Mr. Smith, did you have a second supplementary question?

MR. KLEIN: We'll talk about it; okay? Again, I just don't want to get into this situation where we get down to every pen and pencil and paper clip. Let's sort out what kind of detail you're talking about.

MR. SMITH: Mr. Premier, that's exactly my final supplementary.

MR. KLEIN: I have no problems as long as it's reasonable detail, but when we get down – I mean, we'll be spending more bloody staff time trying to . . .

MR. DALLA-LONGA: It's very important. It's important to the people of Alberta.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Dalla-Longa, this isn't debate time. This is Mr. Smith's period of time. Excuse me.

MR. SMITH: I think the issue that we've decided, by having these in, indicates how important it is to the people of Alberta.

My final supplemental. I guess it's almost a process question. Once this process is through, most businesspeople evaluate the process, go through it, and then decide if it's been productive: do we want to continue on with it; do we want to make changes? Then we have a process that is a benefit of our experience, of what we have learned. Then we go forward the next year.

Now, I found Treasury last week quite enlightening, Mr. Chairman. I'm not quite as enlightened today.

10:41

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Point of order. Are we going through questions here now or are we just sort of having a general . . .

MR. SMITH: My question then: can we not review the process after the process is finished and proceed with this next year? I guess that's a long question to you, Mr. Premier, and I don't know if it applies to this particular program and element.

AN HON. MEMBER: It's probably out of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. KLEIN: Rephrase the question, Murray.

MR. SMITH: I don't know if I can, Mr. Premier.

MR. KLEIN: Well, then give me a short question. I'll give you a short answer to it.

MR. SMITH: Can we review this after and decide whether we want to continue with it?

MR. KLEIN: Well, that's what I would like to do. I would be perfectly willing to sit down with the hon. Leader of the Opposition or have our Treasurer sit down with someone from the Official Opposition to map out guidelines for, say, next year so that we know. I have no problem providing you with details providing I know what kind of detail you require. I do have a problem with getting into such finite details as to create nothing but a staff expense in finding out this information, but if it's reasonable detail, fine. Then we can go from there. Sure. I've got no problems.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Mr. Collingwood is next.

MR. KLEIN: But I was advised that that kind of detail was not required.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Nobody's arguing.

MR. KLEIN: Okay. Fine. All right. Sure, we'll work it out.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to take a moment, I want to express my appreciation for Mr. Smith's question, because I think he's actually hit the nail on the head. Yes, we've been going around in circles on this thing, but really the difficulty we have in doing this with just the four line items is that we have to ask questions, where we might have that information in front of us, and not necessarily to the detail that you were talking about, Mr. Premier. I appreciate that question.

MR. KLEIN: Okay. Well, that's what we have to work out: the extent to which you want the detail.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: So again, with not having that information, the question may be relevant; it may not be. Mr. Premier, my first question is that within program 1, in developing an overall policy of government, is there in any of those line items – and again, I guess we're talking about 1.0.1 or 1.0.2 – a research budget?

MR. KLEIN: A research budget? It would all be part of Gordon Olson's. There is nothing that I know of in my office defined as research per se. That's not to say that we don't have people in my office involved in doing research. Certainly Rod and Gordon are involved in research. Virtually every member of my staff is involved in some kind of research or another. I mean, they're all involved in getting the answers to questions.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Just for clarification, Mr. Chairman. What I'm getting at, Mr. Premier: because we're talking about the administration of Executive Council, the overall functioning of government, I'm again looking at research in terms of overall policy development, not specific areas but overall policy development.

MR. KLEIN: Within administration there's a small amount.

MR. MacNICHOL: Yes. Mr. Chairman, there is a small amount in General Administration for research and consulting initiatives. In this case it's around \$50,000.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Okay.

MR. MacNICHOL: That's over and above, because we draw upon the resources of Treasury Board, economic development, and all the different departments. That's where we go for detailed information.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: All right. Well, I'll use my first supplementary, then, perhaps just to ask if you can give us some detail of what research projects are going on in that budget? If there are outside consultants being hired, what are they looking at in that budget that you're talking about?

MR. MacNICHOL: It's always made public how many dollars flow to private consulting firms, Mr. Chairman, so that information is available.

MR. KLEIN: No, but out of the \$50,000, what have we got?

MR. MacNICHOL: We could break that down to where it went, if that's what you're after, or where it's going for this year.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Yeah, and what I'm asking actually is: what areas are being researched?

MR. MacNICHOL: Yes, we'll provide that.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Final supplementary, Mr. Premier: do you know at this point if any of that research is in the area of sales tax?

MR. KLEIN: Absolutely none.

MR. DECORE: Be honest now, Ralph; be honest.

MR. KLEIN: Just for the record, Mr. Chairman, I would ask how much the Liberals are using of their very generous research budget to examine sales tax.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: None.

MR. KLEIN: Well, okay; so we're spending the same amount.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: I'm trying to get the detail on the accounts.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. I don't believe I have any new speakers in this round. I have Mr. Decore and Mr. Dalla-Longa who would like to start round three on this. Mr. Havelock as well?

MR. HAVELOCK: Am I entitled to make a very brief comment? I guess what I find in this process: we're spending a lot of time on .0023 percent of what the Premier is responsible for. Now, it's certainly your decision. I would have to question whether this is a good use of taxpayers' time spending such an inordinate amount of effort. I'm not downplaying that it's important.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Sounds like it.

MR. HAVELOCK: No, I'm not.

If this is purely a political process, that's fine, because that's what it's become. If it's a process to try and learn of the various parties that the Premier's responsible for, we're not getting it done.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: You should have been in Public Accounts. We spent two hours on \$18,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Excuse me, Mr. Dalla-Long, we're not in Public Accounts today, and frankly we're wasting an awful lot of time here with these side comments. I'd really appreciate it if we could maintain some decorum in here.

Dr. Percy.

DR. PERCY: I would just reply to Mr. Havelock in that it is important in that the Premier is ultimately responsible for the entire budget. As we know, when we're talking about general themes or issues related to a department, it always comes in under program 1. So I would say that I do not agree with you, Jon.

MR. HAVELOCK: Okay. That doesn't surprise me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I don't have a motion on the floor to go on to another program, so at this point I have Mr. Decore, Mr. Dalla-Longa, and Mr. Percy on my list.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Premier, I'd like to deal with 1.0.1 and 1.0.2 and specifically a comment made in the budget that there will be a \$130 million saving in efficiencies in the way departments are rejigged or restructured. Now, there must be some sort of guidelines out of your office or out of Mr. MacNichol's office that allow us to get to that \$130 million. I'd like to know what those guidelines are. How did this \$130 million come about?

MR. MacNICHOL: Could I just ask a question, please, Mr. Chairman? It has to do with the overall policy. It all started with the reduction in cabinet. That's where it started.

MR. DECORE: No, there's a reference in the budget, and it relates to 1.0.1 and 1.0.2, to the savings of \$130 million. This is on page 5 of the budget.

MR. MacNICHOL: That's for the whole government budget.

MR. DECORE: Yes, indeed.

MR. MacNICHOL: Yes, for Executive Council. If you look at the total Executive Council on this page, you see that we've saved there the difference between \$147 million and \$165 million.

MR. DECORE: Mr. MacNichol, this \$130 million doesn't come out of the blue sky. It has to come out of your office or the Premier's office as an identification of a target. All I'm asking is: this is obviously part of a plan, and I'd like some explanation on that figure in the plan.

MR. KLEIN: It has come about through a number of initiatives. It has come about through the downsizing of governments in general. It has come about through an examination of overlapping and duplication and eliminating that. It has come about through the reduction of nine departments of government and the associated costs of those departments. It has come about as the result of freezing wages, of rolling back wages, fewer employees.

10:51

MR. DECORE: Mr. Premier, I'm trying to get at the guidelines that must have come out of your office.

MR. KLEIN: Oh, the guidelines were very simple.

MR. DECORE: All right; what are they?

MR. KLEIN: The guidelines basically were passed on to the deputy ministers first, at a meeting on January 12, that there was to be a general reduction in expenditures, that there was to be a removal of burdensome and restrictive regulations, that there was to be an effort to look at overlapping and duplication, and that there was to be a general downsizing and reduction of public service employees.

MR. MacNICHOL: Under different scenarios.

MR. DECORE: Mr. MacNichol, is the \$130 million a target or it's already determined? Where do we get the \$130 million from in this plan?

MR. MacNICHOL: It's a summary. It's divided up amongst every department of government. If you look in Executive Council, \$20 million comes out of that. The program is under Executive Council, the \$20 million saving.

MR. DECORE: There's some confusion, Mr. Chairman, as to . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Decore, that was your second supplementary on the last question.

MR. MacNICHOL: There was \$20 million that came out of Executive Council to be directly . . .

MR. DECORE: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Dalla-Longa is the only other speaker.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: On pages 14 and 15 of the government estimates there is a sort of different breakdown of the total costs under Executive Council.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry; where are you, Mr. Dalla-Longa?

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Pages 14 and 15 of the government estimates.

Well, let me just explain it to you. The Executive Council costs are broken down by type, and if you look at the total, we have the \$147 million. There is a category in there for \$177,000. Now, I'm not sure if that comes under the first program, the second program. If it comes under the first program, could we discuss it now? If it doesn't, could you tell me where it comes so I know when to discuss it?

MR. MacNICHOL: I'll look it up and get it for you.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: But it doesn't come under the first program?

MR. MacNICHOL: No, that's right.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Okay. Thank you.

Supplementary. The Office of the Premier shows a budget '93-94 of \$799,000. In '92-93 the actuals were \$1,183,000. With the exception of that year, there was an increasing trend in the Office of the Premier.

MR. KLEIN: I'm sorry. An increase in what?

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Why don't I just give you this here, Mr. Premier. In your Office of the Premier, the first column . . .

MR. KLEIN: Right.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: . . . there's an increasing trend with the exception of the '92-93 year. Were there some abnormal costs in there?

MR. KLEIN: Right.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: So there's FIGA and the referendum or something? What would they be?

MR. KLEIN: For '92-93?

MR. MacNICHOL: Well, in actual fact, Mr. Chairman, there was a decrease of about 7 percent this year from the preceding year for General Administration and the Office of the Premier. There was a reduction of 7 percent for the current fiscal year.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Are you saying there was a reallocation amongst the various departments, so they're really not comparable? I thought I'd heard that earlier, but I wasn't sure.

MR. MacNICHOL: No, that's not exactly correct. The situation is that we had a reduction this year of 7 percent. As I said before, between the time of April 1 and the election there were several committees in there. They've been disbanded now, so there's a reduction there. In this year's estimates we had to show the cost of those committees for those four months. On August 11 the details were released on where those cost savings were in exact numbers. There are less people in Executive Council administration now than there were two, three, four years ago.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Okay. You've answered my question. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

I have Mrs. Gordon, I believe, next.

MRS. GORDON: Are we finished with this category now, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have one more speaker in program 1, Mr. Collingwood.

MRS. GORDON: Okay. I will just end here. Mr. Premier, do you see further cuts coming for subsequent years out of all these departments, or will this be something you will be working within your business plan?

MR. KLEIN: Well, yes. It certainly is public knowledge that we have to achieve an overall reduction in expenditures of 20 percent over the next three fiscal years – well, four years including this fiscal year. Those who don't achieve that this year will have to find ways to do it next year and in subsequent years. That's what the business plans are all about. There are some departments – certainly the Minister of Municipal Affairs has indicated that he would like to get as much out of his operating expenditures this year as he possibly can. Other departments such as Health feel that the impact would be too severe to make those kinds of reductions in the first year and are developing business plans along the lines of a four-year program. Look at the departments directly responsible to me. The Public Affairs Bureau has reduced its budget by I believe 9.3 percent this year, so they're halfway there in terms of an overall reduction of 20 percent. The public administration office, I believe, is down 6 percent. FIGA is down 9.7 from actual. Eleven and a half on the Northern Alberta Development Council. These are all, by the way, contained in the business plans, plus how these departments will work in the future to achieve even further reductions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. No supplementary?

Mr. Collingwood.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Premier, as we were going through the breakdown in line items 1.0.1 and 1.0.2, there was some reference you made, sir, about the travel

budget. I'm not sure exactly if that was in item 1.0.1 or 1.0.2. I think you referred to the number \$80,000.

MR. KLEIN: Well, someone wanted a breakdown as to how much has been budgeted for travel.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Right. Now, I think the figure was \$80,000.

MR. KLEIN: I'll give you the exact figure. It was \$80,600.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Okay. My first question, then, is: is that an all-inclusive figure for the Premier's Alberta, Canada, and international travel? That's all-inclusive?

MR. KLEIN: Yes, it is. Yes.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: The first supplementary, then, Mr. Chairman. Do you have at this point, Mr. Premier, the breakdown of your upcoming trip, which is the Alberta Advantage trip to China? Do you have the details of that in terms of the size of the entourage, the purpose, the tracking procedures that will follow, what the expected results of the trip are, who you will be meeting with, those sorts of things?

MR. KLEIN: The agenda is being prepared as we speak. I can tell you that the people traveling will be a very, very small delegation, I think about five people totally. These are all government people. Those who want to become involved with us in the private sector will meet us there. They'll be traveling on their own. I will not be leading a big delegation at government expense. The agenda, once it is finalized, will be released to all members of the Legislature and the public and the media at the same time.

11:01

The mission is designed to promote the advantages of doing business in Alberta, of course. We will argue for the removal of trade barriers to Alberta products. We will promote Alberta as a tourist destination. We will provide support for the investment and trade activities of a number of Alberta companies in Asia by assisting with their marketing activities, and hopefully we will open doors to government and business officials. It's my belief, as I believe it is the belief of your leader, that these things have to be done from time to time to maintain the Alberta Advantage.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I'll go to the second supplementary.

MR. KLEIN: But we will try and keep our costs as low as we possibly can.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: I wasn't in any way suggesting, Mr. Premier, that it was inappropriate, that you had to defend it. We're just making sure we've got a proper expenditure of taxpayers' money.

MR. KLEIN: Certainly, but you have my commitment that the detailed agenda will be released.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Second supplementary then, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Premier, with all of that, do you also have crafted in some form the success measurements of your trip? How will you assess or evaluate the success?

MR. KLEIN: I guess it's a very difficult thing to do, but following the trip we will prepare a report. I guess it will be up to really the public and the individuals who perhaps participate with us to make the assessment. I mean, I could come back and say, "Oh, I just came back from Asia and I had a tremendously successful trip." Someone else might say, "Oh, yeah?" So it's a very difficult thing for an individual, especially the principal involved, to assess. But certainly I will prepare a report.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Will that include the businesses that go with you or . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry; that ends your second supplementary.

MR. KLEIN: No businesses will be traveling with me.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: You're just meeting them there.

MR. KLEIN: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have two more questioners on the same program. Well, you've all got watches on. We've been on this program for some time. If I might add, perhaps this might be a time for a five-minute facilities needs break. I don't know about the rest of you, but I've had about eight coffees this morning.

MR. KLEIN: Okay. So we'll add another five minutes to my time next time around; is that it?

MR. SMITH: No; we've built that in, Mr. Premier.

[The committee adjourned from 11:04 a.m. to 11:13 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your wishes are to go on with program 1?

MR. KLEIN: [not recorded] It's in PAO. Well, I guess it's within both.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, let me rephrase this then. It is up to the committee as to whether or not we do another round or go on. I'm going to ask the committee as a whole: what are the wishes of the committee? Do you wish to stay on 1, or would you like to go to 2 or 7 or 9? I don't believe it makes any difference to the Premier's office which one we're on next.

MR. DECORE: It's 1 and part of another one, so it's hard for me to answer the question because it is part of 2. It's part of the first round and it goes into another round.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Pham.

MR. PHAM: We have spent about two hours on this particular program, and there are other programs we would like to look at this morning. Can I put a motion that we move to another program? Later on, if we have more time, we can come back to program 1, in fairness to all the others.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A member of the committee can put any motion they want.

MR. DECORE: Well, we're just about finished on this first round, Mr. Chairman, for your information.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pardon me?

MR. DECORE: I say we're just about finished on this first round. I think I have a question and Mr. Dalla-Longa has a question on the first round. The problem with my question is that it overlaps into two areas.

MR. CHAIRMAN: PAO being the second one.

MR. DECORE: Pardon me?

MR. CHAIRMAN: PAO being the second one.

MR. DECORE: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Collingwood.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Just to suggest, Mr. Chairman, that certainly we as a committee can by unanimous consent finish at any point in time and move to another program regardless of what it is. If we're clear now that there may be only two questions, why don't we just move on and get them done? Regardless of the structure, we can by consent just agree to move to another program. It sounds like we're almost done.

MR. KLEIN: I have no problems.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

Mr. Decore, you had a question then, and we're still on program 1.

MR. DECORE: Yeah. During the intermission, Mr. Chairman, I had the opportunity of talking with the Premier, and he did provide me with information that somewhat helps me better understand this area. It is in relation to the issue of patronage or the issue of appointments to boards and tribunals. It is my understanding that the Premier has issued a direction to ministers, a letter to ministers on appointments to boards and tribunals. I would like the Premier to tell us what those directions, those instructions are to the ministers for board and tribunal appointments.

MR. KLEIN: Basically, in keeping with the Auditor General's recommendation that there be a screening process through the public administration office for appointments to all – and I think he used the word “significant” – boards, authorities, and agencies, those having spending powers and huge financial responsibilities, regulatory authorities, and so on, those guidelines are now being prepared. I will ask Mr. Dixon to elaborate further as to where he is in the preparation of those guidelines.

MR. DIXON: We now have a proposal before the Premier and cabinet for a process to support this means of reviewing the qualifications of potential members of agencies, boards, and commissions. The basic approach is that the departments establish review panels and they be supported by professional personnel people either from my office or from departmental offices.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A supplemental?

MR. DECORE: I'm sorry; this isn't really part of the supplemental. The Premier also indicated that he was going to give us a copy of that letter. Is that a problem?

MR. KLEIN: You mean the direction I have given?

MR. DECORE: Yes.

MR. KLEIN: I don't have it here, but we can get it, and I'll see if we can . . .

MR. DECORE: I'd like the Premier to help me better understand the definition of “significant.” For example, is a university board significant? Is an irrigation board significant? I mean, how do we determine what is important and spending money, as you put it, and what is less important? Is that defined somewhere or somehow?

MR. KLEIN: It really isn't defined, and I attempted to get precisely that definition from the Auditor General. I guess all I can do is share with you what I think I've already shared with you, the letter he sent me. I guess, again, it's a matter of judgment. Yes, I would say that a university board would be significant. A hospital board that is accountable and responsible to the government is significant. I would say that boards such as the ERCB, the NRCB, the Public Utilities Board would be significant.

MR. DECORE: Would Mr. Klein help the committee by telling us how this departmental review panel process is going to work? Is this something that's done in open session? Who forms the review panel? Are there MLAs that participate in this? How does this system work?

MR. KLEIN: Well, it varies. Certainly the ministers would participate. There are certain MLAs who are charged with specific duties. For instance, Mr. Smith here is the chairman of the Committee on Professions and Occupations.

MR. DECORE: What I meant, Mr. Premier: is it limited only to your side and nobody else?

MR. KLEIN: Well, at this juncture, yes. We are the government. That's not to say, Laurence, that you can't submit a recommendation of a person you would like to see appointed to a board or an authority or an agency.

MR. DECORE: What about openness? I ask that question, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Premier?

MR. DIXON: There's a concern about having information related to individuals that are interested in participating on these panels and boards, that kind of information about individual people, becoming public.

MR. DECORE: So it'll be secret.

MR. KLEIN: There will be a process to properly adjudicate the qualifications of individuals applying for positions.

MR. MacNICHOL: The other key thing, Mr. Chairman, is that the profile or the requirements of the job are identified.

MR. DECORE: Publicly?

MR. MacNICHOL: That will be public, the requirements of the job, yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Decore.
Mr. Dalla-Longa, do you have one more on this same program?

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Yes, I do, surprising as it may seem. Being an auditor from way back, in almost all cases, once we finished a particular department, we would issue recommendations with regard to the matters we came across – recommendations for changing things, improving things, altering things – and we would give them to management, if you will. In this case, those sorts of letters would go to the Premier and his executive staff. Do you recall if in the last audit cycle you had there was – I realize there are these 28 recommendations or whatever they are in the Auditor General's report, but I would assume there would probably be some more miscellaneous ones . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are going to connect this somehow with this budget?

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Yes, I am. May I continue?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Thank you. Were such recommendations made to the Executive Council by the Auditor General, and was there a letter issued, any form of communication?

MR. MacNICHOL: Mr. Chairman, the Auditor General made a lot of recommendations to the Premier. They were all responded to in public, and they were all positively . . .

MR. KLEIN: Well, not all. There was one we rejected.

MR. MacNICHOL: One. It had to do with the top civil servants.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: You're talking about the 28?

MR. MacNICHOL: Yes. Mr. Chairman, I don't want it to be . . .

MR. DALLA-LONGA: That was all the recommendations?

MR. MacNICHOL: I want to be careful what I say here in terms of – I'm not talking down, but I've been a public servant a long, long while, and when the Auditor General or a minister writes us, I can't think of very many instances where we refused to accommodate the recommendations of the Auditor General. So what I'm saying is yes, we get recommendations from him, and we always deal with them.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Does the Premier's office get recommendations on, say, other government-owned entities, management letters, that sort of thing as well?

MR. MacNICHOL: Yes, we do, and normally they're addressed to him.

11:23

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Would you have received one on NovAtel or MagCan or Gainers?

MR. MacNICHOL: Well, I wasn't the Deputy Minister of Executive Council then; I'm sorry.

MR. KLEIN: And I wasn't the Premier.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: You wouldn't have received them?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is your last supplementary.

MR. KLEIN: No, but we did receive comments, as you well know, from the Auditor General as to how these situations should be dealt with in the future, and I agree with those recommendations.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Would it be possible to get a copy of those?

MR. KLEIN: Yes. It's public. I mean, the Auditor General released his – pardon me?

MR. DALLA-LONGA: I'm talking about management letters.

MR. KLEIN: I am not privy to those. If there were letters, I have not received any, not to my recollection. The only letter we have received from the Auditor General of late was the one that I alluded to, and that was with respect to the salaries of various administrators of hospital boards, colleges, and so on. We have taken action on that. As you know, we have introduced an amendment to the Financial Administration Act to have those salaries made public.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Okay. Thank you. No further questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mrs. Gordon.

MRS. GORDON: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Due to the fact that we have time restraints, I would like to move that we go to program 7.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have a motion on the floor. I believe the two sides have essentially agreed that that should be the next program. The order was not critical here. We're on program 7. Questions, please. Mr. Decore.

MR. DECORE: I'll let Dr. Percy start on that, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. Percy first.

DR. PERCY: In Personnel Administration, as you mentioned in your opening remarks, they've undertaken an exhaustive review of how to offer services more efficiently and have moved towards TQM. My first question. In an environment where there is significant downsizing and the morale issues that arise from that – I mean, is it a worthwhile expenditure of money at this time? As you're downsizing, straws are being drawn as to who is going to depart. That doesn't seem to be the environment at which time you introduce such a program that really has to deal more with a stable administrative base. It seems to be something that when you reach the end of the line, you then start to worry about the provision of services and adopt a program of TQM.

MR. DIXON: Well, I think TQM can also support people in terms of their morale by helping them get focused on how we are going to do this downsizing, how we are going to improve the services and get them more committed to the job that they're doing. It is a difficult environment because it does mean further downsizing, but I think they are very consistent.

DR. PERCY: This is my second supplemental. In the department as downsizing occurs, in many instances people who have in fact accepted the package of severance have come back on contract to various departments. Can you give me an idea as to the role, then, that PAO plays in assessing whether or not you get people

who've been bought out, then they're back in on contract performing essentially the same service they had while they were in the civil service but now they're on contract?

MR. MacNICHOL: Mr. Chairman, I'll deal with that. Anybody who received a severance, there's a contract written with that employee, and the terms of it are that if they go back to work for the government, they have to pay the severance back.

DR. PERCY: Okay. But if they actually join – I guess this is my third.

MR. KLEIN: They can't have both, Mike.

DR. PERCY: Yeah. There are some instances that I do know of, though, where they in effect have gone to firms that have immediately contracted for those services. So it's one step removed, then, from direct employment with the government. In fact, they have then joined entities that have now been contracted to provide those services, and there is a flow of expenditures associated with that. So in a sense you just privatized the job and also paid them a nice lump sum, so they're still getting a salary stream.

MR. MacNICHOL: Mr. Chairman, I'll answer that one. All deputy ministers have been directed – as I said before, if you receive a severance payment, you are not to come back on the payroll in one form or another. If you do, you have to pay the severance back.

MR. KLEIN: I think what Mike is saying is that an employee who has received the VSP will join a firm, say a law firm or a consultant firm, and that firm might be doing some government work, and that person might be working on that same project.

DR. PERCY: In essentially the same job they had.

MR. KLEIN: Could you give me some examples?

DR. PERCY: Well, I'd rather not identify individuals, Mr. Premier. I mean, there is a case where they're basically providing the same service they had while they were in government, but they're now in with this other entity. In reply to your question: you're right; they're not being paid directly by the government.

MR. KLEIN: It would be a very difficult thing to monitor.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You could provide them off the record.

MR. KLEIN: I just don't know what the answer is to that, because we have no control over the employment that person might take. In other words, there might be a firm that already has a contract with the government, knows that this particular employee has received a VSP or has terminated employment with the government, and that firm says: "You have a certain amount of expertise that we would like to use. Therefore, we would like to hire you." I don't know how we would have any control over that. Would we then take the contract away from that company because that employee joined the company?

MR. MacNICHOL: There's the time element too, Mr. Chairman. You know: one year, five years . . .

MR. KLEIN: I know what it is for ministers. It's six months, and I think it is the same for senior officials.

MR. MacNICHOL: It's the length of time that their payment period covers.

MR. KLEIN: Right.

DR. PERCY: Thank you, Mr. Premier.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
I have Mr. Pham, Mr. Decore, and Mr. Woloshyn.

MR. PHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My first question is dealing with collective bargaining. The government has made a commitment to hold the line on costs, and I understand that we are negotiating with the public sector right now regarding their salaries. How successful are these bargainings, Mr. Premier?

MR. KLEIN: Well, I'm not directly involved in the collective bargaining process, but I can certainly defer to Mr. Dixon to update this committee on the status of negotiations.

MR. DIXON: Mr. Chairman, we have one master agreement and 12 subsidiary agreements or occupational portions to the agreement. We've been very successful to this point in meeting our objective of zero and zero with six of those subsidiary agreements signed off and ratified. We have two others. We just reached this week an agreement with subsidiary 10, which is our psychiatric nurses and nursing professional agreement. So we're seven-twelfths of the way through maintaining our bargaining position.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A supplementary, Mr. Pham.

MR. PHAM: Yes. I'm going after the revolving fund. It seemed like we incurred a big jump in 1993-1994 compared to last year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry; I can hardly hear you. I'm not sure if the Premier can either, and I'm closer to you than he is.

MR. PHAM: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask about an increase in the revolving fund for 1993-1994. It looks like we have about a \$200,000 increase compared to last year. I would like to know why that is the case.

MR. KLEIN: In the revolving fund?
Mr. Dixon.

MR. DIXON: In the revolving fund there is an increase in the expenditures in '92-93 over what we'd estimated. The reason for that is that we did develop a set of total quality management courses, and the costs of developing those courses will be amortized over the next three years as a part of the revolving fund.

11:33

MR. PHAM: My last supplemental question. I have no doubt that the provincial government of Alberta is offering in the area of personnel administration many programs similar to other provinces. Are we looking at any way, you know, of sharing costs and sharing expertise with the other provinces?

MR. KLEIN: With other provinces, are we . . .

MR. PHAM: That are similar to this, that they'll receive an update. For example, can we share the costs of some? Can we share the costs of researching the improved programs at least in these areas?

MR. DIXON: We do have a considerable exchange of information, Mr. Premier, and we do share developmental work on courses such as TQM and other initiatives that are taken by other jurisdictions as well.

MR. PHAM: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Pham.
Mr. Decore, Mr. Woloshyn.

MR. DECORE: I'd like to ask Mr. Dixon, following up on questions that were answered by the Premier on appointments. I take it, Mr. Chairman, that there must be some sort of a book or a registry or some sort of an inventory record of what's available, what is coming up. Is that in fact correct, and can the public access that book or that inventory or that record for appointments?

MR. DIXON: You're talking about agencies, boards, and commissions?

MR. DECORE: Yes.

MR. DIXON: That would be information, Mr. Premier, that would come to Executive Council, I think, in terms of appointments to those agencies, boards, and commissions.

MR. MacNICHOL: The process, Mr. Chairman, is that when the request comes from the department or the agency to appoint people, it comes to our office and then the PAO. Then they get involved in reviewing the appointments.

MR. DECORE: Just as a further explanation, Mr. Chairman. The Premier and I discussed the fact that the federal government has a yellow book, or something that they call it, that people can look in and see what's coming up and what's available. Is there nothing like that contemplated in Mr. Dixon's office?

MR. KLEIN: All boards, commissions, agencies are public. Is there an advertisement?

MR. DIXON: Well, part of the recommendation is that advertising be carried out where it is felt to be necessary, where it's necessary to obtain candidates for those positions.

MR. MacNICHOL: Mr. Chairman, to answer the hon. Leader of the Opposition's questions directly, we're working with the Auditor General right now with regard to his recommendations that we bring forward to the cabinet just exactly what those significant positions would be.

MR. DECORE: I see. So the plan isn't yet formalized.

MR. MacNICHOL: It's nearly complete.

MR. KLEIN: And we don't know if it's going to be perfect at the outset, but it's going to be a darn sight better than it was. What we're trying to do is open up the process, and we would be receptive to any good suggestions.

MR. DECORE: Well, would the Premier agree that the system of having a book or an inventory or a record where the public could come in and look and see that such and such is coming up and that they could apply for it is a good idea? Wouldn't that be a good way to start?

MR. KLEIN: It could be. We'll check with the feds and maybe some other jurisdictions to see what they've got.

MR. DECORE: Would the Premier commit to putting forward some sort of a guideline or a skeleton of a plan so that we could respond and add to that to ensure that the best people are picked? You see, the big problem is informing people so that they know that something is coming up. Couldn't we work out a process to get this going?

MR. KLEIN: I have no problems, but it seems to me that people are well informed now, or they seem to be.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's really about four, Mr. Decore.

MR. DECORE: It's pretty fuzzy, Premier.

MR. KLEIN: How do you mean, "It's pretty fuzzy"?

MR. DECORE: The plan.

MR. KLEIN: Well, first of all, we have agreed to implement the Auditor General's recommendation. I don't have the recommendation in front of me, but it says nothing about a fuzzy plan. It says that we have to do something to have a proper adjudication of the qualifications of those who are applying for various boards, authorities, and commissions of a significant nature. That's what his recommendation was.

MR. MacNICHOL: Mr. Chairman, I just want to add that when you get a copy of the Premier's letter, it's pretty specific. It's directions to all ministers. The policy that you're looking for is right there.

MR. KLEIN: It seems to me that there is widespread knowledge of the various boards and authorities. I mean, people know that there is a university board. They know that there is . . .

MR. DECORE: But not when these things come up, Mr. Premier, when they're . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Decore, I've been flexible in the extreme here. I think we're up to about four questions in reality. Mr. Woloshyn is up next.

MR. KLEIN: Well, we can certainly look at a process for advertising for significant boards, authorities, and agencies.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Woloshyn.

MR. WOLOSHTYN: In the voluntary leaving program there was a higher number of requests than people's needs that could be met. Some of these people who would normally have been able to leave under the program – their jobs were not going to be replaced. So to avoid an increase in a revolving door, shall we say, they weren't permitted to take part in the program. Was there any thought given to at some point in the near future, as the shake-

down of personnel and the adjustments take place, reintroducing some form of that particular program?

MR. KLEIN: There have been some requests, absolutely, that we reintroduce it. I'll have Mr. Dixon elaborate further on this.

MR. DIXON: We have extended a form of it until March of next year in agreement with the union. The difficulty still remains with respect to positions that are necessary to carry on and we can't find someone to replace that individual. Those are the people I believe you're referring to.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Yes, those are exactly the people I'm referring to. Your answer is quite specific, that they still, as time goes on, individually may or may not qualify, depending upon circumstances.

MR. DIXON: That's right.

MR. WOLOSHYN: You have in the budget three-quarters of a million dollars for training for departments and whatnot. Have any thoughts been given to having a training program to facilitate the people who are leaving, either voluntarily or otherwise, for the private work force?

MR. DIXON: There are some training programs available for those people. We have made a training program available to give a little understanding of entrepreneurial requirements for people who want to set up small businesses. We've arranged for some outplacement assistance for some individuals on a group basis, and departments of their own volition have arranged for those types of assistance programs.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Now, there are some services which are being privatized totally, as in the liquor retail outlets and also driver testing and some of the other ones that go through registry. Is there any encouragement or endorsement – for example, specifically the driver testers – that they be picked up as qualified people by the private sector so they can provide, if you will, a smooth crossover of services and still accept their packages? Can they switch from the public sector directly to the private sector and not be in any way impeded financially?

MR. DECORE: Mr. Chairman, a point of order. Could I just ask Mr. Woloshyn where he gets the three-quarters of a million? I didn't follow that figure in program 7.

MR. WOLOSHYN: If you will look under Personnel Administration, it's the Revolving Fund, I believe, on page wherever it is.

MR. DECORE: On 157?

MR. WOLOSHYN: Yeah. That's for employee training and retraining, and that's a service that is provided, Mr. Decore, to departments and agencies within the government. Hence it

becomes a revolving fund, and you'll notice it fell a tad short this year.

11:43

MR. DECORE: It's the \$800,000 that you're looking at.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Well, yeah, nearly \$800,000. It started off as a budget of \$794,000.

MR. DECORE: Okay.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Did you lose the question?

MR. DIXON: I'm sorry.

MR. WOLOSHYN: When these people transfer over, they're out of the public sector. The same, identical job is going to be taken over by the private sector. Are we giving encouragement to the private sector to hire these people as qualified, or are they going to have to go through a series of retesting, or do you help them, sir?

MR. DIXON: I don't know the answer to that.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Okay. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. It is 13 minutes to the hour. I have two speakers left on this particular program. In the interests of getting the Premier to his next function . . .
Mr. Decore.

MR. DECORE: Well, I thought we'd agreed, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to suggest that we just adjourn at this time, and at a date that's convenient to the Premier . . .

MR. KLEIN: Next week, an hour and a half.

MR. DECORE: Yeah; that's fine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is precisely an hour and 30 minutes left.

MR. KLEIN: All right. We'll give you an hour and 30 minutes. We'll give you a pound of flesh.

MR. DECORE: At a date that's convenient to the Premier, we'll reassemble.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Can I get a motion to recess to the call of the chair?

MR. DECORE: I'll make that motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Through the chair we will then try and get a time that the Premier's available as well as the rest of us.
Thank you.

[The committee adjourned at 11:44 a.m.]

