

Special Select Standing Committee on Members' Services

Monday, March 28, 1983

Chairman: Mr. Amerongen

6:23 p.m.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would you like to refer to your tab under general administration. Before we start, the Clerk has kindly offered to give some words of explanation.

MR. STEFANIUK: Very briefly, with respect to format, the first sheet under every heading is the computer printout format, which is given to us by the budget bureau and which we obviously must complete in order to meet their requirements for computer input. Following each one of these computer-type forms is the detailed breakdown. It might, therefore, be appropriate, Mr. Chairman, to really direct attention to the detailed sheets, because the first one is nothing more than a summary of what appears in the detail. Then perhaps at the conclusion of all discussions relative to a given department under the Legislative Assembly, attention can be drawn to the summary and the vote taken on that basis.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that as much explanation as you want to give now?

MR. STEFANIUK: I think so. As we look at page 1, Mr. Chairman, under general administration details, code 100 is the salaries for the permanent positions. There is a listing of each position and the salary attached thereto. I draw the committee's attention to the requirement for two additional staff persons, which are included in the list, one of those being scroll and subscription clerk, which is the second-last position shown, the other being a constituency office administrator. The scroll work that is prepared in response to requests received from members has become so significant that we feel we have to dedicate a fairly junior clerical position to that particular task of handling all the requests from members.

The other position deals with someone to administer the constituency office program. Members are probably aware that that program in direct payments costs us in excess of \$1 million a year, yet we have no one on staff who is dedicated entirely to that program. Quite often members have requested the assistance of the Clerk's office in negotiating leases, in finding space, in dealing with problems which arise in constituency offices, which requires some considerable travel throughout the province, meetings with landlords, suppliers, and so on. I personally took one of the trips to attempt to determine just how much can be done in any one day in dealing with constituency offices. I think a reasonable number to be visited in one day is four. However, as leases require renewal and so on, depending on locations it could be a whole lot less than that. I'd say four if they are located in one fairly confined geographic area. If, however, we have to travel to a remote location, we may not be able to handle arrangements for more one in any given day. We find that we really do not have the staff facility to accommodate that particular program. In light of the financial value, we are requesting an additional position to administer that program.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The fact is -- and it's not regrettable at all -- that services to members have increased substantially over the past six or seven years. We not only have constituency offices, which require supplies and equipment and the administration of their leases out of the Clerk's office -- the Clerk is the lessee for every constituency office and, technically at least, the employer of constituency staff -- but we have the credit card system for

travel by members and the communications allowance. Each of these things, while I think they're very welcome and good things for us to have in Alberta, has added administrative work to the staff of the Legislative Assembly. Without being able to quote you any statistics or comparisons, I think we have a very frugal operation. I think it's very lean. It has grown far less than you would have expected it to have grown, having regard to the increase in services.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if there are any questions regarding code 100.

MR. KOWALSKI: I have one, with respect to the person we're talking about now. It's very important to me that this be very clear. What you're talking about here is a constituency office administrator, someone who will look after accounts, not a constituency office co-ordinator, who would in essence start reviewing what is happening in various constituency offices, coming forth with various guidelines that would not originate here in this particular meeting. We're talking about someone to help with clerical work.

MR. STEFANIUK: This is not entirely clerical, in that it will require the meeting with and negotiating of leases with prospective landlords. It will require inspection of potential constituency office sites. It will require arrangements with the appropriate agencies for furnishing and equipping those offices. It will require, in some instances, the advertising for and the location of suitable staff. The position might better be described as a co-ordinating one, although there is administrative responsibility related to it as well.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have a tape, which will result in a transcript that may or may not be useful, but there could be difficulty in transcribing the tape if the voices can't be identified. Perhaps it would be well if we gave our names each time we speak.

DR. BUCK: I have the same concern that Ken does. When we originally set up the constituency offices, I thought it was my responsibility as a member to find a secretary, find the space, and then the lease and so on is arranged with the help of the Clerk's office. But I just can't understand why we're trying to create a job which is going to be a headache for whoever is going to look after this. I think it's the responsibility of the member to find his space -- he knows what the budget parameters are -- and the staff. I don't think you people should ever have to worry about that. If they have problems with the lease, you can help them but not to be running around looking for equipment and space. I think that's just asinine. Anybody who asks you to do that should have his head cut off. If the king says, off with his head . . .

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, to respond to that, we didn't go looking for the work.

DR. BUCK: No, I know.

MR. STEFANIUK: It came looking to us, and we're simply responding with this to a situation that presently exists. That is, we are being asked to go to a given community -- perhaps I could give an example. A member receives three or four offers of space, once he has made it known in his constituency that he wishes to set up an office. The member is reluctant to make the decision himself. He calls on us to examine the space and make the judgment for him. We have responded to that kind of request.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I certainly can understand and would certainly support having a staff person working in the Clerk's office for co-ordination, pulling out and doing credit card things. But for heaven's sake, surely the member is responsible for making this very weighty decision about which of the three spaces he's going to choose. Really. I certainly support that we need this person in the Clerk's office to do the co-ordination. But let the members be entirely responsible for space. That should not be the purview of the Clerk's office.

MR. MARTIN: Just to turn it back to you people, then. You're seeing a demand because you've sort of fallen into doing this, in other words. If you had your druthers, would you rather say to members that you do this, and have a memorandum go out, or would you rather have this position that you think is necessary?

MR. STEFANIUK: I don't think the Clerk's office can ever state its preferences, Mr. Chairman. The Clerk's office is in place to serve the Assembly and the members of the Assembly. The Clerk's office will do whatever it is directed to do. In the absence of direction, it will attempt to accommodate a member's request, as it has been doing till now.

DR. BUCK: Send him to the diplomatic corps.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, my original concept of this has not changed. It was the responsibility of the individual member of the Assembly to decide (a) whether he or she was going to have an constituency office, (b) to decide what type of office they would have -- some have one; I think Dr. Buck has five -- to decide what hours it would operate, what type of person they want to staff it. If they're going to take the responsibility for those decisions, they have to take the responsibility for it. We cannot put that responsibility onto the Clerk's office.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But there is something added to that. I realize it's a debatable thing whether or not you want to have members who are not accustomed -- I'm sure Dr. Buck in the course of his practice and you, Dr. Reid, have leased many offices. But there may be members who haven't that experience and are not sure how to go about it.

In addition to that, we like to see standardized leases and employment arrangements made so that we aren't made liable for more than we should ordinarily cover. In fact we had the Law Clerk prepare a standardized lease, and as far as I know we don't depart from it very often with landlords. The Clerk is actually the lessee of -- I realize the members use the offices, but under the lease the tenant or lessee is the Clerk. The Clerk is also the employer of the staff who are engaged.

I don't know whether you want to hear some background to this, but there's a question of taxation. We ran into that difficulty during our first term, when members were incurring various things and being refunded by the Clerk's office, and they were found to be taxable on the refunds, on the footing that the tax-free allowance was intended to cover those things and anything paid beyond that would be taxable. There were several members who were caught for several thousand dollars in income tax, because they went back a few years. Now, by keeping the member out of the financial end of it totally and making the Clerk the employer and the tenant, no money passes between the member and the landlord or the member and the staff person. It comes from the Clerk and, consequently, you can't be taxed on that money.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, the point I'm making is the responsibility for decision-making, not for paying the bills. It's quite agreeable to me that there be a standard form of lease, that there be a standard form for employment contract. But the terms that go into that standard form of employment are going to be dictated by the individual situation, constituency by constituency. Surely that responsibility has to devolve upon the member who is individually using that service. That's the problem I have with the situation suggested.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, those are basically the same thoughts as mine. I don't want somebody coming out from Edmonton and telling me who I should hire in my constituency office. I agree with Walt; dammit, if you're going to use that constituency allowance, part of your responsibility is to find the office space. Hell, I never rented any office space before I went looking for that. But it isn't that hard to go and ask somebody what the rent on an office space is. Redcliff isn't a big town; maybe it's tougher in the city. But I went and ask them how much, and they told me. I asked the Clerk if that was within reason. They prepared the lease, and they signed it. That's all there was to it. The renewal came in, they signed it, and that was it.

MRS. CRIPPS: Are we talking about a situation that is just a once in four years problem? I recognize that the last six months has probably been a problem because of everybody getting constituency offices. But once those constituency offices are established -- and I would imagine that most members who are going to establish them have by now -- is there a major recurring problem over the next three years that would warrant the hiring of a new position?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Only when offices are changed or when there is a change of members as a result of a by-election or an election. The leases of course can't be timed to end on election day.

MRS. CRIPPS: So it's really no problem once members have them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Perhaps we should ask the Clerk to what extent the time of this proposed position would be used for negotiating or helping members find their offices and dealing with staff, and what part of the time would be used for anything else.

MR. STEFANIUK: The question of finding, to the extent that we have been involved, goes in very severe peaks and valleys. Obviously this past few months has been a time when we have been very much involved and perhaps in problems more complex than those that might occur otherwise, complex because when there is a dissolution and certain members who may have held office elect not to seek re-election or are defeated, there is the question of dealing with the closure of a given office, if a newly elected member does not wish to take it over, and the establishment a new one. There's a question of equipment inventory which, as you can probably appreciate, we're responsible for, and the Auditor General certainly holds us very greatly responsible and comments in no uncertain terms if we can't find something.

Let me give you an example. I walked into a constituency office in Calgary, where a newly elected member decided he wasn't going to use the facility which previously existed. He directed that the telephone lines be disconnected, whereas he wasn't responsible for telephone lines to begin with, and equipment which had been placed in that office was missing when I was there. The typewriter was taken by the member to his home. The telephone answering equipment had been taken by his predecessor to his new location. It was a

question of saying, you musn't do that, you must bring the typewriter back to this location, because these are premises which are leased by the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, and you cannot put equipment in your home; and going back to the other member and saying, what have you done with our telephone answering equipment? As it is the Legislative Assembly's property, you can't take it home and hook it up to your own.

There's that kind of thing that has come up, which we're not confronted with, grant you -- but what we must realize is that leases do not all begin and terminate on the same day. The duration of leases varies. We have everything from monthly leases to three-year leases. They become due at various times. The requirement for equipment and furnishings varies and changes from time to time. Personnel in constituency offices, I have found from signing the contracts for personnel, probably has a higher turnover rate than anywhere else in the public service.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, I look at the list of positions and titles. I know we have a very competent group of people working in the general administration. I see a director of administration, an accounts clerk, an assistant accounts clerk, a purchasing clerk. Frankly, I ask that all the good people perhaps work just a little harder, and that we look at code 100 without a constituency office administrator and a salary of \$22,752.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't know whether there are any questions about any other part of code 100. Suppose we approve code 100, other than the constituency office administrator. Is there any further information we can bring on that?

MR. STEFANIUK: I would like to respond, if I may, Mr. Chairman, to the suggestion that the staff work a little harder. We are in a position right now where we have had to ask all the administrative staff to refrain from taking a coffee break because that 20 minutes is time we cannot afford to give up in the office. That is how busy we are. I really don't know how much harder we can push the staff that we have. I hasten to mention as well, Mr. Chairman, a fact that you're well aware of; that is, the report of the controller from the Treasury office which indicates that the Legislative Assembly has one of the best records in the public service for paying accounts. You have seen that report, Mr. Chairman. I think members will generally agree that when they have a payment forthcoming from the Legislative Assembly, it is paid to them within a reasonably short period of time, whereas I know that members of the Assembly who perhaps have a function with government have drawn comparisons between the length of time taken to pay accounts between one and the other, and there has been a very severe difference.

MR. MARTIN: I have to go on the word of the Clerk that this is in fact the case. We can't just leave it and say to people that they have to work harder. It's either clear that they have to cut back some of the services they're offering -- and maybe that's the place we should look and find out what services certain MLAs are expecting from the office -- or we'll have to have the position. We can't leave it in terms of saying that everybody should work harder. That just won't work. There seems to be a difference from constituency to constituency in terms of work. Perhaps we should table this and come back on it with some better idea of the types of things certain members are asking, and make a decision from there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just to deal with that point further, the position, as you know, has been shown at just under \$23,000. What I'd like to do is go into this with the Clerk and see whether -- if you decide we're no longer to be involved

in assisting members with their arrangements for space and staff -- the remaining functions that are intended for this constituency office administrator could be performed perhaps by someone at a lower salary, with more circumscribed or simpler, less responsible duties. If you agree with that, my suggestion would be that we deal with some of the other headings, if there are any concerns on code 100.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I would like to say one thing. I always find it very, very difficult to come into a committee like this cold and say, yes, we're going to hire one or two people or, no, we're not going to hire one or two people. I have confidence in my own staff; I'm sure you have confidence, Mr. Chairman, in your staff. If people come and say that we have a legitimate concern, we have a problem; we just can't do the work you expect us to do; we need two positions; then I have to believe them. I believe they are responsible people working for us as members of the support staff of the Assembly. If they say they need the help, I have to support them and go along with the recommendation.

DR. REID: I'm not questioning the way they work in the office. What I was questioning was what they were going to do. I was probably looking more at the problem of a job description. Assisting members is very different from taking over from them a function that I think is primarily that of the member and is the responsibility of the member. Assistance is very different from having a mini-bureaucracy telling us what type of office we may lease, what type of accommodation it should be, the hours it should work, and the rest of it. That is not the concept that was originally behind the idea of setting up constituency offices, especially for those of us with large areas. I have not got as much concern when the Clerk tells me they work hard; I know they do, and they certainly do pay accounts on time. My concern is that I don't want, two years from now, to have somebody telling me, you don't have the right kind of accommodation or the hours you are operating the office don't conform to the norm. That's my concern.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's not being done; that's not contemplated.

DR. REID: I'd like the job description.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. I hope we're going to meet again soon. Could we come back with a job description at the next meeting?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions on code 100? As a matter of fact, my suggestion would be that we circulate the job description before the next meeting so you can look at it before you come to the meeting.

We go, then, to code 120.

MR. STEFANIUK: Under code 110, we have no financial requirement. Under code 120, wages, again the descriptions are there. They change only because it is proposed that some of the scroll work that is now paid for out of wages be replaced by a permanent position. So you see that there is a reduction -- I'm sorry, that reduction comes out of code 430, which is further along, not from this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Code 130.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Code 140.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, perhaps before we go to code 140, this a question dealing with code 100, 110, 120, and 130. If you add up the positions you have under code 100, which lists 15 man-years, and take the seven man-years in code 120 and the 3.3 man-years in code 130, that comes out to 25.3 man-years. On the budget preparation document, the first page, the total is 23.3 man-years. I wonder if that is just a typing error, or . . .

MISS BLANEY: Yes, I would think it is.

MR. KOWALSKI: That should be 25.3?

MISS BLANEY: Yes, the salary figure is incorrect. We have it as 13, and it should be 15.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. We're at code 140. That's pretty well fixed; that depends on the previous ones.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 3, code 150. All agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would propose to get an all-encompassing motion when we come to the end of this, or do you want to take a vote on each one as we go along? If everyone says "agreed" and there's no dissent, we'll assume it's approved.
Code 200.

MR. STEFANIUK: There is an explanatory note at the top right-hand side of page 4, Mr. Chairman.

MR. MARTIN: I realize this is an estimation, something you really have no control over. I am just curious about the 12 per cent inflation. I think inflation is supposed to be running at about 8 now, or less.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's not all inflation, is it?

MISS BLANEY: We did this last July; 12 was a good percentage then.

MR. STEFANIUK: In respect of air line travel, considering what has been happening to air fares and what we generally hear is going to happen, I think it may not be unreasonable.

MR. MARTIN: I agree. It's probably better to overestimate here, and if you come in under, all the better. You have no control over it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions?

MR. STEFANIUK: Are you concerned about hotels, Shirley?

MRS. CRIPPS: Yes, the 90 bucks a night seems to me to be unduly high.

MR. STEFANIUK: The government rate. Recently in Calgary, I recall, I walked out paying a hotel bill for one night, and it was \$93. I said to the desk clerk, don't I get the government rate? He said, that's what you're getting. I said, what's that room worth regularly? He said, \$108 a night.

MR. HYLAND: I was told by a health unit person that the government rate in the Four Seasons is down to \$38 a night.

MR. STEFANIUK: In Edmonton, not Calgary. Regretfully, we don't rent hotels in Edmonton.

DR. BUCK: This is pretty heavy duty stuff, Mr. Chairman. I have to tell you a story. When we went to that parliamentary conference in Halifax, we got off the night hawk at two o'clock in the morning. I thought we would sleep all the way down; well, you know how much you sleep in an airplane. So we went to the Holiday Inn in Halifax, and I guess they jacked the rates up because American tourists were coming in. We had the kids with us, so we took two rooms. The fellow checking out just ahead of me as I was checking in said, I am with the government. Oh, yes, we have a government rate. So I thought when I checked out, I would try this caper. I said, I'm with the Alberta government. Is there a government rate? He said, yes, it's higher than the one I charged you. I said, I'll take the lower rate.

MR. STEFANIUK: There's no question, Mr. Chairman, that we're taking a good, hard look at hotels, because some of them are getting very high. In certain cities that we visit with some degree of frequency, we are looking at alternatives and testing them.

MR. MARTIN: You mean a list of hotels and prices?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Incidentally, a very -- Mrs. Embury.

MRS. EMBURY: I didn't mean to interrupt you. I'm trying to get an overall view, so it's just a question for information. It appears that beside the basic salary, the professional association fees are paid by the Legislature for such people.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For the Parliamentary Counsel and Law Clerk, Mr. Clegg. And they've gone up.

MRS. EMBURY: Okay. I notice that the Clerk has the use of a vehicle over and above his salary, and gas for that. Is it sort of general that he takes approximately three trips a year?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. One of them is that the Clerk usually accompanies the Speaker to the annual meeting of Canadian Speakers in Ottawa, which will take place in June this year. The Speakers of Canada constitute what is known as the regional council of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. Another one is the annual regional conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, where the Clerk goes along, and that's standard. There is the Clerk's conference. Last year, Alberta hosted it. The table Clerks of Canada meet once a year. Sometimes there are additional needs for the Clerk to go somewhere, either far or near.

Is there anything else on code 200? Are we agreed on code 200?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Code 260.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Code 270.

DR. BUCK: Could I just ask one general interest question, Mr. Chairman. Is the government not self-insuring?

MR. STEFANIUK: May I explain that, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do.

MR. STEFANIUK: All vehicles which are provided to officers of the Assembly are covered by the government's self-insurance plan. However, that has provision for a \$500 deductible. The department then becomes responsible for that deductible. We considered it safe to budget that deductible once for each car. Then we'd have it in the event we needed it. I think in the last year we used two. Two cars were damaged considerably, and we had to cover the \$500 deductible. So in fact we used \$1,000. So this is, if you like, our insurance by putting it into the budget, rather than scrounging for the money if the need should arise.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MRS. CRIPPS: We wouldn't be responsible unless we were responsible for the accident.

MR. STEFANIUK: Yes. But pending the outcome of any lawsuits that may take place, we may have to advance the money to the government for repairs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The recovery would go into the General Revenue Fund.
Code 290.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Code 350. Any questions?

MR. KOWALSKI: This equipment is essentially in the office of the Clerk in this building?

MR. STEFANIUK: Yes.

MR. KOWALSKI: It shows almost a tripling, a 300 per cent increase from last year.

MR. STEFANIUK: What we're including here, Mr. Chairman -- and while this is an annual figure, I can assure the committee it will not be used because we're not ready, by any means, as yet to go with the installation, but we have to mechanize our accounting system in order to be able to handle the volume of accounts. We feel we can better serve the members by doing that and holding back on certain administrative staff increases. As members know, with the various programs in effect, which include the constituency office program, the communications allowance program, the presentation allowance program, and others, we must keep running accounts virtually on a daily basis. In order to do that effectively, we will have to mechanize. This provides for a stand-

alone system, which will include both data and word processing, in the Clerk's office.

Depending on the configuration, we may be able to reduce this. As well, we may be able to provide members' offices, in this building at least and perhaps in the Agriculture Building, with some partial use of this equipment. By that I mean, the mainframe, which is leased by the Clerk, may well serve members in their caucus offices by simply hooking up consoles and printing equipment to that mainframe.

We're presently using word processing to a limited extent by having terminals in our offices, which are hooked up to the government's mainframe in the Terrace Building. However, that equipment is not able to do for us what we need done.

MR. HYLAND: So you got it in here just in case you get to that stage this year.

MR. STEFANIUK: I think we will get to that stage this year. But what I am saying is that I can't estimate exactly when it's going to go in. It certainly won't go in while the session is in because we can't go through that type of upheaval. Notwithstanding the funds that are shown here, they would not be used in their entirety.

MR. HYLAND: That's one shot; next year it won't appear?

MR. STEFANIUK: This is based on a lease, Alan. We're not buying the stuff.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions about 350? Do you want it held to study it? All agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could I get back to 290. I skipped something. I didn't have this paper in front of me, although I knew about it. You've got copies? The members' communication allowance: we have a memo from Norm Weiss, and he may have something there. He points out that up till now it has been the number of the last voters' list in each constituency, divided by two, and multiplied by 70 cents to cover two first-class mailings for postage and 10 cents for materials. Now the postage has gone up to 32 cents, and Norm is suggesting that we should reflect that in this estimate, which I think was also prepared last July.

MR. MARTIN: If that's correct, I think we should work out a new one and change it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you want to think about it, or do you want to deal with it?

DR. REID: I don't think we have to think about it.

MR. MARTIN: It's obvious that he's right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll reverse our approval of 290?

MR. STEFANIUK: Are we directed then, Mr. Chairman, to adjust that figure to reflect 74 cents per posting?

MR. KOWALSKI: I'll make a motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that a motion? Kowalski, seconded by Mrs. Cripps -- that 290 be recalculated on the basis of increasing the per household to 74 cents per year.

Incidentally, as you've no doubt noticed, the 10 cents has remained the same. I don't know whether the cost of material has gone up or not. It probably has.

MR. HYLAND: I think that one increase will cover the cost of material, though, won't it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: What's the figure on your motion, Mr. Kowalski?

MR. KOWALSKI: It would be to move it from 70 cents to 74 cents per household per year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any discussion? Is it agreed.

DR. REID: Is it the last voters' list? This time around there was no revision to the list. Should it not be the final count?

MR. CHAIRMAN: There was a revision last fall.

DR. REID: The revision occurred during the election period. It was the last published list.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think the enumeration took place in August or September. It's according to the latest enumeration.

DR. BUCK: They would use the voters' list, Ian.

DR. REID: But the normal period of revision was not held because, by then, we were into the election period. The extra numbers were not on that voters' list. So it should be the number on the final list, including those added during the election period.

MR. STEFANIUK: We might have to change the formula. Our formula is the latest enumeration. That's what is reflected here, which would be the 1982 enumeration, divided by two, to arrive at the number of households. With Dr. Reid's proposal, the formula would change by saying, the latest revised voters' list, divided by two, to arrive at the number of households, incorporating Mr. Kowalski's suggestion, by 74 cents per household.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's easy. It's the revised enumeration.

DR. REID: That's right. It's in effect for quite a period of time. It's an increased number for almost everybody, and we'll need it.

MR. HYLAND: Are we saying it doesn't increase for four years?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, the next enumeration will be in about August 1984.

MR. STEFANIUK: Is that all then incorporated into a single motion, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. Mr. Kowalski, your motion will carry all that freight, won't it? Okay.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I apologize. I missed something that I discussed at dinner this evening, and that's on code 200, travel, MLA air line credit cards.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could we just make sure we've got this disposed of? So it's the last enumeration as amended in the course of the election, divided by two and multiplied by 74.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, we'll go back to which number?

DR. BUCK: Code 200, travel, MLA air line credit cards. The previous Members' Services Committee made a suggestion that the member's wife or husband would be entitled to four air line credit card passes per year to attend functions that their husband or wife must be at: the opening of the Legislature, whatever it may be. I know nothing came of it. I apologize that I missed it, because I thought I was going to do it in the final vote. But I would like to bring it to the committee's attention, Mr. Chairman, and suggest that there are many times -- and I think we could just start maybe with four -- when the spouse of a member has to attend a function. I don't think it's proper or fair to the member that the member has to dig into his own pocket for the airfare or the mode of transportation and, if the spouse has to stay overnight to accompany the member, any expenses, like taxis, incurred. I would like to make a motion so we can discuss it, Mr. Chairman, that all members be allowed at least four functions that their spouse must attend with them where their expenses are paid.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would just like to ask the Clerk whether we worked out some guidelines on that the last time it came up for discussion. Didn't we work out a formula?

MR. STEFANIUK: We dealt with only transportation, I believe. I think the previous Members' Services Committee felt that the member was being accommodated; there was probably no differential in the incidentals. It was a question of transportation only, and I think it was intended to reflect the formula for federal MPs, who are allowed a certain number of trips a year themselves between the constituency and the national capital and a certain number, which I believe is six, for spouses as well. That was the intent the last time around.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I would just like to throw that out for discussion, and it could be brought back to us so that there be some guidelines established. But I think it's grossly unfair that the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood has to go to a function in Lethbridge that he and his wife are both invited to attend, and that he has to pay her airfare and accommodation while they're there. I think that's grossly unfair, and it's a disservice to the taxpayers of this province.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Doesn't that go beyond the federal formula? They don't pay spouses fares to places other than Ottawa, as I understand it.

MR. STEFANIUK: That's right. I think the intention the last time it was discussed was between the constituency and the capital, and that's how the federal formula works.

DR. BUCK: That's why I would make the suggestion that there be a limit placed on it, that there be four occasions. One we think of is the opening of the Legislature. The second one would be the Alberta Teachers' Association banquet where, as I say, the hon. member has been asked by the Chamber of Commerce to speak to it. The invitation says: Mr. Martin, we'd like you and your wife to be at this function. That's his responsibility as an elected person. And he has to dig into his pocket to pay for his wife's airfare and accommodation, and I think that's grossly unfair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't think our formula went that far.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, we are a committee. And if you wish a motion that it be investigated, I will make it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. What's the motion?

DR. BUCK: The motion will be that the Clerk be empowered to look at the member's spouse being able to accompany him at least four times a year to public functions that the member is invited to.

DR. REID: Within the province?

DR. BUCK: Within the province. Paying airfare and accommodation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So you'd like us to work out a formula, and then you can decide what you want to do with it.

DR. BUCK: Right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that agreed -- we'll work out the formula?

We're going to have to make some fairly arbitrary assumptions. We're going to have to see if we can construct an average trip -- I don't know how you'd do that -- and then multiply it by two, three, or whatever the limit is that you're going to decide on in trips per year. We'll try to come up with something which fits today's prices.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, may I just raise a question, relative to budgeting, with which I have some difficulty. If I were to calculate on the basis of four trips per member's spouse between the constituency and the capital, we could do that. But when Dr. Buck gives the example of a member from Norwood going from here to Lethbridge, I have a little difficulty with that kind of calculation, as one can appreciate, because one cannot forecast where these trips are going to take place. So can you then calculate, if the members of the committee wish a budget figure on the basis of constituency to capital four times a year, and hope that that works. I really can't see how the calculation . . .

DR. BUCK: That would probably work because going from Lethbridge to Edmonton is the same as going from Edmonton to Lethbridge.

MR. STEFANIUK: Yes, but you see in taking that into consideration, I would consider the out-of-Edmonton members as requiring the travel allowance and Edmonton members not requiring it.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, to the Clerk, I'm sure that the thing would work out. I don't think that I would use that more than maybe once a year. There are some members, because they are out of the capital, who would use it probably

four times a year. But I think it would all come out in the wash, where it would average to maybe one and a half to two times a year that it would be used. I have great confidence in the members that they're not going to do it just because they've got a freebee. They're doing it because it's a line of public service.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I've got to phone the Fort Vermilion and Milk River chambers of commerce and ask them to ask me to speak there.

DR. BUCK: Well, that's fine. Whatever turns you on.

MR. STEFANIUK: I raised my question only because I wanted some guidance on a calculation method. I cannot anticipate where local members from Edmonton might be invited to attend. If we can be allowed to work it out on the basis I described, then we can come up with a figure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll work something out and circulate it before the next meeting. If we don't meet again too soon, that is.

We're back at 400, telephone and communication.

MR. HYLAND: Using credit cards all the time for every call that comes to us has got to be the most expensive way possible to charge our phone calls up. What is it, twice the cost on a credit card call? For example, in government members -- I don't know what the opposition has -- let's get that one circuit back in the telephone so we can direct dial. That will cut a bunch out. In our constituency offices -- though, Charlene told me the other day, they're allowed to accept incoming calls and charge them to the telephone number. At one time the directions were different. Even things like that would be a lot cheaper. Even a telephone in the member's house, where you could use it and pay for it by not using a credit card, and only use a credit card when you need to at a phone booth, at somebody else's place, and stuff like that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, if I understand the situation correctly, isn't that something that would have to be initiated from within the government caucus?

MR. HYLAND: Who took the one circuit out of our phones?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, I mean the arrangement. Mr. Hyland is saying he wants your arrangements to be changed so you can make a certain kind of call that you can't make now. Right?

MR. HYLAND: We have no one-circuit in our telephones. Even when we want to phone the operator, we have to go through Leslie. Is that our direction? Ever since a certain member charged up a bunch of phone calls.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, I respectfully suggest to the committee that indeed direct dialing would save a very considerable amount of money. I respectfully suggest that we have no greater controls in place by using a credit card than we have when we're direct dialing. I think it was felt at one time that the credit-card call provided a very exact record of the originating number and the destination number. We receive all that information on our direct-dial billings as well. So I respectfully suggest that calls should be direct dialed and that would result in a very considerable saving in this area of toll charges for long-distance calls.

The credit-card toll is double the daytime rate. If you happen to be using direct dial, for example, from your home or from offices here after six o'clock and enjoying the reduced rate, then you may be paying even three times

as much by using the credit card. So I think it's a question of policy, Mr. Chairman, but I respectfully suggest that an amended policy would result in some very considerable monetary savings.

DR. REID: We shall take it to our caucus.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Do you want to do the same -- take it to your caucuses?

MR. MARTIN: Ours is already in effect anyway.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, just for a bit of clarification from Mr. Stefaniuk on this. Are we talking about two different telephones here -- the ones that are currently in the Legislature Building or the Ag annex as compared to the ones in the constituency office?

MR. STEFANIUK: No, we're talking about the whole thing across-the-board. As Alan suggests, I think the valid use of credit cards is when a member is away from his own telephone, be it in the constituency office or his office here, and needs to use his host's telephone or a phone booth.

DR. REID: What you're suggesting is just dropping the credit-card use . . .

MR. HYLAND: To a minimum.

DR. REID: . . . to a minimum. But we still would have them.

MR. STEFANIUK: Absolutely.

DR. REID: That's why I was talking about taking it to caucus, because . . .

MR. MARTIN: Is that possible to do that at home, too? Is that what you're saying, that you would have that tied into your home?

MR. STEFANIUK: Well, if a member makes business calls out of his home and wants to submit to us his long-distance tolls for payment, we'll pay them.

MR. KOWALSKI: We can just use our credit cards for that.

MR. MARTIN: Well, that's what I'm asking. We're just talking about all the Legislature right now.

MR. STEFANIUK: I really suggest that the credit card should be a convenience for the member's use when direct-dial is inconvenient.

MR. HYLAND: Well, even if you had a separate phone line in your house, you'd soon pick up the cost of that single phone by direct dialing than with a credit card.

DR. REID: I could put two phones in my house.

MR. HYLAND: That would be easy to do, because it's the same thing. It's all itemized. It would be all business calls. You could charge the other to the other number.

MR. STEFANIUK: Not if you have teen-aged kids.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mrs. Cripps.

MRS. CRIPPS: You only paid one . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Excuse the formality. The reason I'm being so formal is because it's coming through on the transcript, and it's going to help the transcriber.

MRS. CRIPPS: For instance, I had to put in a private line when I was elected, and the government doesn't pay for that line. They only pay for one extra phone. I've chosen to let them pay for the one in the constituency office rather than the one in my house. Under the suggestion you're making here, you would pay for the business line at home too. Is that right or not?

MR. STEFANIUK: No, I haven't made that suggestion. I think Alan Hyland made that suggestion.

MR. HYLAND: I made that suggestion.

MR. STEFANIUK: What members are doing is using credit cards to call from their offices here in Edmonton and to call from their constituency offices. I'm merely suggesting that in those two places they stop using credit cards and direct dial, because it's going to cost us considerably fewer dollars.

Now, this is still another question of the use by members of credit cards from their home. I think that for your benefit, we would want to do a study to see how many tolls we're paying for on your credit cards for calls originating from your homes and how that would compare to a flat-fee payment for a business phone in your home.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I'm so stupid that I even pay for my own phone. But I'm not going to from this day on.

MR. STEFANIUK: Where?

DR. BUCK: In my house.

MR. STEFANIUK: We don't pay for any phones in the house.

MISS BLANEY: We pay for the private-line installation and the monthly rental that it costs to have that private line from the closest box.

DR. BUCK: But you pay for the phone rental?

MR. STEFANIUK: No. By way of explanation, what happens is that there are certain areas of the province that do not have private-line service as a matter of course. Where that does not exist we have paid, when a member has been elected, for the installation of private-line service, including the mileage charge for laying the cable. We will then pay the differential between the service that is normally available to them and the new private-line service.

MISS BLANEY: As long as you're a member.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay?

DR. BUCK: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any motion required?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. STEFANIUK: Do you want us to come back with some facts and figures which would reflect the possible differences between paying long-distance tolls by a credit card from the home as compared to installing business phones at public expense in members' homes?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. HYLAND: Any of us whose constituency office isn't in the same town as where we live, it makes a big difference.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Is that enough for code 400?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Code 410.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Code 430.

MR. HYLAND: Code 430 -- \$2,500 for laundry. That's almost what my wife charges me for cleaning my clothes. I didn't think anybody else would be that expensive. Isn't that fairly high? I know there are a lot of robes and that.

MR. STEFANIUK: Well, we're paying for all the robes, all the uniforms for the pages, the uniforms for the security force, and all the robes worn by the Speaker and the officers of the House.

MR. HYLAND: Where does it say about MLAs?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We don't take them to the cleaners.

MR. STEFANIUK: And we do it weekly while the House is in session.

DR. BUCK: That's why this committee is sitting, so the MLAs don't get taken to the cleaners as often as they got taken.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, I don't want to belabor this, but there are three items on page 10 that I would like a brief explanation for, please. One is: budget documents distributed by members, 100 copies each; and there is \$48,000.

MISS BLANEY: That's your copies of the address, the 100 that you receive, and 100 copies of the highlights that you're entitled to.

MR. HYLAND: That's worth \$480 apiece?

MISS BLANEY: \$48,000.

MR. KOWALSKI: And the other two items that deal with MLA and officer letterhead: \$48,000; and MLA and officer envelopes: \$48,000. This is just the Legislative Assembly letterhead that we're talking about?

MR. STEFANIUK: With the overprints for MLAs.

DR. REID: The overprints?

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's turned out in quantity. Then you want your own name on it, and it goes back for overprinting.

MISS BLANEY: If you want it personalized with your name and constituency office or your legislative office.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: I didn't know we did that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In view of those remarks, do you want to increase the amount?

MR. KOWALSKI: What was it last year, Mr. Chairman?

DR. REID: Have you overprinted yours as MLA for Clover Bar?

DR. BUCK: I did at one time, and I paid for it.

DR. REID: But you see, you don't anymore.

DR. BUCK: I'm not going to after tonight. I've just been using the plain letterhead.

MR. HYLAND: I took my communications allowance and had it printed.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, last year's figure was \$12,000. This is based on experience.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But the experience is about to change.

MR. KOWALSKI: I wonder if we could receive a sample of one of these. I've not seen one of these yet.

DR. REID: Let us know what we're looking at. Is it justifiable, considering that underneath in a letter, it can say "MLA, Edson" or "MLA, Calgary Foothills"?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Wouldn't you be able to get those from your colleagues? Once there's an overprint, do we keep it on hand?

MISS BLANEY: Just when we pay the bill for overprinting. We would probably pull a sample for the records.

DR. REID: Let's make it public. Who has done it?

MISS BLANEY: The most recent one that comes to mind is Stan Nelson. His is just being printed now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It didn't take him long. If you're unable to get them from your colleagues, would you let us know and we'll do some more enquiring into where the samples can be got from.

DR. BUCK: On that point, I say to all three caucuses that I think it's the responsibility of this committee to indicate to their colleagues what is available from Members' Services and what is not available. For a long time, I knew that your colleague, Grant -- I told him there was money in the budget

from Members' Services for such and such. Grant turned a little pale because he'd been paying a lot of that out of his own pocket.

MR. MARTIN: That would make him pale.

DR. BUCK: But it's our responsibility to take this back to our colleagues and indicate what is available for members. All the times I've served on this committee, I've vowed that the status of the elected people should be raised in this province. When you are gone, all they say is, who's the new boy or the new girl. I think if we're going to have people show some respect for their elected people, then it's our responsibility to raise the plane of performance of members and their communications. So we'll have to make sure that everybody knows.

DR. REID: Appropos of the suggestion made by Dr. Buck -- and I hate to load more work onto the Clerk and his office -- perhaps they should send out another revised version of what is available under the promotion budget and everything else.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A catalogue?

DR. REID: Well, not necessarily an example of a flag; just that they can get flags.

MR. STEFANIUK: I hasten to point out that decisions to provide this type of supply have been made by the Members' Services Committee. The minutes of that committee have been distributed to all members.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For some time. Is that all right for code 430 then?

MRS. CRIPPS: I have one question. Code 430 covers the constituency office. I assume that's the office allowance only.

MR. STEFANIUK: No, it's the whole thing, Shirley.

MRS. CRIPPS: Office and secretary.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is an amount that's fixed by statute, but under certain circumstances the Speaker may increase it -- I think on the advice of the Member's Services Committee or something like that. And I've increased it -- was it, last year or the year before?

MR. STEFANIUK: Last year.

MRS. CRIPPS: We have a constituency office allowance, communications allowance, and promotional items allowance, and they're not interchangeable. Are they not all the same vote?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I can't answer you offhand whether I'm allowed to sign transfers. Can I sign transfers?

MISS BLANEY: They are in the same vote in that they're all under general administration. As well, they're all under the same control group for budgeting and purchasing provisions. It's just that they're spread out in a variety of these expenditure codes; that is, your communication allowance is under code 290 for freight and postage, and your constituency office is under professional, technical, and labor, because we pay rent and secretaries out of

this area of the budget. Your promotional allowance comes out of 600, because we purchase pins and small things under the office supplies code. It's no administrative problem to amalgamate them. We just have to find a code that suits us.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But Mrs. Cripps' question is whether you may transfer from one to the other.

MISS BLANEY: At the moment, no.

MRS. CRIPPS: Not at present. And my office rental is probably -- well, I know it has been in the past -- far less than many of the urban members' office rentals. But due to the size of my constituency and the number of electors, my communication allowance is far less. So I'm not anywhere near using my office rental, yet my communication allowance is used up almost immediately, practically with one mailing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is a change in legislation necessary to do this?

MR. BLAIN: Yes, it would be. The office is a statutory . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The 1370 is statutory. It no longer needs to be divided evenly between wages and rent, as it was originally.

MR. HYLAND: It says office and supplies, though, doesn't it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, supplies are in addition to that.

MR. HYLAND: Yes, but what about equipment? The typewriter comes out of the 1305.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, it doesn't. It comes out of Legislative Assembly.

MR. STEFANIUK: No, that was true before there was a change in the legislation. The legislation was amended, and it allowed us to give you the equipment in addition to the allowance.

MR. BLAIN: Mr. Chairman, as I informed Mrs. Cripps', her communications allowance is insufficient but her constituency office allowance is more than sufficient. But that money can't be touched. It's a statutory figure, so it can't be.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can't transfer it unless the statute is amended.

MR. HYLAND: I thought stuff that was all the same vote, as long as it's the same vote, you could move it around inside that vote to an extent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If it weren't statutory. When the Miller report came in, this was made statutory in 1970; it was put in the Legislative Assembly Act.

MR. HYLAND: How do we change the dollars?

MR. STEFANIUK: If I may parallel that, it would be the same as a member saying: give me less as an indemnity and throw it into my communications allowance. We can't do that, because the indemnity is a statutory provision. We just can't fool around with that figure.

DR. REID: The point I was going to get on to was that I had the idea of getting a photocopier. I was told that could not come out of my constituency office allocation. Then I had to figure out my communications allowance, which would nowhere near provide it. That's another aspect of the same problem.

MR. STEFANIUK: The difficulty in there lies that, again, the constituency office allowance is a statutory provision which has attached to it the uses for which it may be spent. In other words, the statute says you may now have \$13,750 for office accommodation and secretarial assistance. In light of the fact that that's in the statute, you can't use it for anything else.

MRS. EMBURY: Bohdan, I guess the question is that if somewhere, somehow, we are supplied with office equipment, that was an add-on.

MR. STEFANIUK: Yes, that's an add-on.

MRS. EMBURY: I know it's a horrendous question, but I guess what's going to come up is not a photocopier -- that's what I've heard a couple of rural people say -- or a computer, word processor, or something.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That has come up. I've just asked Dr. Garrison to -- we've got a couple of memos on that.

MRS. EMBURY: I imagine it would be a ghastly expense, but still . . .

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, I mentioned that the Members' Services Committee, predecessor to this committee, has authorized the acquisition of typewriters, telephone-answering machines, and dictaphones for placement in constituency offices. But that is all that we have approval for.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's out of general administration?

MR. STEFANIUK: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Chairs, desks, and so on come from Government Services.

MR. STEFANIUK: That's surplus equipment, except when we ran out and had to start buying.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's been at least one member, and there could have been another, who raised the question of whether we can extend that to include a micro-processor.

DR. REID: I want a photocopier. I think those are the two items.

MISS BLANEY: And addressing machines and postage machines.

DR. REID: So this has to be addressed in legislation?

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's a question this committee can look after without legislation by simply increasing the estimate.

MR. STEFANIUK: But not this estimate.

MR. HYLAND: This is a question, if something can be done. If it is possible -- I have money left in the office allotment -- I'd like to know by the end of the month so I can buy a photocopier.

MR. STEFANIUK: You can't, not out of the constituency office allowance, because the amount and the intended use are defined by legislation.

MR. KOWALSKI: That would be under the Legislative Assembly Act.

MR. STEFANIUK: That's right.

MR. KOWALSKI: So we would need an amendment to that.

DR. REID: I've made a note of it.

MISS BLANEY: Do you then want to amalgamate your communications and presentation allowances?

DR. REID: Well, we'll see how we come out of it.

MRS. CRIPPS: We can't do it here.

DR. BUCK: We have about 10 minutes, Mr. Chairman.

MISS BLANEY: The other two aren't covered by legislation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can do it here, if you add money for it. What you can't do here is transfer out of this statutory amount.

MR. HYLAND: We can't pick up any left over from last year?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. Is there anything further on code 430?

MR. KOWALSKI: I wonder if we could approve it in general. I'd like to come back at the next meeting and raise the question about the computers that one or two members have talked about, plus photocopying machines.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Then why don't we just leave code 430. It only takes a minute to say "yes" when we come back. We'll go into it more when we come back.

We're running toward the end of our allotted time; the House sits shortly. The total cost isn't going to be any different, whether you amend the Legislative Assembly Act and do it that way or not. If you leave money unexpended in the constituency allowance but you provide other funds by means of one of the estimates here, you can achieve the same thing. As I say, the only thing we can't do is transfer from this statutory allowance for the micro-processors.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, that doesn't affect what Mr. Hyland was speaking about: using up what was left in his funds for this year. We couldn't do that?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. That money is gone by midnight on Thursday. This is a memo from David King on the point we're discussing. I just got it this afternoon, saying why can't this flexibility be put into the situation?

Can we agree on a date for the next meeting?

DR. BUCK: Set it up, and we'll try to adjust.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Tomorrow night, between afternoon and evening sittings?

MR. MARTIN: There is no evening sitting tomorrow.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I didn't know that. I'm always the last one to find out. Are we going for Easter recess on Wednesday?

MR. STEFANIUK: That motion is on the notice.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. So that means people won't be lingering around here Wednesday afternoon. That means that we're not likely to be able to get back to this until after the Easter recess.

MR. MARTIN: I think we come back the following Wednesday.

MR. STEFANIUK: April 6.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't know what's on for a week from this Wednesday in the evening. What about a week from this Thursday in the evening?

DR. BUCK: The 7th?

MR. CHAIRMAN: A week from this Thursday in the evening, from 6:15 to 7:45. Is that agreed?

MR. HYLAND: Why couldn't you bring in something to eat, and we could start as soon as session is over. That gives us . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: We've tried that. We waste a lot of time monkeying around with food in front of us and getting it mixed up with our papers and so on. We sometimes get into a jam.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, for the committee's consideration. I don't know how far we'll get on -- if we don't make any more progress than we made tonight. I have to be at that Commonwealth Parliamentary conference the week of the 11th to the 15th. So if we meet on the 7th, when would we tentatively meet after that?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, the 7th is a Thursday. There's another possibility -- and we have done this in the Members' Services Committee. Quite often, Members' Services seems to be a fairly low priority, and we have real trouble fitting in our meetings with all the conflicts. We can come for a breakfast meeting.

MR. HYLAND: What was wrong with Wednesday morning?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No one said there was anything wrong with Wednesday morning, the 6th.

DR. BUCK: The only thing is that some of the members aren't back.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The day after tomorrow, in the morning.

DR. BUCK: They laid something on us; the space thing.

MR. MARTIN: I have to meet Mr. Rogers in Public Accounts Wednesday morning.

MR. BLAIN: There's a standing committee meeting on Wednesday morning.

MR. MARTIN: What time Wednesday morning are you suggesting?

MR. CHAIRMAN: 7:30, 7 o'clock.

DR. BUCK: I don't even get up that early when I'm farming. What day are we talking about?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The day after tomorrow.

MR. MARTIN: I'm tied up between 9:15 through to 11, but up to that time it's okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is 7:30 to 9 Wednesday any good? You can get to your 9:15 meeting?

MR. MARTIN: Yes. It's here in the building.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So it's agreed. Wednesday morning, the day after tomorrow, 7:30 to 9.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

DR. BUCK: Also, Jerry, on the 7th at 6:15?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Unless somebody expresses a real problem when we meet Wednesday morning.

MR. HYLAND: Plus we're doing Thursday afternoon, did you say, on the 7th?

MR. CHAIRMAN: On the 7th.

DR. BUCK: 6:15 on the 7th.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In the afternoon; in other words, between afternoon and evening sittings -- Thursday, the 7th.

MR. MARTIN: We can double check it Wednesday morning.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The only other thing we can do -- and it hasn't been done in Alberta, as far as I know -- and it's provided for in *Standing Orders*; that is, to get leave of the House to sit while the House is sitting. They do it in Ottawa all the time, but we never do it.

DR. BUCK: Yes, but they have a little more of a divided House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could I ask for one more thing? This is perhaps new, but there is another memo from Norm Weiss, which has been distributed to you. There is a possible analogy to this. In Saskatchewan some weeks ago, they instituted a special northern allowance for members in the north of the province who incurred additional costs for travel. Could I suggest that you give this some thought. If there's time, we'll try to work out some general specifics and go back at it, possibly Wednesday.

The meeting is adjourned until Wednesday morning at half past seven.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.