

## Special Select Standing Committee on Members' Services

Monday, May 2, 1983

Chairman: Mr. Amerongen

5:45 p.m.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are we ready to come to order? We have minutes of two previous meetings to approve. On April 12, we didn't approve the minutes of April 7. Perhaps they hadn't been circulated yet, but they have been since. Does anyone wish to propose a motion with regard to the minutes of April 7? Mr. Hyland, does your hand going up signify that you move they be adopted as circulated?

MR. HYLAND: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you all agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, the minutes of April 12 -- Mr. McDougall was at that meeting, you may recall. Mr. McDougall has suggested a slight amendment. It doesn't really change the meaning of item no. 83.114, that's on the page 4, I think, of those minutes. The suggested amended text -- I believe you have it -- is in the material. Is the change acceptable, as circulated?

MRS. CRIPPS: What is the change?

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you'll find item E, minute no. 83.114 on the page 4 of the minutes of April 12, the part of the text that is proposed to be changed is in the second sentence, which starts with "This program". If it were changed, it would read:

This program is done on a government-wide basis, with all government libraries having access to it. The object is to prevent the expensive duplication of library material within provincial government libraries. A fee is charged for this service. Income from this source covers approximately two-thirds of the cost.

It tidies up the language but doesn't make a change in meaning, as I understand it. Is that acceptable? For those who are unable to speak, could they raise their hands?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's agreed. With that amendment, is there a motion with regard to those minutes?

DR. REID: I'll move that they be adopted as amended.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you all agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is so ordered.

There are some items that arise from minutes of previous meetings. We discussed the travel allowance for members representing northern constituencies or constituencies which have less than average transportation facilities or roads. That was raised by Norm Weiss. He supplemented the previous information with a memo of April 8. I think it was intended that members would consult their respective caucuses with regard to this.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, I'm not trying to put off the Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray's problems or the answer to them. But it would appear that there are other members on the government side who brought forward other difficulties they're having with expenses. Rather than address one in isolation, perhaps we should address them all together. They're not all to do with the problem of getting into Fort McKay or Fort Chipewyan. They're related matters where people are finding their expense allowances are not adequate. Perhaps, you could address Mr. Weiss' problem in relation to the others, subsequently clearing up those budget items already ahead of us, rather than getting into additional *ad hoc* ones.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If we approve the budget as submitted and perhaps later on have a special meeting relating to those items -- if that's what you would like -- then it seems to me it would be appropriate to invite some members who are especially affected in that way to attend such a meeting. If, as a result of such a meeting, we were to recommend some additional funding, then I suppose we'd have to try to raise it by special warrant on a suitable occasion.

Could we take that as a motion from Dr. Reid that the consideration of increased travel allowances be put over for a later meeting to be arranged. Is that agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Fischer, the Member for Wainwright, has raised somewhat similar concerns but also dealing with the *per diems*. I think you have been given copies of his memo of April 12. Would you agree that his concerns might also stand over until they can be dealt with at such a meeting? Were you going to ask a question, Dr. Reid?

DR. REID: I was going to make a motion that we do it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On the motion of Dr. Reid, are you all agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We had a note from the hon. Mr. King with regard to microprocessors. I'm not sure whether we're all clear on the situation there. As I understand it, if it's going to come out of the constituency office allowance, that requires an amendment to the legislation. It might seem appropriate if that were to be referred for consideration to the Committee on Privileges and Elections, which will be dealing with the white paper. The thing is this: if we're going to allow part of the constituency office allowance to be used for microprocessors, as I understand it, that requires an amendment to the Act, as it's worded now.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, weren't we looking at -- not necessarily processors -- those three votes. Being as they are the same vote, they could be transferred, but the legislation prevents them from being transferred. If we take that out of the legislation, you could roll that around whichever way you want.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's a further step. It would be two things. One would be to blend the three allowances and let members allot them as they might wish. But at the same time, the language might have to be changed to some extent to permit the use of some of those funds for renting or purchasing microprocessors. If they're purchased, of course, they become the property of the Legislative Assembly because they're purchased with public funds.

MR. HYLAND: The last time we cleaned up the wording to make it a little easier was what got us into the trouble we're in.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's right. What do you think about the idea of someone on the committee . . . Are there members here who belong to the Committee on Privileges and Elections?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would one of you like to undertake the responsibility of referring that item to that committee for consideration in connection with the white paper?

MR. PURDY: I think our mandate with the white paper right now is within that resolution, and it was passed today. It's the white paper itself that we're going to be studying, not any particular add-on to it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But there's a draft Legislative Assembly Act scheduled to that.

MR. PURDY: Right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're now talking about a possible amendment to that. It would seem to me that comes squarely within the terms of reference of the committee.

MR. PURDY: Okay, I get your point.

MR. HYLAND: That would include Norm's thing too.

DR. REID: I don't know if it includes that. But, Mr. Chairman, I was just thinking of the item Mr. Fischer brought up in relation to the *per diem*. I just checked it with Mr. Blain. It's in the Act, too, so that would have to be referred to the same place. It's not this committee that should deal with it under the present circumstances.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right. So is it agreed then that we are going to name someone? Is it agreed that Mr. Purdy take to the Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing, for inclusion in its consideration of the white paper, possible amendments which might deal with the three types of allowances paid to members, including their constituency office allowance, and the possibility of an amendment which would allow greater flexibility in the use of those funds; and, in addition, the concerns raised by Mr. Fischer's memo of April 12 with regard to the *per diems*?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As far as I know, that covers the items that were carried over. Now, if we could resume consideration of the estimates from where we left off. I think the last one approved was 430, under the Library's estimates. The next one is 500. It's on page 8 of the working papers, under the Library's

estimates. Any discussion, questions? Mr. McDougall is here. Is there a motion?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, just one brief question for clarification. The fourth item under code 5 on page 8 deals with union lists of serials in Alberta government libraries. Perhaps Mr. McDougall would be good enough to identify for me exactly what that would entail.

MR. McDOUGALL: The object of that particular program is to facilitate resource sharing among provincial government libraries. The list consists of a cross section of research journals and news magazines that are held by department libraries. Its use has the effect of inhibiting the duplication of journals at several locations within the provincial government library system. It's a sharing tool.

MR. KOWALSKI: In other words, it's a bibliography.

MR. McDOUGALL: Yes, it is, with the object of making us aware of what we each have. Consequently, it facilitates interlibrary loans and cuts duplication costs within the government library system.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would I be right, Mr. McDougall, in suggesting that this is a service which is done by the Legislature Library for all government libraries?

MR. McDOUGALL: That's correct. So is the Alberta government libraries' union catalogue; it goes right across the provincial government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions concerning any items under code 500? Is there a motion for that to be approved? Mr. Kowalski. All agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 510.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On a motion by Mr. Pengelly.  
600.

MR. PURDY: So moved, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you ready for the question? All agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Carried. The last item on that page is just a total.  
Code 850.

MRS. CRIPPS: What's the 17 per cent increase there?

MR. McDOUGALL: It's primarily the result of the shelving figure and the microfiche reader printer. The other items are more routine equipment acquisitions to provide for storage of -- most of it is microfilm material.

MR. HYLAND: I'll move that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Moved by Mr. Hyland that code 850 be approved. Are you agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Carried. I think that completes the Library's estimates. On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank Mr. McDougall for his attendance and his explanations at this meeting and the last one.

MR. McDOUGALL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, if I'm not mistaken, we have to deal with estimates for the three caucuses. Before we do that, perhaps we could deal with two other items. Mr. Blain has kindly sent around a memo, dated today, with regard to the allowance for committees. We've already incurred some costs in this direction. Perhaps he'd like to explain the changed amount. These estimates haven't gone in yet, so we'll still be able to change that amount.

MR. BLAIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I sent you a memorandum, and I notice to my regret that there is an error on it. It was produced in some haste, so it was most likely my fault. If I could, I'd like to go through it with you very quickly. As you know, the Public Affairs Committee last week held a series of public hearings on Bill 44, which came upon us very quickly. We had a major expenditure in advertising. The advertising program which was undertaken in relation to the public hearings -- daily newspapers in the province and on a number of radio stations in the province -- came to a total amount of \$120,000, which was \$20,000 in excess of our token budget of \$100,000. In order to maintain our estimate of expenditure, it has been necessary to make a number of changes.

In addition to this, I have reason to believe that there will be two further committees active, as well as the Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing, which may or may not result in any expenses. In view of this, I've made certain changes to the figures I had calculated prior to this information coming into my hands.

I now recommend that code 120, wages, be increased to \$5,000 as opposed to \$3,000, which makes the manpower control group \$5,000. In the supplies and services area, I recommend that code 200, travel -- the code I omitted -- remain at \$15,000. I recommend that code 260 for advertising be increased to \$160,000, to accommodate the bill for \$120,000, plus any future advertising we may do. I recommend that professional, technical and labor services remain at \$15,000, which makes the supplies and services control group \$175,000.

I've also included \$1,000 under code 510 for hospitality, which I didn't have in before. It has been our experience in the past that some of the committees become involved in hospitality, and I think some funds should be provided for this purpose. I recommend that payments to MLAs for attendance at committees between sittings remain at \$50,000, which gives us a total expenditure of \$246,000 as opposed to the original \$100,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Does it really? If you add \$160,000 and \$175,000, you get . . .

MR. BLAIN: The \$160,000 is included in the \$175,000. That's a control group, you see. So \$5,000 and \$175,000 is \$180,000; \$181,000 and \$50,000 is \$231,000, and the \$15,000 which was inadvertently omitted brings it to \$246,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is still, you might say, a very, very loose or broad 'guesstimation' because, as Mr. McDougall explained previously, it's impossible to foretell what committees are going to be struck, what they're going to do, how long they're going to sit, and where they're going to go.

MR. BLAIN: I might add to the comments I have already made and to the Chairman's comments that if the committees as anticipated are activated, the \$246,000 may very well not be enough. But at least it means that if we do have to ask for more money, we've done our best to make sure we're asking for a minimum amount rather than for a big sum. In the event that they're not activated, then of course the money will go back into the revenue fund anyway.

I just conclude my remarks by recommending that the committee approve the revised expenditure in the amount of \$246,000.

MRS. CRIPPS: I notice in the media plan and budget that you spent \$120,000 on, none of the weekly newspapers are included.

MR. BLAIN: That's correct.

MRS. CRIPPS: That really disfranchises a lot of my constituents and a lot of Ken's, because they don't get the dailies. Every home in my constituency gets one weekly or maybe two.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But where you were advertising for a committee that was going to hear province-wide bodies, they're more likely to be centred in the cities than in the rural areas.

MRS. CRIPPS: But supposing those people wanted to contact their province-wide representative association. That's past experience, but I would highly recommend that in future the weeklies be considered. The advertisement in probably every weekly in the province would -- if you took one day from the dailies, you could advertise in every weekly in the province.

MR. BLAIN: Mrs. Cripps, there are two factors. It wasn't a matter of cost. The time frame was what controlled the advertising. In order for us to advertise in a weekly which comes out on Wednesday, we must have the copy in the previous Wednesday.

MRS. CRIPPS: No, Monday.

MR. BLAIN: No, that's not our experience, and I have substantial experience with this. In this case, it wasn't possible to advertise in the weeklies in the time given. In order to compensate for that, you'll note from the program that a very substantial program of radio advertising was engaged in, which isn't normally done.

I might say to you that for the last eight years, the eight years I've been here, when we've had committees which are engaged in public hearings throughout the province -- and you'll recall this yourself from the surface rights committee -- we have always given full coverage in the weekly papers. It was only a matter of time that on this occasion that procedure wasn't followed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions? Any discussion? Is there a motion?

MR. PURDY: One question, Mr. Chairman. What was the overexpenditure with the surface rights committee, compared with what was allocated in the budget?

MR. CHAIRMAN: There wasn't a specific budget for the surface rights committee.

MR. PURDY: There was still a budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It was the usual lump sum.

MR. PURDY: So if it was \$100,000, and then whatever it cost.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But other committees would be included.

MR. BLAIN: I can find that for you, but I didn't feel that was relevant to this committee. But if you want the information . . .

MR. PURDY: The reason I asked is that I thought we could have a comparison of what it usually costs for us to have a select committee during the recess time, and then in future years put that appropriate amount of money in the budget instead of a token amount of \$100,000 or \$246,000 now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What you'd have to do, with respect, is to go over a period of five to 10 years, total the committee budgets for each of those years, and average it.

MR. HYLAND: But we know this year that the special committee, because of legislation, has to be called before the end of this year.

MR. PURDY: The workers' compensation has to be called.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, I think the difficulty of trying to budget in advance for these committees is -- for instance, the last workers' compensation committee had no idea when we started that we were going to get into the depth we did. We ended up having a tour of the European countries to look at where workers' compensation legislation originally came from. The other committee I have experience of is the constitution committee. We had no idea at the beginning how much interest there was going to be around the country and the time it would take.

I don't think there is ever any question in the special warrants from the Legislative Assembly to cut a committee one. I think it would be a lot of work that wouldn't really achieve anything.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you would prefer, it seems to me it would be easy to total the totals for the years going back as far as you like, and then to average them.

MR. PURDY: I just put that out for consideration.

MR. BLAIN: In broad terms, Mr. Chairman, there was no overexpenditure in the surface rights committee because, as you recall, it ran over more than one fiscal year. The first year, we were within the expenditures provided for committees. The second year, I knew the committee was operating so I tabled a budget for it in advance. It went into a third year, which is the past fiscal year, but that was only a few minor things like a reprint of the report, and things like that. So it was well within the funds provided for committees.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It looks as if they thought they were onto a good thing.

MR. MARTIN: Just to follow up on what Mr. Purdy was talking about. For instance, I understand that by the elections Act it's time we take a look at the boundaries. I wonder if we've taken a look at all the possible committees we know of, at least to have some idea.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm not sure the Electoral Boundary Commission would be paid out of this appropriation.

MR. BLAIN: No. The electoral boundary is a commission by statute. It's not funded from here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there a motion? By Mr. Martin. Are you agreed that these codes indicated under committees be changed as indicated by Mr. Blain and that the new total be \$246,000?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Carried. Now, is there any preference on the part of the committee as to the order in which we deal with the estimates of the caucuses?

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Chairman, seeing Dr. Buck is not here -- and he should be here almost any time -- if it's agreeable, maybe it would be better to start.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Can we go directly to page 1 of the working papers.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, I was associated to some extent with the development of this budget, since I was put onto Members' Services Committee -- if that's the right word. Having been involved with it, I'd like to make some preliminary remarks and perhaps a suggestion.

If you look at the first page, the computer printout, there are forecast changes. There are some significant decreases, like 100 per cent, which is difficult to achieve in any business, and there are some significant percentage increases. But if you look at the total amount, what we tried to do, in a year when I think everybody should be trying to exercise some restraint, was live within a reasonable restraint program. As you know, we have one additional member in what I'll refer to as the private members' government caucus, from 43 to 44, which accounts for about 2.25 per cent of the increase. Then after allowing for the increase of one member, we tried to live within a 7.5 to 8 per cent increase. It was achieved by some significant decreases, by some budgets, item by item, remaining the same, and by other budgets showing considerable increases, in particular in relation to things like computerized equipment and supplies for word processors.

I'm trusting that unless there is any change in the make-up in the Assembly in the next year, which I don't anticipate, we will live within this budget, the total figure being some \$869,267, which works out to about \$20,000 per member in rough terms for 44. That's to supply the secretarial and research to the government private members, and the supplies and other services that are needed for it. Eight hundred and sixty-nine thousand dollars may seem like a lot of money. But if you look at what happens in other parliaments, it is reasonable, and that's what we try to do.

The comment I would like to make is that having done this -- and if we go through it item by item, there are going to be some ridiculous decreases of 100 per cent and some apparently very significant increases. We were really looking at it on a global basis, to see what we could do to try to remain within the limits that we feel are reasonable in the province in the coming year. When we look at caucus budgets, I'm not sure that really it's of any great significance to this committee, be they opposition members looking at how the government caucus allocates its funds or the government members looking at how the opposition caucuses allocate their funds within whatever their global sum may be -- it seems like a somewhat ridiculous exercise.



considering that, presumably, the individual caucuses have already gone through the individual items in deciding where they need the money spent.

Those are the remarks and the comment.

MR. MARTIN: I would make just two comments. The part that becomes very difficult for me is to know what government members need. I take it they have done their budgeting, and it's reasonable and realistic. I would have no way of knowing otherwise anyhow. I also agree with what Dr. Reid says. I think we have to look at the global picture, because I agree with Dr. Reid that how we all designate our own resources is really up to the individual caucuses. So I would just reinforce what he said on that matter.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, I think it's important in the overview just to amplify what Dr. Reid has indicated. To take two words from my hon. friend from Edmonton Norwood, I think two key words were used when government members took a look at this budget -- one word being "reasonable", the other "realistic" -- keeping in mind the current tempo and the economic situation in the province of Alberta. When you look at that figure of \$869,267, that's really to be divided among 44 members of our caucus. The average figure of approximately \$20,000 per member should not be forgotten and lost in the minds of all members of this committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I should perhaps explain to Dr. Buck what has happened. We have completed our work on the Library budget. We then went back to amend the committee budget as a result of last week's expenses, the advertising for the committee and anticipated committee work coming up, to a new total of \$246,000. We are now starting on the caucus budgets. We're just starting on the government members' budget. It has been suggested by Dr. Reid and reinforced by Mr. Martin that since the items have been scrutinized by the caucuses and their preferences indicated as to allocations of funds, there may not be any need for us to examine individual items but we should content ourselves with the overall total.

MRS. CRIPPS: Just to be perfectly clear, then, what we're looking at is a 2.25 per cent increase because of the one member increase -- 44 instead of 43 -- and a 7.5 to 7.75 per cent increase in overall budgets for inflation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Perhaps my figures are wrong. I thought the government members' budget last year was something over \$18,000 per member.

MR. PURDY: \$768,400.

MRS. CRIPPS: The other is the increased member. You have forty-four forty-thirds; it's called an improper fraction.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you want to deal with this total by motion, that we not examine the individual amounts but look at the global budgets for each caucus? That doesn't necessarily bind us for future years.

DR. REID: It was just a comment, Mr. Chairman. I wasn't really putting it into a motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But it affects me in the way I call out the estimates.

DR. REID: Yes, I know.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, I had a researcher do some work and prepare a chart. It deals with total numbers. I've gone through this book to some extent. The majority of the legislatures at least appear to be dealing with global budgets relating to members. I think Ian and Ray are right. If we go to global budget and call it a global figure and that's how it appears in the estimates, we all have to answer when it comes to public accounts as to why we spent the money that way. If the Legislature is supreme, so to speak, we should be able to make our own rules and go with a global budget. If that's what is acceptable to us and to the Legislature, that's the way we should be able to go. What appears here shows a total amount. I hope that next year when we come back, we would see one line on this printout, \$869,000. The others can be sorted out as they're spent. The caucuses will just have to be careful that they don't overspend, or they're going to have help sitting there for a couple of months without any pay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm not sure, though, if you spend the money in that way, that there would be total transferability within government members or any other caucus.

MR. KOWALSKI: Perhaps I could be of some assistance in that regard. Within a vote, there is total transfer.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Quite. Is there a motion?

DR. REID: I started it; I'll so move.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The motion is that we deal with the caucus budgets globally. Is that right?

MRS. CRIPPS: Just the caucus membership budgets.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Carried. All we need to look at is \$869,267.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I'm sorry for being late, but I just couldn't make it where I had to go and back in time. I missed what Dr. Reid and Mr. Kowalski said. In discussing over coffee with Dr. Reid, being a new member on Members' Services, I have some government members say to me: we don't think our budget is large enough. I said, well, then that's what you tell us on Members' Services. I don't know if it's too large, not large enough, or someplace in between; only you know that.

So in just kicking it around outside this committee, Mr. Chairman, I mentioned to Dr. Reid, when one of the government members made this presentation to me, that this person said, I think we should be looking at some kind of base so that all members are treated equally. Then superimposed on that is the responsibility the different groups have in the legislative process. That way, I can't say to Mr. Kowalski, you're getting more money than I am; or he to Mr. Martin, you're getting more money than I am.

If we look at some kind of base budgeting so that all members are treated equally, then we look at the responsibility that the Official Opposition has or that maybe in years to come the Liberal caucus has. I also have some feeling about a person who has received 5 per cent of the votes in this province. I think a man like Mr. Taylor should receive half a member's

salary, or something. I think he should have an office in this building. But that's another argument, and I think I will raise that later.

I don't know if it's too late this year to look at some type of rationalization of budgeting of the different caucuses, using that kind of basis. There are different groups who have different roles to play in the legislative process. I'm just throwing that out for discussion, Mr. Chairman, because I don't think it's fair to members on both sides of the House for me to be saying to Ken Kowalski, look, you're getting more money than I'm getting, or you're getting less money than I'm getting. We have to have sufficient funds to do the job we have to do responsibly and adequately in this Assembly. Then we can kick around in discussion the role those groups have.

I just want to throw that out, Mr. Chairman, to get the discussion started.

DR. REID: I'm used to this, because I was on the workers' compensation committee with Dr. Buck. He's a jump ahead of me in some ways.

DR. BUCK: I'm sorry I brought it up now, but I didn't know what opening statement you made.

DR. REID: The statement was essentially related to the development of the government members' budget and the fact that it came out to approximately \$20,000 per member, and that we tried to keep it down in 1983 because of the restraints that are applicable to everybody just now.

I was going to make some other remarks in relation to the opposition, but I might as well make them now. If we're going to go to global budgeting, it's going to be relatively simple to handle the dollar amounts.

I'm very well aware historically of the function in parliament of the opposition and opposition groups. Westminster has sometimes been split in two parties, sometimes in many more than that, including an oddity called the Scottish National Party.

DR. BUCK: Which my wife's cousin ran for three times and lost, and the next time the guy won.

DR. REID: It just shows you; Robert the Bruce: if at first you don't succeed .

The situation is that our system of parliamentary democracy is based on a government and an opposition. That's usually taken as being the Official Opposition, and historically that's been the case. But there are other groups that can happen in our parliaments. There are, I think the usual term is "minority" parties, where in various parliaments the recognition varies according to the percentage of the vote received in a general election or the number that are elected to the House, or a combination of those two features. Those are minority parties, and they represent parties which do not achieve as much of a popular vote or the numbers of the Official Opposition. I don't think anybody argues about the funding of what one could call the "office" of the Leader of the Official Opposition. That's not just the physical office; that's the office as an entity. I think the leaders of minority parties -- there is usually pretty wide acceptance for that.

I think we have to look at the situation we have in the Alberta Legislature at this time, where we have two people who ran as Independents. We all know the political and parliamentary history of both those people. We also have to recognize what I would call a parliamentary coalition, for want of any better term -- and if you can think of a better one, I'd like to have it. There should be some funding of the office of the leader of a minority party. In the present circumstances, I think there should definitely be some funding for

the leader of a parliamentary coalition. I don't want to go into the political history of the events as they happened over the last two or three years.

There is another factor that has to be brought into it, and that is that at the moment in the Alberta Legislature, there is an unusual -- although in Alberta history, it is not that unusual -- distribution of the members of the Legislature other than Executive Council. There is a ratio of 44 to 4. I think there are demonstrable and accepted economies of scale. I find the suggestion made by the Member for Clover Bar, attractive though it may be, a little unacceptable with a 44 to 4 ratio. I think you have to allow for the fact that smaller caucuses do not have the economies of scale. I think it would be unrealistic in the present circumstances -- I emphasize the word "present" -- to have the same budget for opposition private members and for government private members. As attractive as it may be to accept the proposal put forward by the Member for Clover Bar, I think the realities are somewhat different.

I would suggest that at the moment, we might look at some ratio which is in the two to three times government members. We established ours at about \$20,000. If the ratio of private members on the opposition and government sides were more equal, as it was between, say, 1971 and 1975 -- and I don't remember offhand what the numbers were.

MR. CHAIRMAN: About 26 in the opposition.

DR. REID: And I don't know how many government private members there were. But in those situations, the economies of scale are probably similar. I think that when you get to the situation as it is now, you have to be realistic and accept the economies of scale.

So I would suggest that we look at some system where we allow for the office of the Leader of the Official Opposition, and in view of the remarks you made on March 11, Mr. Chairman, I think we should allow for the eventuality that there might be a party other than that party which is represented in the Legislature, which has obtained, say, 5 per cent and two members, or 7 per cent -- whatever might be decided upon. Also in the present circumstances, we have to fund the office of the leader of the Independents, as you've been terming it. Also we should look at some reasonable amount for the individual members who belong to those opposition caucuses.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, it almost looks like we've been in collusion here, because I have some notes I've had typed up. I have dealt mainly with the Leader of the Opposition's office, and so on. Are we just general now, or are we . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're really on the government members' estimates.

DR. REID: We've expanded our discussion.

MRS. CRIPPS: It sounds like we're on principle.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're discussing principles.

MR. HYLAND: It almost looks like you, Ian, and I have been in collusion, because I have something somewhat the same that I was prepared to propose, at least when we came to the opposition budget; that funding of the Leader of the Opposition's office at a set rate, the leader of the coalition at a set rate, and a rate of allowance per member. If anything changes, we're not just adding to it all the time, or trying to patch it to make it work. This way,

we know from the time we start that each office carries with it a designation of X amount of money and, as the membership may change, the amounts to the parties change. Should I put the numbers out? I would suggest \$200,000 for the Leader of the Opposition's office; secondly, the leader of a minority party -- I have 'guesstimated' at 5 per cent of the vote or two members; I guess it's all up for debate -- at \$125,000; office of the leader of a parliamentary coalition, \$100,000; and an allowance per member at \$50,000, which with the present set-up would be \$300,000 for NDP and \$200,000 for the Independents in total budget. I think that sets the parliamentary designation of the leader's office and what it carries with it; it sets the case that we have here, with the leader of the Independents; and it sets an allowance per member of two and a half times the proposed budget for government members.

MR. MARTIN: That's all very well and nice. But you'll notice that the smaller the opposition, the greater the ratio. Let's look at what the role of the opposition is. Are you saying that if there were a big opposition, it would end up costing you a fortune -- each member if it were that close. I don't think the opposition would need that much more. It doesn't matter whether there are two or 32; the role of the Official Opposition and the opposition is the same. We still have to get ready for the same amount of time we're there. I'm sure it's not going to shorten. I don't think there should be a corresponding -- let's say there were 30 members in the opposition at some point. I don't think they should get 15 times as much as they got. Surely with more MLAs, you can begin to do a lot more research on your own.

Frankly, I think we're on very dangerous ground, if we start to look at this as a proposal to add members on. Even though there are only four of us in the opposition, we still have to attempt at least -- obviously we can't do it as well as if there were 30 -- to do the same things as 30 would do in terms of the opposition. As I said, perhaps the research staff would still be the same whether you had 30 or two, to get through that much research for question period and all the rest of it.

What I'm saying is that the role of the Official Opposition is still going to be the same without numbers. Conversely, I would also say that the opposition should not go up each time. If there were a big opposition, if there were 35 people, the MLAs would certainly have more time to do some research on their own, I would think.

The other point I would make is that it's not just in terms of the Official Opposition. The Official Opposition in terms of British parliamentary democracy is, whether we like it or not, government in waiting, as Mr. Lougheed was when he was elected in 1967. As a result, you're not just dealing with your budget; we're dealing with the ministers' budgets in each of those departments. What we're attempting to do is stay on top of 30 portfolios; not an easy job. But the people in Alberta, in their wisdom, have spoken. With four members, we still have the same amount of work to do as 30 would.

I'm prepared to look at it somewhat reasonably, but those figures would dismantle this. It would be just totally unacceptable.

DR. BUCK: It's going to get down to some philosophical arguments. I don't know whether or not I started the thing off on the wrong foot, but as I said, I didn't know what Ian had mentioned before. We look at the government budget of \$869,000 and Mr. Hyland's proposal of \$325,000. As Mr. Martin said, two groups of two are expected to peruse the Heritage Savings Trust Fund, to monitor and see what's happening in 30 departments, plus I have a small constituency, and I think Ray's is probably the same size -- everything from Edmonton north is my constituency. I have tried to say that I will sort of shadow, look after half the province and he will look after the other half.

The only way the role of the opposition and the Official Opposition can be fulfilled is that the Legislature gives those two groups funds so that we can hire people to do the job that 30 or 35 members would do. It's basically that simple.

Having been in the Official Opposition, I know that we don't waste money. I know the government members don't waste money either. The budgets we proposed are what we feel are the reasonable numbers of dollars we need to do the job we see we have to do.

Mr. Chairman, it's basically that simple. That's the position we have. If we're going to do the job, the only way we can do it is to have funds to hire the people to help us do the job. Otherwise the process -- and I think we have to worry about the process we're looking at, the parliamentary process, rather than that we feel they're getting too much or we're getting too much. If the government needs more money in its caucus, then we vote it. I don't know what they need, but I know what we need to do the job we think should be done. If the government caucus feels it needs \$2.3 million to do the job, then we vote it. I don't know what they need. But I do know that they have 30 cabinet ministers and 60,000 civil servants who can help them. We don't have quite that. All we can do is go out and use the taxpayer's money to hire those people to do the job, to supervise the Heritage Savings Trust Fund, the provincial budget, and all the things that come into our offices. The only way that can be done is with sufficient funding. It's basically that simple.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, I've sat back and appreciated some of the comments given by some of my colleagues on this committee. I would perhaps like to take off on a comment made just a little earlier by Dr. Buck, when he basically said let's look at the funding per member. If we're looking at the submission made by the government caucus in this regard, it really boils down to about \$20,000 per member.

I've looked at the submissions made by the two opposition caucuses, and I find the figures absolutely scandalous, to say the least. When you look at the NDP proposal, which is upwards of \$394,000, and the Independents, upwards of \$394,000 for two members, and you go back to the base we talked about a few minutes ago, \$20,000 per government member, what's being suggested here -- and I know Mr. Hyland came in with another alternative proposal -- is that a member is not a member in terms of some of these submissions.

I was elected to represent a particular constituency, as was Dr. Buck, as was Mr. Martin. Never in my mandate was it ever given to me that I have to be spokesman for a part of the province, whether it be half of the province or the south of the province or all Edmonton or Calgary. I'm a Member of the Legislative Assembly, like all Members of the Legislative Assembly. It's an interesting philosophy of parliamentary democracy that a particular member is a representative of or responsible for half the province. That is a position, it's quite clear to me, that is absolutely unknown in parliamentary democracy. If there is some precedent there, I would be very anxious to hear the basis of that and how we might be guided to see what might be happening in other jurisdictions. But I think we have to be reasonable and realistic.

I want to reiterate the second comment I made. If a member is a member, then we should be looking at a member as an equal member to another member. It's downright scandalous to me to see some of these figures that are being floated around in some of these documents.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could I just put in a possibly explanatory note. We haven't the same kind of working papers here for these as we've had for the other estimates, like the Library and so on. As I understand it, the NDP budget includes \$243,966 for the Leader of the Official Opposition, plus \$394,215 for the caucus budget.

MR. MARTIN: \$230,000 for the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have a sheet here . . .

MR. MARTIN: Sorry, it's 5 per cent increase. The \$230,000 was what we took out of the Leader of the Official Opposition's budget last time, and there is a 5 per cent increase. So you're correct.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So it would be \$243,000 for the leader and \$394,215 for the caucus as a whole. The Independents haven't sorted out a separate budget for the leader, as I understand it here. Their overall total comes to \$395,400. Am I right?

DR. BUCK: Right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry I interrupted. Mr. Martin was going to enter the debate.

MR. MARTIN: I'm a little perturbed by what I hear, because there are some differences under British parliamentary democracy. For one thing, the Official Opposition in most legislatures and parliaments, and other oppositions -- for instance, for the third party in the House of Commons, we have shadow cabinets. We have to shadow the people. I think it is a ridiculous statement to say that we're all equal in terms of the roles we have to perform there. If I do not have adequate back-up staff, I'm not serving Alberta well. If we're going to nickel and dime the opposition in terms of the role they have to perform as a watchdog in this Legislature -- at some point it could be the Conservatives that are in opposition.

As I said, I'm quite prepared to be reasonable. In all fairness, Mr. Kowalski, we do get case studies from all over the province. I'm sure the Independents do. We can't say to people, don't call the Official Opposition because you don't want to go to a specific government member -- just as you wouldn't. If somebody came to you from Norwood, you would take up their case. The point is that that is reality. We carry those cases. We do have to be a shadow cabinet. I remind the members that it's not just government backbenchers' money we're talking about; we're talking about cabinets with a lot of money, a lot of back-up. These are the people we have to deal with as a shadow cabinet. I hope they have the best people around advising them. To dismantle the opposition totally in terms of a budget, they're trying to do it. You can take out the figures and say it's \$300,000 per member, and all the rest of it, and try to work it out on a ratio like this, but that's just not applicable to what we're talking about.

As I pointed out before -- and I'll say it clearly here again -- if the opposition were up to 30, I would not expect that we'd take the opposition budget and multiply it by 15. The role of the opposition hasn't changed. In fact, I would hope that some of the members would be able to take some of the back-up role we need to do. I'm prepared to look at this. But looking at the figures we're looking at, it's totally unacceptable.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there any other discussion?

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, I thought I had made it clear that I was talking philosophically about funding the offices of the Leader of the Official Opposition, the minority parties, and what I chose to call a parliamentary coalition. On top of that, individual members would get two or three times what the government members get. I also said that I didn't think that that allocation to individual members would remain the same were the two sides of

the House relatively in balance. That is exactly the point Mr. Martin is making.

As far as the sums of money are concerned, we're looking at budgets that were presented to us -- and I'm not going to go into all the details of the figures again. They come to a total, for the two groups: the Independents, \$395,400, and the NDP, \$638,000. It comes to \$33,000 over \$1 million; it's roughly \$1,033,000. I was recognizing the historical significance of the opposition function. But when I look at this sheet that Mr. Hyland sent around and look at some of these amounts, try to analyse the Ontario position -- the 33 Liberals in the Ontario parliament function on a total of just over \$1 million, which would be \$30,000 per member. The 22 NDP members function on a total of \$736,000, which is roughly \$33,000 per member. We're looking at suggesting that the NDP have \$150,000 per member, if I understand Mr. Hyland correctly. And we're suggesting that the Independents, who do not have a party function, have a budget of some \$100,000. To say that that's ridiculously low I find a little difficult to accept.

DR. BUCK: You mean \$100,000 each?

DR. REID: That's what it would come to.

DR. BUCK: I'm just checking your figures, Ian. A total of \$100,000 or \$100,000 each?

DR. REID: It's a \$100,000 for the office of the leader of a parliamentary coalition and \$50,000 for each member, which would give the two Independents a combined budget of \$200,000, which is \$100,000 apiece. If we go to the global budgeting principle, how you divide that between the Member for Little Bow and the Member for Clover Bar would be your responsibility. I must say that I agree with that idea, because I don't think we should be deciding how each other's caucuses allocate their funds.

If we look at the New Democratic Party, we're allocating \$200,000 to the office of the leader and \$50,000 to each member, which gives \$300,000. Even in present day Canadian dollars courtesy of Mr. Trudeau, that's a fair bit of money. If their constituency requirements happen to be the same as the government members' and we get by on \$20,000 -- and Mr. Martin has eloquently said that we only have to look after our constituencies out of that -- then their constituency obligations are \$40,000, which leaves them with \$260,000 to do the function of the Official Opposition in parliament. A quarter of a million dollars, and then some. I really think that is adequate in 1983, in a province with 2.25 million people.

MR. MARTIN: I'll come back to my point again. You looked at Ontario. My point was that there is a role for the Official Opposition that we shouldn't be looking at on a per-member basis. They have over \$1 million. If you take the two groups, they have much more than that. The point I tried to make before, and I'll make it again, is that I wouldn't expect our budget to go up a corresponding amount each time there is a bigger opposition, because the function is still the same. We still have to do the same things. You have not referred at all to the back-up that cabinet ministers have and the back-up you have in provincial employees who are all feeding information to government members. The cabinet members are the government. That's who we have to deal with also.

The other point I make is that even if we look at the previous budget we had, the opposition budget from the previous House, the Socred and NDP budgets before the election were \$557,000: \$450,000 Socred and \$107,000 NDP. Now



you're proposing \$500,000, a decrease over the previous year for the opposition.

DR. REID: Those budgets were set for four Social Credit and one NDP, which is five people.

MR. MARTIN: Yes, but surely you would agree that there is a different role for the opposition. We are dealing with back-up. You take the cabinet ministers and the back-up they have in their political offices. You should be including those figures too, to be honestly fair about it. That's who we have to check. I get up in the question period. I don't ask you a question, because we have to be dealing with the ministers. We have to deal with the ministers in estimates. Surely, to compare the two roles, is just not appropriate or fair.

DR. REID: I was allocating the whole \$20,000 to the government members for their constituency work and doing the same for the opposition parties. That leaves, with Mr. Hyland's suggestion, the NDP with approximately \$260,000 to fulfil that role.

MR. MARTIN: But what I'm suggesting to you is that we cannot operate and do the job we have to with that amount of money. I remind you that the total opposition budget in 1982-83, before the election, was over \$700,000.

DR. REID: Let's not get into the way that was budgeted, because that included \$101,000 that was never budgeted at all. If you look at the Ontario situation that you've criticized my applying to with 33 Liberals in the Official Opposition, if you allocate \$20,000 per member for his constituency business -- that's \$660,000 -- leaves you with about \$350,000 for the Official Opposition in Ontario, with a population of 9 million. We have 2.25 million.

MR. MARTIN: Dr. Reid, do they still have to do the same things in the Official Opposition? Do they have question period? Do they have to get ready for estimates? Do they still have to perform the same function as the opposition in this province does?

DR. REID: Their parliament functions most of the year.

MR. HYLAND: Last year's budgeting was added to -- at least my understanding is that when Mr. Kesler got elected, his approved budget was \$101,000, which I'm not sure was entered into these papers. So that's in excess of that. In what I figured, I just left it out. Last year the Independent got \$57,219, the Official Opposition got \$445,018, and the NDP office got \$107,000.

DR. BUCK: Which is really about a third of what they should have had.

MR. HYLAND: That could be, Walt; nevertheless that's the way it was last year. I looked at the global figures and knocked off the difference in members at the same rate that was added on to prepare ours. That's where I got the idea for these numbers and tried to make them fit into some sort of formula so that if something happens, if there's a by-election or whatever -- if the government caucus changes, ours goes down correspondingly. Last year, as members were added on -- Ray, you said you would expect it to go down if membership increases drastically. Last year, as membership changed in caucuses, the amounts went up. When I thought of these numbers, I took into account the Leader of the Official Opposition's office and all that goes with it -- the staff, et cetera -- an amount to run the parliamentary coalition's office, and the allowance of \$50,000 per member.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I have a question for Mr. Hyland. First of all, I am in no position and there is no way I could make an educated comment on whether your budget is too large or too small. Only your caucus knows what you need to do the job adequately. What we are presenting to the committee is what we think we need to do the job on behalf of the people of this province. If we want to say \$20,000 per member, that's fine. There'll be \$20,000 for me, \$20,000 for Mr. Speaker, and the \$355,000 on top of that for the role that the two members, the coalition -- whatever term you want to use -- for the responsibility we have to do exactly what the NDP is doing. We have to do the same job for the people of this province. If you want break it down that we as members all get \$20,000 apiece, that's \$40,000. But to do the job, that's what we consider is a budget that can do the job. We're so hung-up on saying X number times so many members. It's the role, the job that the people of this province have inflicted upon us -- "inflicted" is probably the word I want to use. To do it, that's what we have to have. It's just that simple.

Right now, the budget we have used from December to now -- we've been 103 per cent above that budget. For all intents and purposes, we have had hardly any research done. Those are the foot soldiers, the people who are going through reports, that are doing jobs, scurrying around the country. My research assistant right now probably knows as much as any deputy minister or minister of education. But it has taken her literally four months to do that. That's one department. I've got 29 more to go. If you don't think we have a role to fulfil, I don't know what the answer is. I don't know what the solution is.

We have tried to put before the committee a reasonable budget to do the job. Our job is completely different from yours, in the role of monitoring what the government is doing. Our role as members is the same. Mine is the same as Mr. Kowalski's. He gets problems from my constituency; I get problems from his constituency. The only thing is that he has 74 people to help him solve the constituency problems that I've got. And there's only one of me for the half of the province, plus my back-up people, to do that job.

Mr. Chairman, just one point before I forget. Mr. Speaker and I have not designated nor have we requested any funding for him or me being named leader of a coalition. We are not asking for funds for that. We have put our two offices together, because we think we have some economies that way. We think we're trying to save some money for the taxpayers.

Now you can give me hell, Ken; go ahead.

MR. KOWALSKI: It's not my turn, Walter.

DR. BUCK: I'm sorry, it's Shirley.

MRS. CRIPPS: One of the reasons we didn't look at vast increases -- believe me Walter, I wouldn't mind having a secretary to myself, instead of sharing with three. But I don't think the people of Alberta at this time would accept massive increases in government budgets. Quite frankly, I'm not prepared to go to the people of Alberta and suggest that they accept it either. The neighbor down the road has had to cut his staff and payroll. If I came home -- and believe me; he's monitoring what the government is doing. Each and every one of us is being monitored by our constituents in what the government is doing.

I think the proposition that Alan has brought forward is in keeping with what Dr. Reid has suggested. The office of the Official Opposition performs a role. That's a function; there's no getting around it. If we designate the leader of another official party or a coalition, as we have . . .

DR. BUCK: Dr. Reid insists it's a parliamentary coalition.

MRS. CRIPPS: I don't care what you call it.

DR. REID: I don't know what else to call it.

DR. BUCK: It's a good term.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The initials are PC.

DR. REID: It's going to cause great confusion.

MRS. CRIPPS: To me it really looks as if those amounts and offices form the function you're talking about. Quite frankly, I couldn't sell \$637,000 and \$395,000 to my constituents for opposition roles. You go to exactly the same people as we do when you want a constituent problem solved. You phone the Minister of Education, or his EA, if it's an education problem. I do the same. You can't solve that problem. If it's that kind of problem, only the minister's office can solve it. Quite frankly, I think your figures are extravagant.

DR. BUCK: Mrs. Cripps, I would take my chances on what the people of this province think on the budget we're presenting. I say that, Shirley, as sincerely as I can. The people of this province have indicated through their ballots that they want the government they have. They have left the other role to four people. I'll take my chances with the voter, if they think we are trying to please them. So what's the question? The question is that you are saying that we do not have different roles. You are saying that we have the same roles.

MRS. CRIPPS: I agree with Ken; I'm saying that each and every one of us is expected and elected to represent a constituency. If the people in my constituency -- be they NDP, Liberal, WCC, or whatever -- have a problem, they call me. And I reply to the problem the same in every case, because they are my constituents. I expect to represent them fairly, and I do.

MR. MARTIN: I think we have to come back. I'll tell you this: \$300,000 is a severe cutback for us. Whether or not you people acknowledge it, we need the research to stay on this government. None of you has referred in fact at all to the political people hired by the cabinet ministers: the deputy ministers and all the rest of it. That's very different from what the Official Opposition has. You have the back-up of the total government. But we're still studying the same estimates. That's different, a different role from the government backbenchers.

Frankly, if you think we can do the job on this, we can't. If you want to go out and tell Albertans that we can spend money on all sorts of things, but we want to dismantle the opposition, we'll take you on there too. But that's not what we want to do. We want to have a reasonable position from this Members' Services Committee. That is not a reasonable position. I can tell you that we cannot keep researchers on with that.

It's interesting to me how government members here know what it takes to run the Official Opposition. How many of you have been in opposition and know what you have to do? Now I haven't heard from all the government members, but I'm beginning to think that this was prearranged. I hope I'm wrong -- that we come in with these figures.

DR. REID: We didn't arrange anything.

MR. MARTIN: Okay. Then I'll accept that. Then it's still on the table. I'm trying to tell you as honestly as I can. You figure out who we're going against. You're part of that government, but I think you're fair-minded people and know that we have to perform a job too. We shouldn't get hung up with numbers. I would like to have 10 other members so I could relax every once in a while, instead of every day . . . But I have to ask the same questions; Grant has to ask the same questions. If we had 10 people, we'd still have to get ready for the same sorts of things, as Official Opposition.

MRS. CRIPPS: You have to remember that Mr. Lougheed had one researcher/secretary when he was in the Official Opposition.

MR. MARTIN: I don't care. The point is that when Mr. Lougheed came, he was very generous with the opposition the first time because he understood the role. Now we seem to be cutting it back. He was the one who did increase it the first time; it's to his credit. I want to know where we're going here. If this is the final thing because of the overwhelming majority of government members, then frankly we're wasting our time.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, first of all, I think it has to be noted, and I guess I will make the clarification for Mr. Martin, that I'm unaware that senior people in the public service of the province of Alberta are simply political researchers, as he might suggest. They are members of the public service, hired on the merit principle.

Secondly, I'd like to perhaps react very briefly to my good friend from Clover Bar, who indicated that the people of Alberta had inflicted upon him and certain numbers of his colleagues a responsibility to speak out for them. As I recall in the November 2 election, in the constituency of Barrhead, the Independent candidate received 32 votes at the ballot box out of 10,000. So in fact if he feels he has an onerous responsibility speaking on behalf of the 32 Independents in that constituency . . . (interjection).

I would like to reiterate, Mr. Chairman, that Mr. Martin asked us to be reasonable and realistic. I think those words are very important. Let's be reasonable and realistic. Let's bear in mind that all members in this Legislature and all members around this table were elected in a constituency to represent the people of that constituency. Now we're also Members of the Legislative Assembly of the province of Alberta. I think all of us have empathy, an understanding, and a global reaction to what is happening in the province of Alberta.

Unfortunately, I have to say that I resent the suggestion that there was some collusion here. The position I'm taking is that, in fact, the view put forward by Mr. Hyland is a heck of a lot more generous than I'm prepared to support at this time. And on the basis of one request that is being forward by one caucus tonight -- there is a position put forward here by a member of this committee from Cypress. I want to repeat: I think that position being put forward by the Member for Cypress is a heck of a lot more generous. It's absolutely unfair to the constituents I represent for me to go back to them and say, look, I can only provide one-fourth, one-fifth, or one-tenth of the service provided by somebody who may be in another caucus. I have to answer that question to them. Frankly at this point, I don't have the answer if we're going to have such a tremendous amount of inequity and unfairness with respect to how individual members of this particular Assembly are treated.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It appears to me that we've been discussing three budgets in one discussion. If there is no further discussion, is there a motion? Let's take them one at a time. Government members budget, \$869,267. Is there a motion?

MRS. EMBURY: I'll move, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you ready for the question? All those in favor? Opposed?

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I want my vote to be recorded in favor. But I also want it recorded that these are the figures that the caucuses presented, and that is the figure they think they need to do their job. I am supporting it on that basis.

MR. MARTIN: The same follows for me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. The Official NDP Opposition offices. Do you want to take that in two parts?

MR. MARTIN: Yes, one should be Leader of the Official Opposition. I propose that we do it that way.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there a motion?

MR. MARTIN: My motion would be that it be what we've proposed. It was \$230,000 for the Leader of the Official Opposition last year. We put in a modest increase for salary increases and that works out to \$243,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You're moving that be approved?

MR. MARTIN: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there any discussion? All those in favor? Those opposed. The motion is lost.

Is there any other motion under this heading?

MR. HYLAND: I could make a motion. I put out this suggestion that everybody has a copy of, although it runs over the two groups, so it could be split.

MR. MARTIN: Well, if we're not going to look at an increase at all, can we make a motion that \$230,000 from last year that was for the Leader of the Official Opposition?

DR. REID: I haven't got those figures. They haven't presented them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It really wouldn't matter as long we had the figures. There is now a motion that the Leader of the Official Opposition be funded at how much?

MR. MARTIN: It was \$230,000 last year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Two hundred and thirty thousand dollars.

MRS. CRIPPS: Well he is. I don't see the \$34,000 that the Leader of the Opposition gets for being the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You mean his salary. It doesn't belong in here.

MISS BLANEY: It's on the first line of that first page, Shirley. It's \$37,044.

MRS. CRIPPS: I'm looking at Alan's proposal here: office of the Leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. HYLAND: It's meant to be part of it, just like a minister's office has that minister's salary in it.

MRS. EMBURY: So you're saying it's over and above this 200,000, Alan?

MR. HYLAND: No, I'm saying out of the \$200,000 is the extra salary the Leader of the Opposition gets.

MRS. CRIPPS: Which is an extra \$34,000?

MR. HYLAND: My proposal is that when you look at what it says in the budget for a minister's office, his salary is included in that amount.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Chairman, it seems to me we weren't looking at minister's offices before, and now we turn around and we are. I tried to raise that point a number of times. That's who we're dealing with, in terms of the estimates. So we use these terms whenever it seems to be convenient.

MR. HYLAND: It's my understanding that in parliamentary history, procedure -- whatever you want to call it -- Leader of the Opposition is a position equivalent to or on the stature of a cabinet minister.

MR. MARTIN: Alan, my point is, when you were comparing the numbers you were using a global budget for the Leader of the Opposition in comparing him with what you people are getting. Now you've turned around and comparing him to the ministers. It can't be both ways. The salary was included as a global budget before.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, I don't understand this conversation. Is the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood really suggesting that the budget for the office of the Leader of the Official Opposition should be equivalent to the combined budgets of 27 or 28 . . .

MR. MARTIN: No, Dr. Reid. My point is that when we were talking about the global picture, you people were saying that we were getting way too much, which I disagree with, and you were comparing the Leader of the Opposition with the total budget just of the government backbenchers. Now we're turning around and comparing it with the minister's office. The point that I was trying to make is we don't deal with the government backbenchers. We need the research staff because we're dealing with the ministers.

DR. REID: I was under the impression that we were dealing only with the item of the salary increment for ministers or the Leader of the Official Opposition?

MR. MARTIN: No, he was talking about the total.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I thought we did talk about the salary, but evidently we're talking about the total.

MRS. CRIPPS: My question was directly related to salary.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I was mistaken. It's the MLA portion that is statutory and it's covered under the other estimates that we've already approved. This is the special salary which, for the Leader of the Opposition, is equivalent to that for a cabinet minister other than the Premier.

We can only proceed on the basis of motions.

MR. MARTIN: I made a motion that it be \$230,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you ready for the question? All those in favor of that motion?

DR. BUCK: Are we looking at a vote?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. The Official Opposition's budget is in two parts. The one part which has been proposed at \$243,966 is referred to as being for the Leader of the Official Opposition. That's the part we're dealing with. There's been a suggestion that if it's not acceptable at that amount, the motion now is that it be set at \$230,000.

MR. MARTIN: And that 230,000 is what it was last year for the Leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would those in favor of that motion please say, or show their hands. Opposed? The motion is lost.

We still need motions if we're going to move ahead.

MRS. CRIPPS: I'll make a motion that we look at the three offices, the area that Alan has here in brackets: the office of the Leader of the Official Opposition at \$200,000, regardless of who it is -- then we've got something to work under -- the office of the leader of a minority party with 5 per cent of the vote and two members at \$125,000; the office of the leader of a parliamentary coalition at \$100,000. I guess that covers the offices, and the other would be a separate vote.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're really dealing with the Official Opposition, unless the meeting decides to deal with both together.

MRS. CRIPPS: Okay, then I'll just make a motion that we accept the office of the Leader of the Official Opposition at \$200,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there any further discussion on that?

MR. MARTIN: I cannot understand how you people can sit here and talk about how responsible you're being. You only have a major increase, and you cut us back by \$30,000 from the same office. At least show some consistency. This is looking to me like a railroad job. I'm telling you that a lot of people will hear about this because it's becoming too convenient right now, as far as I'm concerned, the way this is going.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there any other discussion on the motion?

MRS. CRIPPS: Just a minute. He asked a question. I'd like to answer. Last year, there were six opposition members.

MR. MARTIN: This is the Leader of the Official Opposition, one person.

MRS. CRIPPS: I know, but . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't know if we had a breakdown last year.

MR. MARTIN: Yes, we did from when we went through the process earlier on.

MRS. CRIPPS: We don't have it.

MR. MARTIN: It's in the book, if you read it. Remember when we worked it out, in terms of having the discussion with the Independents. That was taken out and is from the recordings that it was agreed that \$230,000 was in fact -- it might be a few dollars more, but it's in that range.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's a discussion now in regard to this motion as to what last year's figure was for the Leader of the Official Opposition. I don't know whether that information is here or not. Is it? My recollection is that we didn't separate out the Leader of the Opposition in a total in last year's budget.

MR. MARTIN: No, but we did the 450, take away the 216 that they put down as the Social Credit caucus, and that was talked about. Therefore, the Leader of the Opposition's was 230,000.

DR. REID: When were those figures developed, Mr. Chairman? I have no information that indicates anything about a budget for the office of the Leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Those figures for the opposition were developed after the election.

MR. MARTIN: This is what we've worked out when we had the recordings. I have it in here that there was in fact \$216,000 for the Social Credit caucus.

DR. REID: But for three people?

MR. MARTIN: The total was 470, leaving 230 for the Leader of the Official Opposition.

MISS BLANEY: Four. We still had Bob Clark with us.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right. But the question is in regard to last year's estimates.

MRS. CRIPPS: We didn't have it in last year's estimates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question that I understood was asked was whether in last year's estimates -- the estimates for '82-83 -- there was a separated out total of various amounts for the Leader of the Opposition. The answer I got from the chief administrative officer of the Assembly is there was not.

MISS BLANEY: There's no breakdown. We've never separated the two before.

MR. MARTIN: But we put one down as the Social Credit caucus for 216,000. Take 216 away from 450 and the rest of that had to be for the Leader of the Official Opposition.

DR. REID: We're talking statistics, Mr. Chairman, on the basis that it was done last time on an apparently global budget basis but with some breakdown as to the element. And we've already done the government members in a global budget. Should we not look at doing the Official Opposition one on a global budget basis?

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is a motion before the committee by Mrs. Cripps that the office of the Leader of the Opposition be funded at \$200,000. It's in regard to that motion that we've been asking in what manner the estimates were submitted to the committee for approval last year.



DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, a question. Last year the total for the office of the Leader of the Official Opposition was \$445,918. That was the total budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That included the caucus.

DR. BUCK: Yes, the breakdown and those figures we pulled out in December for interim budgeting. We looked at a figure of \$230,000 for the office of the Leader of the Official Opposition. That was sort of the breakdown we had.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But that wasn't the question. The question was asked as to what manner the budget for the Official Opposition was submitted when this committee was approving it for '82-83 and as to whether an allotment for the Leader of the Opposition was separated from the rest. The answer I have from the administration, and we have last year's budget here, is that it was not. It was a total, global budget for the Official Opposition.

MR. BLAIN: We only had three in last year's budget which related, Mr. Chairman. The only entry in last year's budget which related directly to the Leader of the Opposition was his salary.

MR. MARTIN: All the figures we were going by were what we had discussions about before.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We were discussing figures in the fall, and I don't remember now how those were arrived at. But in any event, that wasn't the question that was asked.

MR. MARTIN: In fairness, it is. If the figures we're going by, that we talked about -- when we take out what they considered the Social Credit caucus -- and that were agreed with by all the members when we were discussing it, then the rest has to be associated with the Leader of the Official Opposition. What else could it be?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Apparently that was a sort of cost accounting exercise that was gone into after the election. The budget itself was not submitted.

MR. MARTIN: I recognize that. But if you try to break it down, we're saying that by the cost account -- I recognize it was a total budget. But looking at it, they're saying that roughly \$230,000 was given to the Leader of the Official Opposition.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Chairman, in view of the fact that I didn't have that information at hand when I made the motion, and Alan probably didn't have it when he made his proposal, and what we're trying to establish is a principle of an office of the Leader of the Official Opposition -- at least that's what my motion is trying to establish -- I suggest we vote on the motion.

MR. PURDY: I haven't voted on any of the motion because I have some difficulties with it. If we're going to relate the Leader of the Opposition to a cabinet minister, we should relate him to that budget on the average. I'm not exactly sure what it is, but he gets the same salary as a cabinet minister, he gets the automobile, and those types of things. So realistically, I think we should be looking at something in the neighborhood of what a cabinet minister is getting. If my figures are correct, it's about \$240,000 to \$250,000, depending on the workload that goes through that office.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So we have the motion by Mrs. Cripps that the office of the leader of the Opposition be funded at \$200,000. Is there any further discussion?

MR. MARTIN: Yes, I think what Mr. Purdy is saying -- what is a cabinet minister then, if we're going to be compared with them. Do we have all . . .

MRS. CRIPPS: Two hundred thousand is pretty close.

MR. KOWALSKI: It would be very, very simple, Mr. Chairman, to ascertain that. We have the estimates before us. They're in the blue book. There are 29 departments. We just extract the minister's office out of each one, add them all up, divide them by 29, and get your answer.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, if we're using that reasoning, why would we not look at the Leader of the Official Opposition being funded the same as the Premier, because he is the premier-in-waiting. That's what the parliamentary system is all about. So I don't think that he should be looked at as being the same as a cabinet minister. We look at his salary, but his office is what we're talking about, not his salary and his support staff. He is the premier-in-waiting. We're looking at that office, not a cabinet minister's office.

DR. REID: That I find difficult to accept.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is your wish in regard to the motion? Are you ready for the question?

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I can't understand how we can come here and just pull figures out of the air. I can't understand that, unless it has been cut and dried. Or did somebody just pick a figure or what did we do?

MR. MARTIN: Yes, that's what I don't understand.

DR. BUCK: On what basis? At least the hon. Member for Stony Plain says at least we'll compare with the cabinet ministers. At least there's some rationale there. Well I say, let's use the Premier's. Let's compare with the Premier. I've got as much right to use that as a premise as the hon. member because we're just picking figures.

DR. REID: Can you give me some figures?

MISS BLANEY: 445,918.

DR. REID: What was Grant Notley's budget.

MISS BLANEY: 610,742.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That was for five members because . . .

DR. REID: Six. Four Social Credit . . .

MR. STEFANIUK: The WCC budget was not in that figure. The WCC budget was never approved.

DR. REID: That's why I didn't include it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So this was for five members.

MRS. CRIPPS: But Clark's was.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, right. For part of the year, we had Bob Clark.

DR. REID: So that's what I'm going at. The Kesler situation was so difficult because it was never budgeted, by my understanding. I can't find it anywhere.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There was a very simple reason for that.

DR. REID: So we've got 610,000 for six, including the Leader of the Official Opposition, including the leader of a party. We're now talking about 500,000 by Mr. Hyland . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The total in last year's budget for the opposition was 610,742. The totals proposed today are 1,033,581. The total increase is just short of 70 per cent; it's 69.23 per cent.

DR. BUCK: I don't agree with your math, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It isn't mine. I'm just reading.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, the total budget of all the opposition last year, had it all been used, would have been \$710,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 610.

DR. BUCK: It was Mr. Kesler. There was a special . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, Kesler was never voted.

DR. BUCK: Well he was going to have some money. Somebody signed a special warrant or something. Somebody promised Mr. Kesler \$101,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, we were transferring already voted funds and the election intervened. The reason for this committee never having approved Mr. Kesler's budget, although we did provide him with money, was that we were still working on figures. You may remember we asked the Social Credit opposition to do some cost accounting and to separate out the cost of the Leader of the Opposition. This committee never did get a chance to approve those figures because the election was called. Consequently, although Mr. Kesler was funded, it came out of what is now a total of \$610,742.

DR. BUCK: It came out of the 610?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. So according to this arithmetic, it should be easy to establish right here what the total requested this year is. The total requested this year, according to what I've been given here, is 1,033,581. Compared with 610,742 for the previous fiscal year, that represents an increase of exactly 69.23 per cent.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, that's exactly the direction it should be going. There are four people to do the job of . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm not commenting on the merits. I'm just giving figures.

MR. MARTIN: Well if we want to play numbers games, as some of the members here do, comparing us with backbenchers . . . Let's take the Premier's office --

over \$1 million for one member. You say, he has a lot of different departments. Well, the Leader of the Opposition has the same number of departments. We have to check.

MRS. EMBURY: It's a good game, isn't it, Ray, to pull out numbers.

MR. MARTIN: You are the ones who pulled out the numbers.

MRS. EMBURY: We're pulling out a lot of numbers, all of us. Okay, as opposition members you have both submitted a budget. In trying to work out mentally what might be a reasonable increase, even though you've stated that there's one or two less to do the work you have to do, I still would like to remember what happened on November 2. I think there's a fair indication with the numbers that were elected to the government. That doesn't decrease your workload, I'll guarantee you. But I think there's a message there from the people of Alberta. I do find that you've asked for an extremely large increase that's totally unrealistic today. You've heard me say it in this committee on these other budgets. That's the one thing that I cannot go back to my constituency -- and I haven't very often made that statement, since I've been elected -- with a clear conscience and vote in large increases when there are far too many people with unemployment down there.

If you want another alternative -- I thought that I would try to grasp the ideas here, but it seemed to me there was some idea of establishing some principles that we can operate on because we have had different circumstances in the last few years in Alberta. I assumed that was the beginning of what we were looking at. But maybe if you don't care to look at establishing some type of framework that we could operate from, given our differences and what will happen, I'd like to suggest that we just give 500,000 to the Leader of the Opposition and he divide it all up. That's my latest proposal.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm not entering the debate. That was a proposal that was made in 1975 when the opposition was given an additional \$150,000. The agreement was that the Leader of the Official Opposition should allocate it among the six opposition members. He declined to do that. From then on, the money was allocated in the budgets themselves, rather than left to him to divide. I think it's a point of order that if we're going to pass a resolution here allocating a lump sum to the Leader of the Opposition to divide up, we would perhaps first have to get his agreement that he would do it. That's why I'm mentioning that a previous leader of the opposition refused to do that.

MR. HYLAND: Well, there have been some comments about this paper that I handed out. All the other provinces listed have amounts that show per member taken into account, whatever allotment they make for leader of their official opposition. At least that's my understanding of the numbers that exist there. They've taken that into account, and that's why it shows the other two as a total, without allotment for the leader of the opposition off, because the other numbers have taken that into account.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, the Member for Calgary North West said that everybody's picking out figures. I was just going over these figures and if we were to do it on the basis of the size of the opposition as opposed to what it was prior to the election with six members, we'd be looking at a budget, including an 8 per cent escalation, of a little under \$440,000. Now I think Mr. Hyland's suggestion is that we look at a budget for the opposition at \$500,000. So we're looking at a budgetary increase per member, if you look at it that way, of somewhere over 20 per cent for the opposition. That's the other side to the attempt to say it's being reduced. We can argue figures

about how to arrive at certain things until doomsday, but certainly the opposition, official and other, are not being treated on the same basis as the government members who are taking an approximately 8 per cent increase, allowing for numbers. For the opposition, we are looking at an increase of over 20 per cent, allowing for numbers. I think we can only take this process so far and go back to our constituents and justify it. I certainly cannot go back to my constituents and justify 70 per cent increases. I cannot do it.

MR. MARTIN: Frankly, that's a crock and you know it. I'm sure if you went back and told your members that you cut back the opposition budget, I'm sure they would be very pleased. I remind the members, before we get too arrogant about it, that 37 per cent of the people did not vote Conservative in the last election. That's certainly not reflected in the numbers we have, if we want to use those numbers. That's irrelevant, I agree, but that was brought up.

We keep going back to the comparison between government members and the role of the opposition. As a famous Conservative once said, that's like comparing apples and oranges. Throw in the cabinet ministers then if we're going to look at numbers. They've got political back-up staff, and nobody referred to that. They keep comparing us with a different role altogether. I'll go back. If there are 30 members, I wouldn't expect -- if we're going to look at principles, let's look at an overall realistic budget then for the opposition and not expected to go up each time there is another opposition member. Let's look at a global budget, rather than by numbers. The role is still the same.

The point about saving money -- remember that we have a very big role in terms of questioning budgets too. I'm telling you that as we go through, we have to look at billions of dollars. We need a research staff to do it, as do the Independents. I am telling you, as honestly as I can, that I would be prepared to compromise somewhat, but we thought it was realistic. But to come down to \$300,000 dismantles our research department, I can tell you that.

We were hoping, to be honest, that we could get some increase. But when we start comparing 77 per cent, you're taking two totally different functions. I just think it's wrong. I do not think the taxpayers of Alberta would look on it as being very appropriate that we cut back the opposition budget. It should at least be what it was before. The role hasn't changed; there are less members to do it. You need more researchers to look into it. That will save money for the taxpayers in the long run, if you have a strong opposition. That's one of the roles of the opposition.

MR. HYLAND: My understanding of the parliamentary system is -- Ray, you made the comment that not everybody voted for the government members. You represent one constituency like I represent one constituency. You don't represent everybody in the province that voted NDP. You have an extra role because of your place in opposition; I don't deny that. But to tie anything in with whatever your responsibilities are, for the percentage of the people voted for, I don't think that's right either. We're all MLAs. You have different responsibilities than I do. That's why I suggested a breakdown.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I don't know how long this filibuster can last. The budget last year for the total opposition was \$610,000 for six members. We are looking at a global increase of 8 per cent. That comes to \$659,000. The number of people who have to do the same job has decreased one-third. So if we were to increase that budget one-third to make up for the people we have to hire to do the job of the two members who are now dearly departed and have become Tories, then we're starting to look at a figure awfully close to \$1 million -- Ukrainian farmboy figures.

Mr. Chairman, we are not being unreasonable in our requests, when you put it down that way. But we're not asking to have the slack picked up. The four

opposition people would be happy to get last year's budget with an 8 per cent increase, broken down in the way that we presented it in December. Now I can't understand how anybody would think that's unreasonable, unless somebody in their wisdom has decided the opposition doesn't really matter; we will throw them some token money to say that they've been budgeted and let the charade go on.

Mr. Chairman, I am a reasonable person. I'm a hard-headed s.o.b. I didn't get to this Legislature by being a nice guy, but I'm trying to be a reasonable guy. If we looked at that global budget of \$610,000 and added 8 per cent, we can live with that. But if you want to be really realistic, it should be increased one-third because that's the workload the four of us have.

MRS. CRIPPS: Well, I just heard a new twist on democracy. If you don't get elected, then you hire people to do work.

DR. BUCK: Shirley, don't you know what the democratic, parliamentary process is?

MRS. CRIPPS: That's what I just heard you say.

DR. BUCK: That's right. That's exactly what you heard me say.

MRS. CRIPPS: Oh, come on, Walter.

DR. BUCK: Because otherwise you're saying that the democratic, parliamentary system doesn't matter.

MRS. CRIPPS: You're saying if the people elect me instead of you, you've got to hire someone to take my place. That's ridiculous.

DR. BUCK: You are starting to get the message.

MRS. CRIPPS: I think we have a motion on the table, Mr. Chairman. We should vote on it. We aren't getting anywhere.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you ready for the question?

MR. PENGELLY: I just have one observation to make. I have to agree with the hon. Member for Barrhead that I wouldn't be as charitable as it is here. I cannot see where two Independent members and the leader of the so-called coalition should get \$100,000. They're only representing two constituencies, as far as I'm concerned. They're not a registered party.

MR. PURDY: Not to speak for the members opposite me here, but to put it into perspective: they have to hire researchers, they have to hire secretarial staff. We have a pool; they don't.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm very reluctant and hesitant to answer Mr. Purdy's question, because there hasn't been time to check the figures. The average support staff per cabinet minister, on this year's estimates, has been calculated at \$230,000.

DR. BUCK: I guess you do look at those numbers, when you're reading them, Bill.

Mr. Chairman, I have one question of the committee. If the committee can answer this question for me, then I think I might be halfway satisfied, or I might even be fully satisfied. Why is this committee, in its wisdom, going to

cut the budget, not increase it 8 per cent, from \$610,000 down to what they're proposing? Can anybody tell me why this committee is giving that advice?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. Buck is calling for volunteers.

DR. REID: I'll volunteer on that, Mr. Chairman. I was looking at it from a philosophical standpoint; I was looking at it from the function of parliament standpoint. When I went back over last year's figures, I had difficulty following the system that was applied in order to arrive at figures for Mr. Sindlinger and for Mr. Kesler. Incidentally, I also had some difficulty with a figure that was arrived at for Mr. Notley. I could find no basis in the budget for the Social Credit caucus of four; I could find no basis for the funding of the office of the Leader of the Official Opposition. I didn't attach numbers to it, but I'm quite willing to back up the numbers that Mr. Hyland has attached to it.

I think it's unfortunate that in the past there appears to have been -- as far as I can make out, reading back -- several decisions made that applied to circumstances as they arose. Perhaps it's high time that we started to apply principles so that whatever happens during the sitting of this Legislature, we don't go through this discussion two or three more times. On that basis, I did my thinking that led to the statement I made in answer to Dr. Buck. I was attempting to cover all the situations I could see arising during the present Legislature in the next four years.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, will no one answer my question? Why are we cutting the opposition budget from \$610,000 to . . . I must have missed something, Ian.

DR. REID: I thought I answered. I didn't apply the same numbers -- as I said, these are Mr. Hyland's figures -- but I can support them. The principle I was going on, as I said at the beginning of this discussion, was that we should fund the office of the Leader of the Official Opposition. We should fund the office of the leader of a minority party that achieves some kind of parliamentary standing. Because of the present situation and history of the two independent members, I felt we should realistically fund the office of the leader of those Independents, which is the term the hon. Speaker has applied to the Member for Little Bow.

I find the sums of money allocated here in relation to the numbers of people in the opposition realistic. Obviously, some members in the opposition do not find them realistic, and that probably isn't surprising under the circumstances. But I would find great difficulty in accepting the other proposal put forward that we should look at a 70 per cent increase in the funding of the opposition parties in the Alberta Legislature from one year to another year when an election has intervened. As the Member for Calgary North West pointed out, the people of Alberta must have had something in the back of their minds.

MR. MARTIN: It seems like we're going around the mulberry bush, because nobody's listening. Nobody's talked about the minister's back-up. Government members conveniently miss that when they talk. Some people snickered when I mentioned over a million dollars to one man, the Premier. But if you wanted to play that sort of numbers game, we should be looking at it all. All we're doing is comparing apples and oranges. Frankly, I'm beginning to believe that this was settled ahead. When I tell you that \$300,000 dismantles the research, I'm not kidding; I'm not making up rules. Look at the cost of staff, and we pay our people less than others.

But the role of the opposition is important, and it's different from the role of backbenchers. Some of you will be cabinet ministers in the future, you'll have a big staff, and the opposition will be asking questions. What I'm trying to say, clearly, if you want to establish principles, let's look at a global figure for the opposition rather than numbers. Because, I've said before, I wouldn't expect a big increase if there was an opposition of 35; let's use that as an example. If you have the research staff and the people there, you don't need a number of new researchers. The only thing you'd need to increase would perhaps be secretarial staff. So the corresponding increase would not multiply 15 or 16 times. So we should be looking at the overall role of the opposition.

How come it is never mentioned what the ministers have and the fact that one man has over a million dollars. And you think we're being frivolous. That doesn't come up here. When we point out that we have to deal with the ministers -- that's who we're dealing with most of the time. I don't remember asking questions on estimates to you people. So that's who we in the opposition are dealing with all the time. We're trying to say that the role is clearly different, but it seems to me that we're not getting anywhere. It seems to be a preconceived notion that we're going to cut, we're going to compare the opposition members to how much we're getting, feel sorry for ourselves, pass what we want, and then screw the opposition. And that's not acceptable.

The Premier, when he was in opposition, fought very hard -- and I agree -- and he raised the opposition when he came in. I would be surprised if he felt the same way about the opposition. This seems to be the rate we're going. If this is the case, if it's a preconceived notion, I don't know what we're wasting our time for. Because obviously, you can outvote us. But I just say to you, take a look at it.

MR. PURDY: Well, I think we should get away from this notion of what the now Premier said in opposition, because there was no funding for either caucus at that time. Walter will agree with me there; there was no money for government members and no nothing for the opposition either. So I think we have to look at 1983. I would come up with a figure now of 230, approximately what we have said the Leader of the Opposition should be worth in his office. I have no other thought on it because I haven't had time to think about the Independents or . . .

MR. HYLAND: I think we may have been a little high.

MR. PURDY: I think we may have made a mistake, too, by talking global tonight.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The figure is being reworded.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, if the average across there is \$230,000, I have no difficulty in making it \$230,000 for the office of the Leader of the Official Opposition, if those figures are correct.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It was with some reluctance that I gave that figure, because it's being done in an awful hurry. If we could have anticipated that this information was needed, I would feel a little safer in giving it to you.

DR. REID: In view of the fact that it is now 8 p.m. -- and to give Miss Blaney a chance to be a little more comfortable with the statistics she's producing -- perhaps we should just leave it at that and see if that figure is correct. Personally, I have no difficulty if they come up with a figure of \$230,000, which presumably Mr. Hyland didn't have available . . .



MR. CHAIRMAN: The calculator works fine. We'll have a check on the figure shortly.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, may I just explain these figures, while we're doing some additions. From the 1983-84 estimates, we've taken each of those figures that is applicable to the minister's office. In the case of the Premier's office, I believe there are certain departments being looked after.

MR. STEFANIUK: At the moment, we're dividing only by 24 which is the number of figures we have. There is one department which is showing a very low figure -- and I'd have to go back to it now to try to find it -- and it is not being identified as the minister's office; it is being identified slightly differently.

MR. HYLAND: Is that Consumer and Corporate Affairs?

MR. PURDY: I think that's Economic Development you're looking at.

MRS. EMBURY: Mr. Chairman, I don't think we established how long we're going to meet tonight. We normally quit about ten to eight.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I guess it's open to anyone to move a motion that we conclude by a certain time.

MR. HYLAND: What do we get?

MISS BLANEY: \$226,413.41.

MR. STEFANIUK: The Department of Economic Development is presented somewhat differently. The minister's salaries and benefits are shown at 81,600, which appears to be only the salaries of the two ministers, as opposed to any support services. We can't identify it from this presentation any better than that.

MR. HYLAND: 230,000.

MRS. CRIPPS: I'll amend my motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: When you're averaging, are you counting those two ministers as two or as one?

MR. STEFANIUK: We're counting them as one. I've explained what we've done. We have 24 separate figures. We have added those and divided by 24, and we come up with an average of \$226,000. Having regard for the fact that Economic Development has presented us with figures which represent only the salaries of the two ministers, and having regard for the fact that Executive Council, the Premier's office, includes more than one minister, you see that they're somewhat distorted. That's what we come up with in a hurry.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mrs. Cripps is asking for leave to withdraw her motion. Is it agreed?

MR. HYLAND: Are you withdrawing it, or changing the numbers?

MRS. CRIPPS: I'll just change the number to 230.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's a substitute motion for \$230,000 for the office of the Leader of the Official Opposition, including, as the figures show here, his salary and other benefits. Are you ready for the question? All those in favor of the motion? Those opposed? The motion is carried.

We now must deal with the funding for the official opposition caucus.

MRS. CRIPPS: Well, if we have them the same as a cabinet minister, then they're the same as we are.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, we've dealt with the Leader of the Official Opposition; we have not dealt with the budget of the opposition caucus. Is there a motion with regard to the opposition caucus budget? It has been submitted at \$394,215.

MR. PURDY: Mr. Chairman, this is why I asked the question of what is involved. This is maybe where we made the mistake of going on the global end of it with our own budget. I'd like to know what's involved in their office. How many research people have they got? How many secretarial people have they got?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The committee seemed to have come to a consensus.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, I'm having a little difficulty. I'm the government Whip, and we were supposed to be at caucus some seven or eight minutes ago.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, what is your wish? The particulars are in the working papers. But as we agreed to deal with the thing globally before, but of course the committee can change its mind.

MR. HYLAND: I'd make the motion: \$50,000 per member attached to that amount of the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In other words, \$100,000 for the caucus budget of the official opposition.

MR. HYLAND: But that it's noted that it's set at the rate of \$50,000 per member not at a global figure of \$100,000, so we know how it's arrived at.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The only thing you might be achieving there is that if they want to pass funds back and forth, you may be preventing that.

DR. REID: Perhaps amend the motion to read: \$100,000 for two members.

MR. HYLAND: Same difference.

MR. MARTIN: With all due respect, that does mean a cutback. I'm sure I've said it all tonight, and I'm not going to change anybody's mind on this. But I leave with the committee that this is unacceptable to us. If we were going to be comparing figures of people -- say, government and opposition members -- I certainly wish that we could have brought in the cabinet ministers and all their back-up. I've said that a number of times. At this point, it seems like I'm dealing with closed minds about it, so I just put my vote in -- I'm going to be against it. I protest.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It hasn't been put to a vote yet.

MR. MARTIN: No, but I know it will be. At this point, I'm saying that I hope people would reconsider. If they want to come back, I'll be honest -- some

600,000; we didn't expect to get that. That was an increase like any bargaining level, but never in our wildest dreams did we think we'd get cut like this.

Now, I don't know whether the government members brought theirs in in terms of what they thought was realistic or a bargaining point. But because we've heard speeches and things about how much the opposition was getting, we really didn't expect to get that. But I can tell you that this seriously undermines us. I protest most seriously that when we were discussing it, we didn't discuss ministers and all the rest of the back-up the government has. It looks like a lot of money when you're comparing just the government backbenchers, but I assure you that they know as well as I do that someday they'll be in the opposition; rest assured. And we all have long memories; I can tell you that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other discussion?

MR. PURDY: Mr. Chairman, because of the lateness, I would like to have some more information from the NDP caucus of what's involved here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The breakdown is there. It's in your working papers.

MR. PURDY: We've allocated 230,000 for the office of the Leader of the Opposition. I would like to know if there's any duplication of what is asked for in the 394,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I haven't compared the breakdown between the office of the Leader of the Opposition and the caucus budget, but there are separate breakdowns, presumably no duplication. Perhaps Mr. Martin or Mr. Mandelbaum could tell us.

MR. MARTIN: Well, what we did was move some staff that we had previously over into contract positions, because income tax people -- I imagine government members are in the same position -- are looking that they should be on permanent staff, and we had a number of our people on contract last time. We made that sort of shift across. Our purpose with this budget was to keep the people on staff that we already had. I'd certainly be glad at any point to go over with Mr. Purdy -- I imagine that at this late hour people wouldn't be very interested but if you want to postpone it, we'll sit down with Mr. Purdy, or whoever, and go over our budget and what we're doing. We'd be quite prepared to do that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's a motion by Mr. Hyland that the opposition caucus budget be approved at \$100,000. Are you ready for the question?

MR. HYLAND: I want the minutes to show that it's for two members.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, just before we do our thing, what justification does this committee have for coming in here with a private member of the committee picking a figure of \$50,000 out of the air, as opposed to what the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood -- the people have had input. There are reasons behind every one of these entries: why they feel they need that staff, how many staff, what they're going to be used for. Every dollar and cent is accounted for. We are going to ask this committee to have a vote on a figure that's been basically pulled out of the sky.

I would like to ask the member who's making the presentation how he arrived at that figure and how he breaks down the \$50,000. I'm not ready to vote on the basis that someone brings in a figure with no breakdown.

DR. REID: Well, I can't relate it to the previous official opposition, because it's not done that way.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there any other discussion on the motion by Mr. Hyland that the opposition caucus budget for two members be set at \$100,000. All those in favor of the motion? Opposed? The motion is lost. Is there another motion?

MR. MARTIN: I'll make a motion then, if I can just take a minute for figures here.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, I'm sorry, but I'm going to have to pull the government members out of here. We're now a quarter of an hour late and we have to get over there. I move that we adjourn.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's a motion for adjournment. Before I put it, may I ask what your wishes are with regard to another meeting.

MR. MARTIN: Can I make a motion and see if it proceeds with you? And if it does, quickly; if not, then we'll adjourn. If I break even, fine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's a motion on the floor. I'll have to get consent if another motion is going to supercede it. The motion is for adjournment. Now we have a proposal that another motion should supercede that. Are you agreed? Mr. Martin wants to make a motion which he thinks may untie the knot.

DR. REID: I put a motion on the table to adjourn.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you want the question on the motion to adjourn, or do you want the motion? All those in favor of the motion to adjourn? So we're adjourned *sine die*, as they say. That means without a date.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, when are you going to be back from . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: On the 17th. I was going to say in that regard, Mr. Appleby has agreed to chair the committee if you decide to meet while I'm away. But he asked me to be sure to ask you if that would be acceptable. Is that acceptable? All right. So we're adjourned, presumably to meet again at the call of the Chair by arrangement, and Mr. Appleby will chair the next meeting if it's held before May 17.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, before we leave, is there any indication when the committee could get together? We all have our notebooks here, and we all know what commitments we have.

DR. REID: I know of commitments tomorrow at dinner time. I know of commitments on Wednesday evening. I know of commitments on Thursday at dinner time.

DR. BUCK: Let's look at next week. Can we pick a date next week and see how it flies?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next Monday. Should I ask Mr. Appleby to have notices sent out for a meeting next Monday.

DR. BUCK: What time, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: If the House isn't going to sit Monday evening, it would seem practical to have it start at 5:45, as we did tonight. And we can have a little bit of sustenance brought in. If the House is going to sit, then we'll want to go down to the cafeteria for a meal. In that event, I'd suggest it be at 6:15.

DR. BUCK: But it will be Monday night then. The chairman will decide what happens.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll leave it to Mr. Appleby, if you agree.

*The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.*