

**Special Select Standing Committee on Members' Services**

**Monday, April 5, 1982**

*Chairman: Mr. Amerongen*

*5:43 p.m.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The first item on the agenda is the approval of the minutes of the March 2 meeting.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, may I raise one question? I don't know whether our meetings have ever been recorded by the press and for what purpose the recordings for broadcast or otherwise might be used. I know there is some recording equipment over there. Is that normally the case?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I haven't really noticed recording equipment on any preceding occasion.

MRS. OSTERMAN: I believe there is tonight. I only ask the question in that people should be aware. Whether legislative committees are normally recorded for broadcast . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is the only one I have chaired, so I don't know.

MR. GOGO: Do you want it on or off, Connie?

MRS. OSTERMAN: It doesn't matter. I'm just saying that that is the case; as long as we are not setting a new precedent or breaking a rule that is there. I only raise it, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't know of any rules in that regard, nor do I know whether it's a precedent. As I said, I don't attend other committee meetings of committees of the House. Okay?

MRS. OSTERMAN: That's fine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The first item on the agenda is the approval of the minutes of the March 2 meeting. Any comments or motion on that? You moved it, Frank? Are you ready for the question? Are you all agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. They are carried and adopted.

The next is the budget estimates for Mr. Gordon Kesler, the new Member for Olds-Didsbury. Have members copies?

MR. GOGO: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. In view of the cafeteria hours, could we discuss the possibility of a 6:30 adjournment?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sure.

MR. APPLEBY: We'll work towards that, I think.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Should we agree that we'll try to adjourn by 6:30?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Have members got their copies of the draft budget? Mr. Kesler is here. If there are any questions anyone wants to ask him, this would be a good time to do that. Ray, you have a derogatory look on your forehead.

MR. APPLEBY: Mr. Chairman, before we go into Gordon's budget, I made some comparisons the other day. The budget for the Member for Olds-Didsbury shows employer contributions of \$2,800. I notice the NDP shows \$6,747. I wonder if someone from the Clerk's office could explain where that big difference comes in.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Charlene Blaney is here, fortunately.

MR. R. SPEAKER: While Charlene is looking at it, I guess my status is that I can be involved in the discussion but not have a formal vote. Is that what happens?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't know.

MR. APPLEBY: I think you would have a vote.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You're representing Fred. As far as I'm concerned, I don't want to be sticky about a thing like that.

MR. APPLEBY: I think you would do what Fred does.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Fair enough.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, on Frank's point, if we're going to entertain Mr. Kesler's budget, my preference would be to have him present the budget and speak to it. Then we go through item by item, as we did other budgets. I think that would give members an opportunity to raise questions, if that is satisfactory to the committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Gordon, do you want to tell the committee what you have in mind with regard to Code 100: salaries, permanent positions, \$20,988.

MR. KESLER: I think that one is fairly straightforward. There shouldn't be too much argument on it. Basically it is salary for my secretary. I checked with Charlene and verified the salary offered to that position. She gave us the figure, and that's what we put into the budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any questions?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now 120: wages, \$3,000.

MR. KESLER: What I did there is talk to other people involved in the Legislature workings. I looked at the Independent's figure, which is exactly the same. I looked at the opposition members, and it was close to \$9,000. Because it's the first crack at this, I felt I should be on par at least with what the Independent is getting, as he doesn't represent a party. It works out to about the same, on an average, as what each of the opposition members are in place at this time. Theirs is very close to \$9,000, so it works out to an average of \$3,000 a person for the opposition people who are working in the Legislature. What I have to go on is what other people are receiving for those positions.

MR. APPLEBY: That's part-time wages for filling in when someone is ill, and so on.

MR. KESLER: Right.

MR. APPLEBY: That \$3,000 is satisfactory to you because Mr. Sindlinger has it?

MR. KESLER: Not just because Mr. Sindlinger has it. It appears to me that those who have had experience in the Legislature before have come up with that figure, through their experience.

MR. APPLEBY: Except for Mr. Notley. He probably has half that. I'm just curious as to why the \$3,000.

MR. KESLER: I think we have to look at some of the other areas and relate back to that one. Perhaps he feels he has staff that can compensate for that area. If the secretary is out, he has secretarial staff who can compensate when they're gone, which I don't have. One other thing is that we've been involved in hiring through a secretarial service. I think everyone here is aware of the expense of that. When you have to bring someone else in, it certainly isn't the standard secretarial wage. I think her wages are something like \$700 a week. It doesn't take very long for someone to be off sick to eat up \$3,000, if that's the case.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The next one, 130: payment to contract employees, \$46,000.

MR. KESLER: It works out to about one and a half people a year there. It's in line with other people, in relation to other budgets that are reviewed. I felt that I need a good researcher. I also felt that because of the position I'm in in representing the party and the amount of work I see coming through my office, I'm certainly in need of an executive assistant to help me deal with those problems as they come in and to be involved in working between the Legislature and the constituency while I'm tied up at the Legislature.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, we've immediately gotten into detail, and that's fine. But I think it raises the philosophical question I asked last time when our committee met. That was if there was any guidance anywhere in this

country in terms of opposition budgets and how something is handled. It's obvious from the budget that Gordon is presenting what he feels is most closely aligned, at least in the bottom figure, with the NDP budget. I guess I would like to ask him to tell us -- and I realize he hasn't had a long time in the Legislature to sort of analyse his position -- how he sees himself in relation to the other opposition members.

MR. KESLER: I guess I see myself in at least an equal role. Probably in respect to the amount of work I have to do, it might be more demanding because it is a new party. As a party, I think I have the same responsibility as Grant Notley. I'm not an Independent; I represent a party. Not only do I represent it at the constituency level, but because I'm the only one sitting in the Legislature I have to represent this party throughout the province in my public exposure.

MRS. OSTERMAN: So it's fair to say that you are the pseudo head of the party in relation to the same status that Grant Notley has, as representing the party.

MR. KESLER: In representing the party, that's correct.

MR. APPLEBY: What do you mean, Connie? We would have to have four categories, I suppose. We have the Official Opposition, with the acknowledged leader. We have the Independent member. We have the registered NDP, with the provincial leader as elected member in the House. Then Gordon's position: a registered party, but I don't know where the leadership question comes in.

MR. KESLER: I don't either. The fact is that we checked on that prior to my ever coming to the Legislature, to make sure that wasn't a factor in determining the allocation of budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You mean, whether or not you're a party leader?

MR. KESLER: That's right. We were told at that time that whether or not I was party leader would have no direct effect on budget allocation.

MR. OSTERMAN: Who told you that?

MR. KESLER: Mr. Stefaniuk.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, I don't think the question was put quite that way. The question posed to me was relative to any additional payments for holding the position of party leader. What was provided to the party that raised the question was very simply a quotation from the Legislative Assembly Act, which provides for additional payment to any party leader who leads a certain number of members in the House. There is a minimum requirement. The answer that was provided to the enquiry was simply that a single, elected member would not enjoy that additional payment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As I see it, apart from the position of the Leader of the Opposition, which usually automatically falls on the person who is either leader of the party having the most seats in opposition or House leader of the party having the most seats in opposition, I'm really not aware of any status which a party leader would have in the House as the lone representative of his

or her party. For example, if Grant Notley were succeeded by someone else as party leader, I wouldn't see that resulting in a reduction in his budget. He is an Independent member. What party he chooses to belong to is his business.

And you, Mr. Kesler, are an Independent member, as I see it. In my opinion, whether you are or are not the leader of that party would not affect your status in the House from a parliamentary point of view, as to whether you got more or less. The same thing applies to Mr. Sindlinger. If he were to succeed in establishing a registered party and it turned out that he were the leader of it, I wouldn't see that resulting in any special status for him in the House. The special status can arise only under the Legislative Assembly Act or the *Standing Orders*, and I know of no provision that gives that status to one member who happens to be the leader of a party. The House isn't organized that way. I know they have the concept in Quebec of recognized parties where there is a minimum number of members. In your case, for example, if we were to take cognizance of these things which occur outside the Legislature concerning which the Legislature had nothing to do, that would mean that if we approve a budget now and in another little while Mr. Kesler were to become leader of his party, we'd have to review the budget and build in an additional factor to represent that leader, just as we would have to do for Tom Sindlinger if he achieved some kind of leadership of a party.

As far as I can see, it's services to members. Apart from the official status of the opposition, or possibly a recognized party if we go that route, it's a matter of just being an Independent member.

MR. APPLEBY: Mr. Chairman, I haven't reviewed the Legislative Assembly Act for some time, but I do believe we have a provision in there that if a party has four elected members, the leader of that group gets a stipend of \$5,000 extra, I think. That's not significant here anyway. But I just wonder if, at this stage of the game, Gordon would at least see himself as the acting leader.

MR. KESLER: I don't want you to put words in my mouth, especially with these guys here. You guys have been reading the newspaper; that's all.

MR. R. SPEAKER: I think what Gerry said is the answer to the question. I don't think the Legislature is responsible for the leader of a party carrying out his functions. It's the responsibility to help the member in the Legislature to carry out his legislative functions. Taking that as the underlying assumption -- and I think that's what you were saying, Gerry, if I comprehended the message that was coming across the table -- then we look at precedent. Precedent says that Grant Notley, leader or not, received \$107,000 because he did have some official party recognition, (a) through the Societies Act and (b) under the contributions Act. On the other hand, Tom Sindlinger doesn't have a recognized party by the Societies Act, nor is registered. That's the significant difference. Because of that, the committee decided he would have less as an Independent. On that basis, I see Gordon fitting into the definition here, being registered under the Societies Act and under the contributions Act, giving the same kind of responsibility as Grant Notley in performing his functions. If we are saying we are financing the party leader, which as I see it is a party function, not the function of a Member of the Legislative Assembly -- at least, we haven't done that yet. On that basis, from precedent I think we should approve the budget that is here.

The second thing I think we should do -- and I think we're at this stage -- is that for this kind of decision, somebody should sit down and look at all the options that are there and formalize this thing, or we're going to have

all kinds of piecemeal things that are going to happen in the future. We would really get ourselves in difficulty in terms of decision-making. I don't know who we can assign that task to, but that should be done. I'm sure the options can be put together and something formal brought back.

MR. APPLEBY: It requires amendments to the Act. Ontario provides for pretty well every contingency, as far as I can see.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In the Act or the *Standing Orders*?

MR. APPLEBY: In the Act, I think.

MRS. OSTERMAN: I see a difficulty here. I can agree mostly, in terms of what Ray has said. But the difficulty is that the New Democratic member I don't necessarily believe will look at it the same way. My understanding -- and Mr. Mandelbaum is here -- is that he would consider his member, even though we in this committee try to leave parties aside, if you will -- and of course got into the hairy business of how much extra work somebody has because they are the leader of a party and they get the calls anyway. Even though there are MLAs out there who could serve those people, the member might get calls from all over the province. I'm saying that I think we're going to run into difficulty, because the NDP member will then make the point that he still has a slightly different status in terms of the kind of workload that has been built up historically and the services that people have an expectation of because of that; and so is going to say, I think it's completely unfair that a brand new member, albeit a member of a party -- so you're giving recognition, and possibly he fits somewhere between the Independent member and the leader of a party. But I don't think we can dismiss that lightly. Even though it may make some sense, we're still going to have somebody come back with a different argument that we're going to have to face. I think it puts us in a bind.

MR. APPLEBY: Ray has pinpointed it very well. I think it's a gray area. I don't think this committee can resolve what is not in the statutes. I think we're going to have to accept the situation as it exists, and I think we should get on with looking at. . .

MR. R. SPEAKER: Can I just add this other piece of information? I had the difficulty when Sykes was leader of the party and I had the office here in the Legislature. I had to make it clear that there was a difference. You are to get your funds from the party, in terms of travelling and leading the party; this was a different kind of office. You can't stop visitations in between, and that kind of thing. But there was a difference. That's the way I always looked at it. We haven't set a precedent of paying the leader of a partisan party from legislative funds. That's a different kind of precedent that I would have to question.

MRS. OSTERMAN: I recognize that, but we're told that the workload is different when you're the leader of the party. And it's a legislative workload, in terms of the number of people who will contact you, asking for assistance.

MR. KESLER: If you want to find out about the workload, talk to anybody who comes through my office. I'm sure I have as much workload today as Mr. Notley has after his years in the Legislature. People in the province, not only from the constituency but all over the province, who have tried other channels and felt they haven't had proper attention for one reason or another, feel that because I'm a new member and because I represent a new party they should go through me to get their problems solved. So if you're talking workload, I don't think there's any argument to be made. At this time, I have the same responsibility Grant Notley has, because people who don't feel they have had proper representation somewhere else are going either to him or, now, they're going through me. The workload is there. I think I have exactly the same responsibility to my constituents, to the people of this province, to recognize the problems as he has.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As far as workload is concerned, I'm not aware of any parliament anywhere where the support funds for members are based on workload. That would mean that a member with a large constituency or a member who was more popular, shall we say, would get bigger funding than the member with a small constituency or one who was a little more of a quiet sort and maybe didn't have quite the same popularity. It seems to me those are factors we can't assess without getting involved in areas where a member could say, none of your damned business. How can we go to Mr. Notley's office, or yours, and say: what is your workload like; who are you getting all those letters from?

MR. KESLER: That's what I say. I don't think it's valid as a criterion either. I've presented a budget that's similar in nature to Mr. Notley's. Because of the responsibilities I have to the people in that riding to do a good job, I felt I should have available the same funds to hire those kinds of people to get the job done in representing them the best way I can.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't want to cut short the discussion, and it may well be we'll have to adjourn this until tomorrow or some other time. But I think there are certain factors here. Being the chairman, I don't want to intervene too much, although I think I have some responsibility to all members to attempt to achieve a certain equity and fairness.

There are two other factors here. We have the budget of the Independent Member for Calgary Buffalo, and we also have the situation in the Social Credit caucus where we originally prepared our estimates for four members and there are now three. I think those are factors that have to be taken into account in considering what is equitable, or roughly equitable because we'll never achieve exact, to the penny, equity. I think those are relevant factors.

Are we ready to go back to Code 130: payment to contract employees, \$46,000? Or do you want to continue with the general discussion?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I think the general discussion helps overall, even in terms of quickly going down the list. I'm interested in Ray's comments. In terms of dealing with the Official Opposition, would he apply the sort of -- last time we asked Fred to come back with a proposal of what they thought was fair in terms of how they divided their budget. Do you take the salary the Leader of the Official Opposition gets and deduct that from your budget, look at what's left, and say all right, that is divided by four, and that is what is fair? Or is it looked at in another way? That's also part of the discussion in terms of how it's handled overall.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Originally there was some consideration like that, but eventually it all sort of moved over to Bob's responsibility as a total opposition office function. So it didn't get divided up amongst the members as such. When I took over, Bob had three people on staff who were carrying on ongoing functions that I didn't feel were necessary. So I let them go. I don't want people sitting there so I can create work for them. Because of that decision, we're going to have a bit of a surplus.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You mean the end of the fiscal year just closed?

MR. R. SPEAKER: That's right. If I had kept those people sitting there full-time and creating work for them, we would have spent the money. I didn't feel that was responsible.

MR. APPLEBY: Wasn't this question raised, though, when we were discussing budget, that it would be contingent on the results of the by-election?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Fred was going to come back with . . .

MR. APPLEBY: A proposal.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Yes. He was going to discuss it with his colleagues and find out how their budget had been allocated. Obviously there are some things tied to each individual constituency. Everybody is making the point they are representing a constituency.

MR. R. SPEAKER: It becomes an office function more than a constituency function.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As you know, Fred was not well. He was hospitalized for part of the time in between. I'm sure that explains why we haven't had . . . Ray, I think what we were looking for was comments from your group as to what effect they thought the results of the by-election ought to have on the budget. I think that's what we had in mind. We didn't have any preconceived notions that I'm aware of.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Walt and I talked about it a bit and said to Fred, look, it costs us that much to run this opposition function; if we cannot spend the money, we won't do it. Last year we didn't. We would like to see it stay where it is. If we had divided it up amongst the four of us and said, you get so much and you get so much, then when Bob left it would be different.

MRS. OSTERMAN: But whoever was working for Bob to assist him with the Olds-Didsbury constituency service -- surely it must be somewhat similar to what government members do. We have correspondence and so on. Are constituency functions so small that most of your money is spent in other things?

MR. R. SPEAKER: With Bob, Jan McKee did all that. She was sort of secretary, constituency contact.

MRS. OSTERMAN: So her salary could be identified, for instance.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Now we have Noreen Wickens who took her place.



MRS. OSTERMAN: Doing what?

MR. R. SPEAKER: The very same kind of thing, working with my constituency and Fred's and Walt's. Another secretary supports her and does that kind of thing. So they have picked up that constituency contact function. The other people in the office -- the only one who does partial work for one of the MLAs is Mark Byington. He has worked with Walt for a long, long time. But most of his assignments come from me and Dwight. Walt gives him very few assignments.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't want to interfere with free discussion, but time is running on. I'm wondering how we best spend the remaining time. Should we continue to go through item by item with Mr. Kesler while he's here, and then postpone conclusions to another meeting? Or do you wish to continue with a general discussion of concepts and principles? Or do you want to go at it element by element, as we started doing?

MR. R. SPEAKER: I'd like to move that we accept the budget as presented. That's my motion.

MR. APPLEBY: We go through all normal budgets by code, don't we?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, we usually go through them item by item.

MR. R. SPEAKER: I think it's the end figure that makes the difference anyway.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's a motion, and we've agreed we don't need seconders in these meetings, any more than we do in the House.

MR. APPLEBY: Mr. Chairman, we're just coming to 140, which I wanted to get some information on. Maybe we could get that at least.

MISS BLANEY: The difference on that, Mr. Appleby, is that in this amount of \$2,800 is not included the 4 per cent we would need to contribute for the pension plan or contributions that have to be made to the dental plan. Mr. Kesler's office wasn't aware of those two parts of the employer contributions.

MR. APPLEBY: So that would be additional.

MISS BLANEY: Yes.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Will his total be the same as the NDP then?

MISS BLANEY: It will be based on what decisions are reached on 130, and then we total the three figures and base the percentages on those, also the number of individuals employed.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, if comparisons were to be made, it should be known that in the case of the NDP office budget, or Mr. Notley's budget, he has two contractors who are contracted pursuant to the Public Service Act and have a certain benefit entitlement. Without knowing what kind of contracts are foreseen here -- there are obviously no benefits built in relative to contractors. They could be fee for service contractors, which entails no benefit package whatsoever. Or they could be contracts pursuant to the Public

Service Act, which would mean some benefits and additional monetary requirements.

MISS BLANEY: Actually they could only be the latter, because fee for service has to be under 430.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have a motion I think we have to deal with before we go into any more individual items.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I'll speak to it. I think we should handle this budget as we do every other budget. We shouldn't change our method.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Okay. I'll hold off the motion if you'd like to go into detailed discussion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Have we dealt with 130?

MR. APPLEBY: I think so.

MR. GOGO: I have a question to the Clerk. For example, 100: the salaries of a secretary, which would normally be \$20,988 divided by 12. Code 130: \$46,000. Could that be paid in one month or is that incidental?

MR. STEFANIUK: No, that is payment to contract employees. The payments would be made pursuant to the terms of the contract. It could be in 12 equal instalments or whatever. It could be a payment in a lump sum at the conclusion of the contract.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As I understand it, we're at 130: payment to contract employees, \$46,000.

MR. KESLER: I felt that I needed somebody a full year, and then the other half year I could have someone working through both spring and fall. That's where I came up with the half person. I would use them only while we were sitting in the spring and the fall.

MR. WOLSTENHOLME: Part of the time you'd have two people.

MR. KESLER: That's right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In other words, if we sit four months of the year, you'd have one person for two two-month stretches and the other one for the 12 months.

MR. KESLER: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you ready for 130? Is it agreed?

HON. MEMBER: Agreed.

MR. MANDELBAUM: I just have one general question. As I recall when Mr. Sindlinger came in here originally with his budget presentation, he came in with a largely identical budget to what Mr. Notley had proposed. At the time, he was told there are differences in the situation and, as such, he wouldn't be eligible for the same budget as Mr. Notley had. In light of the fact that

there seem to be some changes right now, does that mean Mr. Sindlinger's budget will be re-evaluated?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't know.

MR. APPLEBY: Are you representing Mr. Sindlinger?

MR. MANDELBAUM: No.

MR. APPLEBY: Well, I think that is something we'd have to deal with at a future date.

MRS. OSTERMAN: I'm not sure what changes are being discussed in terms of -- if, philosophically, we've accepted that Gordon Kesler is equal to Mr. Notley.

MR. MANDELBAUM: That's my basic question. Are there philosophical bases on which the changes are being proposed and, if so . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I wonder if we could finish going through the items, item by item, because that is a matter of general discussion, and perhaps come back to it.

MR. WOLSTENHOLME: Does 140 need to be raised some, in view of what Charlene has said here?

MR. CHAIRMAN: What would it be, Charlene?

MISS BLANEY: I'm just figuring it out.

MR. CHAIRMAN: While Charlene is doing that, do you want to go to 150?

MR. APPLEBY: If we've approved the salaries, wages, and payments to contract, those employer contributions are going to have to be included. So we might as well approve it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The only thing is that if we approve it at \$2,800 and it turns out to be short, then we haven't done ourselves any good.

MISS BLANEY: Can I make the assumption there is going to be one permanent secretary and one permanent contractor?

MR. CHAIRMAN: One permanent secretary, one permanent contractor, and a part-time contractor for possibly four months of the year.

MR. APPLEBY: I think that figure could be adjusted as necessary. We could approve the figure "as necessary", whatever it's going to be.

MISS BLANEY: \$6,080.

MR. CHAIRMAN: How does that compare with Mr. Notley's, for example?

MISS BLANEY: There's a \$400 difference, but then Mr. Notley's contract payments are a bit higher and involve two full-time people.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In other words, the benefits that would be payable, having regard to the items already approved and Mr. Kesler's explanation as to what he has in mind, you say, Charlene, come to \$6,080. What does the committee wish to do about that?

MR. WOLSTENHOLME: I move that it be accepted as necessary.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We can't budget on that basis.

MR. APPLEBY: Well, those figures will be filled in. We approve whatever is necessary to be filled in.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Charlene has given it to us.

MR. APPLEBY: But maybe it's not exact.

MISS BLANEY: I'm making the assumption there will be only two full-time positions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's so close. We have to approve amounts; we can't approve ideas.

MISS BLANEY: The difference between what we see for Mr. Notley for this element and what we see for Mr. Kesler is approximately \$400. The reason there is a difference in that Mr. Notley has one more full-time employee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That difference would be manageable. But a difference between \$2,800 and \$6,000 is significant.

MR. APPLEBY: Let's approve \$6,080.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that your figure, Charlene?

MISS BLANEY: Yes it is.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you all agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Item 140 is amended to read \$6,080. 150?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And the total, of course, is a matter of consequence. 200: travel expenses, \$1,600.

MR. GOGO: I'd like an explanation for that, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Gordon, do you want to talk about that?

MR. KESLER: It might be a little high, because I had actually planned on those travel expenses before I recognized that I had some other travel allowances given to me.

MR. GOGO: Do you want to suggest an alternative?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would you have any idea what effect the subsequent knowledge you have would have on that amount?

MR. KESLER: Probably travel expenses there, outside the normal -- I would drop that down to \$800.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it agreed at \$800?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Code 200, travel expenses, is changed from \$1,600 to \$800. Are you ready for 260: advertising, \$800?

MR. APPLEBY: That's substantially up over the other two.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that balloons, pamphlets, or what?

MR. KESLER: It's for questionnaires. I felt it is important to have that much in a constituency.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Did you have regard for your communication allowance? There is a communication allowance, Gordon. It's based on the last enumeration in your constituency, which would have been last August and September. They take the total number of voters and divide it by two, and they assume that covers the total number of households. Then there is 40 cents per household as a communication allowance. Do you remember how many registered voters there are in your constituency.

MR. KESLER: There were close to 14,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Half of that is 7,000, multiplied by . . .

MR. GOGO: \$2,800.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So, you see, you're getting \$2,800 in communication allowance.

MR. STEFANIUK: Which is not in this budget. It's in general administration.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You don't have to put it in your budget.

MR. STEFANIUK: As I recall, Mr. Chairman, this item in the other budgets was related to advertising staff positions, and so on, when vacancies became available.

MISS BLANEY: No. We take care of all that. It's advertising that, for example, Mr. Notley wanted to do when he was having meetings. But then we also pick that up out of communication allowances as well.

MR. KESLER: If you pick those kinds of things up, I would drop it to \$250, just in case there is something unforeseen in advertising. That's very reasonable, because you can't do anything for less than that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So Code 260, advertising, is amended to \$250. 290: freight and postage, \$1,000.

MR. APPLEBY: There again, you have your communication allowance. The NDP and the Independent have \$83 in there, a token amount. Maybe you would like to expand on that, though, Gordon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What did you have in mind there?

MR. KESLER: You ought to see my office.

MR. APPLEBY: Your postage is all covered through the office.

MR. KESLER: Is it really?

MISS BLANEY: Through the Clerk's office.

MRS. OSTERMAN: But not for mass mailing, just your correspondence.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mass mailing comes out of the communication allowance.

MR. KESLER: I figured that at 30 letters a day.

MR. APPLEBY: If that's just ordinary replies to letters . . .

MR. KESLER: Well, in that case . . .

MR. GOGO: Grant's is a pretty good guide.

MR. KESLER: What's he got?

MR. GOGO: \$83.

MR. KESLER: Let's go to \$150. That's quite a difference. You see, I tried to figure out what it was going to cost me to handle postage through that office, and it was astronomical.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What does the meeting say about \$150?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Rental equipment.

MR. KESLER: The rental equipment I'm looking at is if I have to rent a xerox machine for the office. I can't keep running to someone else's office all the time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Aren't you going to have to build in a mezzanine floor to put that xerox machine on?

MR. KESLER: I'm looking at the future. If there's an election, we'll have those bigger offices to work in.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's a pretty strict division between constituency service spending and election spending, Gordon.

MR. KESLER: I know that. I need to do quite a bit of copying. I don't know where I'm going to keep doing it, because I'm always having to go to someone else's office.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Have you enquired about rentals?

MR. KESLER: As near as I can tell, they're \$50 a month. That's an average in town.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Does that include your paper, toner, and stuff?

MR. KESLER: No, they didn't tell me about that. Actually, I was only looking at six months.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ray, there's a photocopier in your office?

MR. R. SPEAKER: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What about Grant's office? Does he have a photocopier?

MR. MANDELBAUM: No, we use the Library's or the Clerk's office.

MR. CHAIRMAN: How do you handle the cost?

MISS BLANEY: We don't charge it back. It's a facility we provide.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there a record kept of that use?

MISS BLANEY: There is in the Library.

MR. KESLER: You see, if there's a charge-back on it, you still have to pay somebody.

MR. WOLSTENHOLME: But there is no charge-back.

MISS BLANEY: It's a service we provide.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So what are your comments or wishes with regard to rental equipment?

MR. KESLER: If I get copies, like Charlene says, I'll back it off to \$200. Then if I need to have a special piece of equipment, it'll be available.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. KESLER: It's all these little goodies I didn't know about.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Professional, technical, and labor services, Code No. 430: \$25,000.

MR. APPLEBY: 410: \$100 for repairs and maintenance.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sorry. It was so small, I overlooked it.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, 430.

MR. KESLER: As I understand it, that area covers specifically short-term contract help for special projects. If I have an area I want to pursue, I can hire someone on contract. Or I can hire someone to . . .

MR. APPLEBY: Excuse me, Gordon. Perhaps the Clerk can clarify that code for us.

MR. STEFANIUK: That's either a fee for service contract or a contract with a professional consulting or research firm on the outside.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That distinguishes it from 130?

MR. STEFANIUK: Yes it does.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's a sort of ballpark figure.

MR. GOGO: It's difficult to see him getting more than Grant.

MR CHAIRMAN: What is Grant's figure on that?

MR. STEFANIUK: \$21,877.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is Tom Sindlinger's?

MR. STEFANIUK: \$3,000.

MR. R. SPEAKER: You see, Grant has put his into full-time employees. There's a philosophical difference.

MRS. OSTERMAN: I think Ray should come more often. This could be fun.

MR. KESLER: I know there are special services available through the private sector to do research on special projects, computerized type projects.

MR. CHAIRMAN: To tell you exactly what you want.

MR. KESLER: That's right. So I don't have somebody telling me they don't understand the question.

MRS. OSTERMAN: You'll have to hire somebody to explain the professional.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is an item to enlighten ministers.



MR. KESLER: Probably an item to enlighten me, so I have at my disposal those types of services.

MR. APPLEBY: Do you want to leave that figure the same as it is, taking a look at the NDP one at \$21,877?

MR. KESLER: I would be willing to drop it to \$20,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's item 430, amended to \$20,000. No. 510, hospitality.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Item 600, materials and supplies.

MR. KESLER: That figure represented there is because I don't know for sure the things that are available, Charlene. In this budget, all those materials that come to the office are checked off?

MISS BLANEY: No, they won't be. It's specialty items that your office orders that we don't carry because we don't consider them to be standard stationery supplies.

MR. KESLER: Then this is way high. I thought that everything that went into my office was checked off.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For example, you get your MLA letterhead.

MR. APPLEBY: The NDP has \$2,580.

MR. KESLER: Let's drop it down to \$2,000.

MRS. OSTERMAN: What's normally utilized?

MISS BLANEY: Especially in a new office, they have nothing. We've had to purchase the telephone books, special file trays, things like that.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Are we being fair, then, in terms of a new office? I don't want him to get more than he deserves but I don't want him to get less either.

MR. KESLER: Will \$2,000 cover it?

MISS BLANEY: Barely.

MR. APPLEBY: What about \$3,000?

MR. GOGO: Let's remember that Gordon doesn't want a subsidy.

MR. APPLEBY: You don't have to spend it.

MR. KESLER: That's right.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I move we accept Mr. Kesler's budget as presented.

MR. APPLEBY: Ray has been holding a motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: At \$3,500?

MR. APPLEBY: The total.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The total will be simple arithmetic.

MR. STEFANIUK: Have you been adding it, Charlene?

MRS. OSTERMAN: As presented and amended by the member.

MR. R. SPEAKER: I'll second John's motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The motion is that the budget be accepted as it is, subject only to the amendments as agreed upon in the previous proceedings of this meeting. Are you ready for the question? Are you agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, may I draw to your attention that we require a formalized motion to establish one more permanent position, that being that of the secretary. We do not have any vacant positions. We require a decision from this meeting to establish that one more position.

MR. WOLSTENHOLME: I so move.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Does this count in the overall public service?

MR. CHAIRMAN: If we maintain a distinction between parliament and government, it won't.

MR. GOGO: Let's not get into that today.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you ready for the question? Agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's the establishment of the extra position. The only other thing . . .

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, I have one more question.

MRS. OSTERMAN: We have to finish with this before we get to anything else in terms of funding, do we not?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The motion has been approved.

MR. STEFANIUK: But the funding, Mr. Chairman. The budget has now been tabled by the Provincial Treasurer. The budget is before the House. There is no provision for any of this. So we require a funding method. Perhaps the

committee would go on record as recommending a funding method. I see the only alternative as being a special warrant.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That means we can't get it until the House rises, and Gordon will break out into a rash.

MR. KESLER: You're right.

MRS. OSTERMAN: If the committee has agreed to the budget . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: We insert an amending sheet in the budget, that's all.

MR. APPLEBY: We have a budget for the Official Opposition that can be used to pay things in the meantime.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Yes.

MR. APPLEBY: So we can settle that at the next meeting, can we not?

MRS. OSTERMAN: As long as there is a way of paying the bills, we can do whatever we need to after the House is out.

MR. STEFANIUK: So I will need a special warrant to cover the total.

MR. APPLEBY: Yes, you will.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's not up to me, but . . .

MR. APPLEBY: I would ask Ray to review the Social Credit budget and see if they would identify what was applicable to the Olds-Didsbury constituency for service.

MR. R. SPEAKER: That will take two minutes.

MR. MANDELBAUM: I have a general philosophical question along the lines of what I raised earlier. As you recall, when we went through the different budget estimates we argued that there has to be a greater budget for the total opposition, recognizing that there is a function that the opposition has which is unique to the opposition and doesn't apply to general government members. Mr. Sindlinger made that same argument and came in with a proposal similar to Mr. Kesler's in terms of a budget that roughly corresponded to ours. At that time, it was argued that there were differences. Now, in light of the fact that we would like to see a general increase in the total opposition budget, in terms of the general philosophy of discussion what I'm wondering is that if Mr. Sindlinger forms a party and if he becomes either acting leader or the House leader, does that mean his budget changes?

MR. CHAIRMAN: You know what we would do with that if it were a question in question period.

MR. APPLEBY: That's a hypothetical question. I move we adjourn.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, just before we close . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: There are two other items on the agenda, and we have a number of outstanding items. What about a time for another meeting? Do we try to arrange it by . . .

MRS. OSTERMAN: The same method as before.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It takes a heck of a lot of phone calls. It's easier to call the House into session than it is to call this committee.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Well, if you dangled the prospect of a meal in front of the committee . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Then the meetings don't end.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, the point I was going to raise is that if the Clerk has some difficulty in rationalizing all this with regard to the Provincial Treasurer, members of this committee will support him.

MR. WOLSTENHOLME: Absolutely.

MR. APPLEBY: Oh definitely.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sure. So we're adjourned.

*The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.*