

[Chairman: Mr. Amerongen]

[8:35 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Perhaps we could come to order. The first item is approval of the minutes of the meeting of July 27, 1983. Are there any comments about those minutes?

DR. REID: There are lots of them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. They're really more than minutes; they're minutes plus summarizing remarks.

MR. PENGELLY: It's a long time to sit beside a telephone. That's why I'm here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh. Sore ear. You have to be careful how you say sore ear. If you run it together, it sounds different.

Is there a motion?

DR. REID: I'll move that we adopt them. I read them at home.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. On that point, with regard to future minutes I'd like to make a suggestion to the committee. The preparation of these minutes, which has really been very well done by Mrs. Louise Empson, is a rather difficult task, because the way in which we've been keeping the minutes thus far, not only are motions, reports, and things of that kind that you usually find in minutes recorded, but there is an addition, what you might call a summarizing of the intent of various things that are said.

My suggestion is that we forego that, that we have minutes in the ordinary way, and if we want to see what was said, we refer to the transcript. We do that in the House, and it seems to me that if it's good enough for the House, it should be good enough for this committee. It would make it a great deal easier for the secretary simply to record motions and reports and, if we want to see the background, leave it to us to do our own editorializing or summarizing out of the transcript. The transcripts aren't that long, anyway. Is that agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. As far as I'm aware, the business arising out of the minutes has pretty well all been looked after in the items on today's agenda. Dr. Reid and Mr. Kowalski have to be away not later than 10, and it's been suggested that we therefore start with two other items, one of which I was going to bring up under "other business", and the other is presently item 8.

Under "other business", the item is this. Some weeks ago, possibly six or seven, I received a memo from Ray Speaker, the leader of the Independents, saying that under the circumstances of last year's budget process in this committee, the Independents would not be submitting a budget. The Official Opposition, as I understand it, took the same position at that time. However, as a result of discussions with Doug Blain, the Official Opposition has decided that they will provide a budget, and we hope to have it by the end of this week. The Independents, however, are adamant that they won't supply a budget. Since our next meeting probably will be dealing with budget, the question is: what does this committee wish to do in regard to the lack of a budget from the

Independents?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, have you notified both opposition groups that this committee is requesting a budget from them? Has there been a formal memo on it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh yes.

MR. KOWALSKI: Has a deadline been applied to it as well?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. The Independents, as I say, have outright refused, so the deadline doesn't matter. The Official Opposition has assured us that we'll likely have the budget by the end of this week.

MR. KOWALSKI: Then if the other group fails to provide us with one, I think at the appropriate time, when we're having that meeting and discussion, we'll just make the decision then; but until then, keep the thing open. If they do not provide one, there's nothing we can do with it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, may I just remind the committee that under those circumstances, we will not be able to prepare an overall summary of the Legislative Assembly budget. Consequently, that would have to be prepared after a decision is made by this committee relative to a budget for the Independent members.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, I know that this year we were sort of at the last gasp in getting the budget for the Legislative Assembly, but that was because this committee couldn't be struck until the House was called into session. On the presumption that we're going to sort of follow the usual budgetary timetable, I think that that decision, when it has to be made — if it has to be made — will be in ample time to prepare the Legislative Assembly budget for submission to the Provincial Treasurer, once we've completed it. So I don't think it's really a difficulty. I'm like Mr. Kowalski; I don't think we have to address the issue at the moment, because at the moment it is still a non-issue, in that we do not have the concrete evidence.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, I only point that out for one reason. We have traditionally come in with an overall summary of the Legislative Assembly's estimates, and members have been able to read, the first day when they consider the budget, the bottom line for the Legislative Assembly overall, including the percentage differential from the previous year. This year they obviously would not be able to do that.

MRS. CRIPPS: I understood that we established a formula last year for all the budgets. I would assume we would base our budget estimates on that formula, basically.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would you agree that the matter could be deferred until the next meeting and that at that time, we could consider what you've just said as one of the options?

MRS. CRIPPS: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Is that agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. MANDELBAUM: I'm sorry for being late. What Mrs. Cripps brought up actually comes to the heart of the problem that we had in working on the budget. We weren't sure whether the budget was to be approached on a global basis or on an item of expenditure basis; also, if it were to be arrived at on the basis of a formula that comes out of government members' budget as opposed to our own. The last budget discussion didn't leave it certain whether the formula that was talked about at that time was just a formula used by government members to arrive at their estimate of what we should use for that time only, or whether there was an ongoing formula.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The budgets that have been prepared so far — and I think they're all in except for the two opposition ones — have been prepared on an itemized basis. It would seem to me, if the committee agrees, that the budget might be prepared for the Official Opposition in the usual way — this is another year — and it can then be discussed in the usual way by the committee. Is that agreeable to everyone? Does somebody want to make another suggestion?

MR. HYLAND: Last year was a separate year, and I think I was the one that made the motion — or Shirley; I forget which one of us — that it would make it easier with a global figure, and government caucus, opposition, or whoever, would slot that money in as it was spent, wherever it fit, or Treasury would do that. You had your budget to live with, and you weren't supposed to exceed it. You had your parameters. But then, as you say, this year it could be something different. I thought we established something there so we didn't have to get down to saying that we need one more secretary and the opposition needs two more, and all those sorts of things. I thought we were trying to get away from those kinds of things.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Then would you be going to the point where you would say the overall budget is so much and you may spend it as you wish, and there's unlimited transferability from one subcategory to another?

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, in a discussion last year, I think what we started off with was trying to get some form of rational process instead of what had been a sequence of decisions made in relation to the changes in the make-up of the Assembly during the last Legislature, where, when you looked at them in retrospect, the changes in budget allowances did not, in my humble opinion, follow any pattern that seemed to establish what would happen if there were similar changes during this Legislature.

What we were trying to do was establish a base budget for the entity of the Leader of the Official Opposition, for the entity of the parliamentary coalition, and then to make some form of reasonable allowance for the back-up for the individual members of those caucuses. That was the concept we were working on. Inevitably, that becomes to some extent a global budget type of pattern. It may be that the individual caucuses may well do their own budgetary estimates item by item, but last year we approved in blocks the funding for the government caucus, the Official Opposition caucus, and the Independent caucus. We didn't approve it item by item, so that those caucuses could, if they wished, transfer of their own volition.

MR. MANDELBAUM: Our preference in terms of going into the budgetary discussions this time round would actually be to do it on an item of expenditure basis. The last few months have been the first time we've been the Official Opposition. We found that there were certain expenses we didn't expect, and also that there were certain expenses we expected that didn't come up. I think it might be more worth while if, in the course of discussion anyway, we did it by an item of expenditure basis. Then, of course, the committee can decide as it sees fit, once the items of expenditure have been discussed. At least it gives some better idea of the budgetary needs of all caucuses.

DR. REID: Perhaps, Mr. Chairman, we're really starting to discuss budgets that we haven't even got in front of us at the moment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. But the question is basic: what do you want in front of you?

MR. PURDY: It's a bottom line figure we're looking at anyway.

DR. REID: That's right.

MR. PURDY: No matter how it's submitted.

MRS. CRIPPS: That's the exactly point, Mr. Chairman, of doing it on a more global basis. If they find, or we find, that there are expenses we hadn't anticipated but other expenses that we had anticipated and weren't using, in the new global budgetary process based on budgeting the office and then the members, there is transferability — which flexibility wasn't possible before. How he wants to present it is their problem.

MR. MANDELBAUM: I'm sorry for jumping in all the time, but I think there was flexibility within votes, even in the 001 and 002 category. So we always did have flexibility in terms of expenditures.

But in terms of giving a meaningful presentation of what the needs of all the groups are, be it government caucus, Official Opposition, or Independents, I think it might be worth while if we discussed it on an item of expenditure basis. Frankly, it means more work for us. It's easier for us to say that we want X amount of money and we'll argue it on that basis alone, but I think it might be more meaningful in terms of budget discussion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The proposal, then, on behalf of the Official Opposition is that they submit an itemized budget. If the committee is prepared to consider a budget submitted in that way, then of course that doesn't necessarily bind the committee in any way. But if you're prepared to receive it in that way to deal with it, the matter is settled for the time being.

DR. REID: Let's leave it that way, Mr. Chairman. Because the government members [inaudible] be submitted in an itemized fashion, but the way we've gone over it already, it's not going to make much difference to the bottom line on a global basis.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. PENGELLY: Mr. Chairman, will that be in the parameters of the global budget that we set before?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That remains to be seen. That would be up for consideration when we start dealing with budgets.

So are we all content to leave it on the basis that the Official Opposition budget will be presented for consideration in such form that the Official Opposition decides and we'll deal with it when we receive it? Is that all right?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Do you want to deal now or at the end of the meeting with the date of the next meeting? I assume that that meeting will be concerned mainly with budget?

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, we are having a problem because of certain select and standing committees that we have members on. Mr. Kowalski chairs the Heritage Savings Trust Fund standing committee. Is there anybody on this committee who is also on the workers' compensation select committee? I don't think so.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is Mrs. Embury?

MRS. CRIPPS: No.

DR. REID: So the conflicts, then, are with the Heritage Savings Trust Fund committee, because there are two members of it.

MRS. CRIPPS: Three.

DR. REID: Three.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Hyland, Mrs. Cripps, and myself. That's undoubtedly been worked out. We know essentially the dates on which we'll be meeting.

DR. REID: The budgetary meetings can't be done on a basis like this one, trying to squeeze it in before ten o'clock. That won't work. Also, it can't be set for a date that the Heritage Savings Trust Fund Committee has already set for their meetings. My understanding is that those meetings are pretty well set. I think I saw a timetable somewhere.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The members who are on those committees will know what their commitments are in that regard. If you want to discuss the date now, rather than do a rush job on it as it gets towards ten o'clock — because I think it's rather important that we have good attendance for the budget meetings. Could somebody make some suggestions?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, do you want to have these meetings before the commencement of the House?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't know. That could cause some problem for me, because I have three absences coming up, two of them of a week and one of three days.

MR. KOWALSKI: Are you looking at the post-fall session period, then?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Or during it. Treasury starts to get concerned about when? In December?

MR. STEFANIUK: They begin to be concerned in September.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ah, yes. But when do they start becoming unfriendly?

DR. REID: About December 1.

MR. STEFANIUK: About December 1. That usually eases up over Christmas week, and then we face it again. It's terrible then.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Maybe we won't have to this year.

What is your view? What we can do, and we've done it before, is to meet starting at

eight o'clock or 8:30 on days when the House is sitting. We've even brought in breakfast, although I don't think that's practical.

MR. HYLAND: Are you saying some of us are too big to have breakfast?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. It's just not practical. It's better to have it before or after. It just disrupts and slows things up. You might as well start later.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, with the schedule I have of town councils and school boards, who all seem to want to meet with me before their elections, and the rest of the dates that I have fixed, and with the conflicts with the Heritage Savings Trust Fund Committee, I would much prefer that we start after the House opens.

MRS. CRIPPS: Agreed. I haven't got any time.

DR. REID: The week preceding that and the last week of September I have no time open.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Are you sufficiently aware of goings-on after the House opens, that we can now discuss possible dates? We will clear those with the opposition as well. I should add for the record that, as I mentioned at a previous meeting, since there's a doubt . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Tuesday mornings?

MRS. CRIPPS: When's agriculture caucus?

AN HON. MEMBER: Wednesday's the best.

MR. PENGELLY: That's private Bills.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I was going to say that I'm continuing to send notices to the opposition.

MR. HYLAND: How many private Bills are we left holding?

MR. STEFANIUK: Not too many. Most of them were passed.

MR. HYLAND: If they're passed, if they're moved quickly, that may leave us room there. We may not have to meet in Private Bills.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there a likelihood of any coming in under an extension of time?

MR. STEFANIUK: Oh no. The deadline is defined by Standing Orders. That would have to go before the House.

MR. PENGELLY: Agriculture has been meeting at 5:30 on Monday nights.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The thing is, if we leave it too long we're sort of left in an orphan position. All the other committees set their dates, and then we're left with some pretty undesirable times. That's happened many times in the past.

MR. PENGELLY: How many come in on Monday morning?

MRS. CRIPPS: I'd prefer to meet early in the morning one of the days of the week,

Tuesday or Wednesday.

DR. REID: Tuesday I've got cabinet every week.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We can meet before 10.

DR. REID: But cabinet's at nine when the House is sitting.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Public Accounts is at 10 on Wednesdays.

DR. REID: So we could meet Wednesday morning.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We could meet Wednesday morning, and we can at least get started on the process. Would you prefer 8:30 or eight o'clock?

MR. HYLAND: Eight o'clock. You've got two hours then.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Eight o'clock? The House opens on Wednesday the 19th. Do you want a meeting that morning, or would you rather start the following Wednesday?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Wednesday, October 26?

MRS. CRIPPS: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: At eight o'clock.

MR. HYLAND: How many overlaps are there in Private Bills? Just me?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Two.

MR. HYLAND: That's not too bad.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MRS. CRIPPS: Oh, is Private Bills at eight o'clock Wednesday?

MR. HYLAND: Eight-thirty, depending on how many there are.

DR. REID: I don't think there are very many.

MRS. CRIPPS: Probably that first Wednesday we won't be in, then.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Perhaps we could dispose quickly of item 4 by recording that there are no visitors. Mr. Mandelbaum is here representing the Official Opposition, but we have no visitors as such. Occasionally in the past, we've had MLAs attend who wanted to speak about special concerns that were or were not on the agenda.

Can we go, then, to item 8? In that regard, members will have received a memo dated September 13, 1983, entitled "Senior Officers of the Legislative Assembly". In paragraph four on the first page there is something I don't understand, which is the word "single" in the third line. I think you could cross that out. It doesn't seem to fit.

There is also some perhaps qualifying information that I should mention in this regard. We were informed that the 5 per cent rule has been quite strictly applied — that

is to say, 5 per cent increases for management staff — and that thus far no exceptions have been made by Personnel Administration. But we were also told that these so-called inversions, where subordinate staff are paid more than management staff, result ordinarily from having new management staff, who haven't accumulated any seniority, and long-term support staff who have accumulated a considerable amount of seniority. That has, in a number of cases, been the cause of these inversions where the staff person with the greater responsibility is paid less than the one with less responsibility.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, if I remember it correctly, that particularly applied only to Hansard. I think that was the concern Mr. Stefaniuk had.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm just giving that as qualifying information, because you've got the whole thing in your support information.

So if we could start, if you wish, with the first. There are four positions involved in this discussion. The first three involve no change in salary but only changes in category, and the fourth one, the Hansard Editor, involves a change in salary in order to allow for a modest difference between the next senior person in the Hansard organization and the Hansard Editor, who is really also a manager.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, this is to do not with any particular classifications of the four people, but we're looking at a sort of one opening window in the financial situation of these people. By my memory, in the recent past there has been a considerable increase in the salary of the Parliamentary Counsel. I don't know what the situation is about Mr. Stefaniuk or Mr. Blain vis-a-vis Mr. Clegg. I notice, for instance, the proposed classification of Mr. Clegg. He fits approximately in the middle of the proposed classification. But Mr. Blain at the moment is very much towards the bottom end of the proposed classification and is in actual fact above his present classification. Mr. Stefaniuk is presently at the top of his present classification and would go close to the bottom of the proposed classification. So there are obviously different problems involved here.

I don't know if it can be done — certainly not for this meeting, obviously; if I had had this yesterday I might have gone to Mr. Stefaniuk and asked for it. But would it be possible to get, say, the last four years of the salaries of those positions — it might be as well to do it for Mr. Bubba, because I have a particular concern there of his predecessor — so that we can see if there's a pattern in one of these which is an aberration from the others. Maybe Betty was not getting increases, or maybe she was. I don't know. This is the difficulty. I'm sort of working in a bit of a fog.

I have a memory of some increases, and considerable increases, for Mr. Clegg. They had something to do with his being taken out of the grid.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not directly. The proposal made to the Committee on Legislative Offices was that he be put in a higher classification equivalent to senior lawyers in the Attorney General's Department. The committee declined to do that and instead said, in effect, let's not bother with any classification; we'll fix his salary. That's what happened and there was in fact a substantial increase, but he then ceased to be in any known classification.

As I understand it, there are two ways of going about this. One of them would be for this committee to say that henceforth the senior officers of the Assembly would be taken to be in positions or classifications parallel to certain known classifications in government, and that automatically, as the salaries went up within those classifications, their's would go up or they might get increases within that scope and subject to whatever percentage limits are applied, such as the 5 per cent. That would be one way of doing it. That would be, in effect, establishing a formula according to which the salaries of the senior officers would be set automatically, from time to time, under the formula.

The other way would be simply to say that we're going to take the Clerk out of the category that he's in and deem him to be in a certain range, and we'll put the Clerk Assistant and the Parliamentary Counsel in the equivalent of another category, but the salary review each year will be a matter for this committee. We can't really put Legislative Assembly staff into government personnel directly or exactly, because they aren't part of the public service, but we have those two ways of doing it. One is so that the salary each year is handled by means of a formula, and the other is so that each year when the salaries come up for review, they're reviewed by this committee. But we could still cure this anomaly we now have of the Law Clerk, Parliamentary Counsel, being out of a category and the Clerk being in one, and the Clerk being the deputy minister.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, sorry to get back in, but that phrase you just used "the Clerk being the deputy minister" — I know I was to some extent guilty of it last year when we were discussing the salary of the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, and the Deputy Chairman of committees, sort of relating those to ministerial salaries and benefits, but it was not with the intent of developing any concept that the Legislature was a division of the government service. I thought I was being very careful not to do that, and I think we all tend to be guilty of it. Perhaps we should have something, which I think you did in actual fact just put into the record, that it is not with the intent of having a department of government. The Legislature is a different legal entity.

I think we all look at this from the standpoint of avoiding going over the same work that is done by the — I forget the name of the committee of cabinet that looks after these things, but there's a committee of cabinet that does it. There is no point in our reviewing these things year by year as a committee when we have sort of one person in each classification, when the cabinet committee and the department of Personnel Administration go through all those things already, keeping track of what's happening in the private sector and the economy, competitiveness, and all the rest of it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Except for two things. One is that with respect to parliamentary staff, Legislative Assembly staff, I would perceive this committee as performing the function of cabinet in relation to senior officers. The second thing is that the parallels with the public service do not work. As I mentioned when the Legislative Assembly Act was up for review, we had one outstanding example, and it was by no means the only one, where a certain position was approved by Personnel Administration for a certain category. There were 13 criteria in relation to that position insofar as government staff were concerned. Only 10 or 11 of them applied insofar as Legislative Assembly staff. Yet on the basis of what was called "nearest equivalent", the salary was fixed, notwithstanding the wide discrepancy in criteria because there is, as is mentioned in the last schedule to this memorandum of September 13, a substantial difference between parliamentary staff and government staff.

DR. REID: The point I was trying to make, Mr. Chairman, is that the purpose of this committee should surely be to deal with changes in the duties or responsibilities of our staff in the Legislature, to make sure the equivalent slot is a reasonable one. That's the point I was going to try to make. I don't think that we in this committee need to be duplicating, for very largely one-of-a-type positions, the work that goes into making decisions where there's a whole group of people involved. In other words, we can use their work as a reference point.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No question, even though, as I say, in many instances there's no real parallel. But it's still worth looking at, and we've always assured both government and Personnel Administration over the years that we've never had any intention of becoming mavericks and having pay scales in the so-called department of the Legislative Assembly which were so far out of whack with what was being done in government that it would

cause government any difficulty.

It's true that by deeming the senior officers to be in positions parallel to certain categories in government, as proposed here, we will be putting them into brackets which will allow increases in their salary, especially in the case of the Clerk and the Clerk Assistant, which would be greater than what they would get if they continue to be in their present classifications. But the fact remains that by changing these classifications, we are neither increasing salaries nor committing ourselves to any increase in salaries.

MRS. CRIPPS: But by changing the classifications, we actually are committing ourselves to salary changes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not really. They won't be in those categories. We're simply saying that that's the parallel. We can't do that; we can't put people in public service categories.

DR. REID: This is a question to Mr. Stefaniuk. Could you get that information I was asking for? I'm a little leery, and you know which one it is I'm looking for.

MR. STEFANIUK: Perhaps I could draw the committee's attention first of all to schedule A, Mr. Chairman, and apologize for an error in the figures provided under the Clerk Assistant's salary and classification. The classification should be Senior Officer IIC (Administration), and the salary range is \$40,824 to \$52,332.

DR. REID: That means he's not above it.

MR. STEFANIUK: He's not above it. There were a number of people working on these documents, with the result that one incorrect figure crept in. I apologize for that and ask members to correct it.

Insofar as the question of history of increases, all increases granted to the Clerk, the Clerk Assistant, the Editor of Alberta Hansard, and other management staff during the past seven years — I speak of seven years because that's the length of time I have served — have been within the range prescribed by the Public Service Commissioner in each of those years. The formula, as mentioned earlier informally by Mr. Kowalski, was such until this year that it provided for, one, a market increase and, two, a merit increase. The range of increases within the last two years preceding 1983 has been from 0 to 8 per cent as a total. In the years preceding those, the range was as high as 11 per cent. That pretty well matched the market conditions which prevailed at that time. Obviously, the adjustment in this past year, in 1983, was limited to 5 per cent overall, and that has been adhered to.

The exception, as mentioned by Dr. Reid, has been the Parliamentary Counsel, Law Clerk, whose case was referred to the Special Select Committee on Legislative Offices, which had undertaken over a period of approximately two years to review his salary. There had been a substantial adjustment made during that time. Otherwise, salaries have been adjusted in accordance with the formula prescribed by the Public Service Commissioner, and adjustments have paralleled those in the public service overall for management employees.

MRS. CRIPPS: I guess Alberta Hansard is your problem.

MR. STEFANIUK: Yes.

MRS. CRIPPS: Okay. So I understand that the assistant can actually earn more than the Editor.

MR. STEFANIUK: That's right.

MRS. CRIPPS: Why would the initial salary of the assistant be that high, then?

MR. STEFANIUK: The assistant has been in place for a good number of years, and has peaked as a result of long service and the annual adjustments which have been made. The adjustments which have been made in support employees' earnings in recent years have been, in percentage terms, substantially higher than those of management employees. The support employees, as shown on the appendix to schedule A, are also qualified for benefits, including overtime pay and shift differential, whereas management employees are not.

MR. KOWALSKI: That certainly is a problem that's been with any public service for years and years and years. I can just relate one example to you. When I was put on the O.C. list a number of years ago as chairman of regional transportation services, I think 25 of the senior people that reported to me all made more money than I did. That was a quirk. They threw me in at the bottom of that particular level, and everybody else had 20 years experience behind them. That was an ego problem; no doubt at all about it. But it also exists in the pay scales and situations in a lot of other arrangements as well.

As an example, the salary grids and salary ranges for educators in the province of Alberta generally begin with a level of university training and years of experience. It's not that uncommon that a principal in a school would be realizing fewer dollars than some of the teachers who may have taught for 10, 12, or 15 years.

By the very nature of it, I guess, the one point that still goes with it is that the opportunity for longer term gain for the people in the more senior positions, even though their current salary may be less than some of their subordinates, is greater than what would be applicable to the subordinates, because they're essentially at the maximum of their range.

MR. PURDY: Mr. Chairman, this is also applicable in private industry, where some management people may be getting less because of overtime and shift differential than a subordinate. I have no problem with this. You know, we have a proposed salary of about 11 per cent, which is just out of our guidelines. I couldn't support that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any further discussion?

MRS. CRIPPS: MLAs too.

DR. REID: And premiers.

MRS. CRIPPS: That's right.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, I'm just not sure I have enough information yet. For instance, on the Parliamentary Counsel the proposal is to put him into Executive Officer II (Legal). I'm not aware of the parameters in other branches for allocating who goes into EO I (Legal), EO II (Legal), et cetera. I'm really not sure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think there'd be a substantial parallel between his professional service as a lawyer and that of the senior people in the Attorney General's Department under Ian Paisley.

DR. REID: Ross Paisley. Ian Paisley is another gentleman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sorry. I guess Ian has a higher profile.

DR. REID: He sure does.

With the information that Mr. Stefaniuk has just given us — I've made some notes on this; I'm just going to clear this out and take it with me afterwards — I'd like to do some more digging of my own. I don't want to do it via the Personnel Administration department, because I'll get another document that I don't understand, which is usually what I get. I'd like to do some digging of my own before I sort of commit myself and approve something I don't understand, where we are to some extent creating a possible precedent, if that's all right with you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's in the hands of the committee. There appears to be no further discussion. Dr. Reid wants to get some further information. If there is no further discussion, it would appear to me that we can resolve this matter in a number of ways. One is by a blanket motion dealing with all four positions. Another is by a position-by-position motion. Just to get the thing going, might I ask if there is any motion in regard to the proposal with respect to the Clerk?

MRS. CRIPPS: I understood that Dr. Reid asked to have the whole thing held.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He wasn't specific, but if that's the intent . . .

DR. REID: No, I wasn't being specific. The concern I have with Mr. Bubba and with the Parliamentary Counsel — Mr. Stefaniuk has clarified to some extent the situation with Mr. Blain. The concern I have about the Parliamentary Counsel is a precedent thing which might apply to the others. Perhaps we could leave them all over until I do some more digging there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that a motion?

DR. REID: I can convert it into a motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could we just get the motion a little more definite. In effect it's a tabling motion. The question is: is the matter going to be tabled without date, or should it be carried forward from agenda to agenda until such time as you want to deal with it?

MR. KOWALSKI: I want to raise a question for clarification on this. As I understand it — and unfortunately I could not attend the last meeting, when it was discussed the original time — the four positions we're now talking about had adjustments to their salary levels this June 1983, so in essence that would carry through to the end of May 1984. So in terms of an urgency of resolving this, we have to resolve this question of classification prior to that time, or as much ahead of that, so that the four positions would be clarified. I'd like to spend a little more time, because I would not want to make a decision that would be hasty. I can empathize with the fact that the positions in question are very unique, and the uniqueness is something I want to pursue a little further.

MR. PURDY: The only comment I was going to make, Mr. Chairman, is that there is a salary change which would be a budgetary item, which should be brought back to the meeting in October.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In regard to the Hansard Editor?

MR. PURDY: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Coming back to Dr. Reid's draft motion, which, as I

mentioned, is in effect a tabling motion, the question is what sort of time frame you want to put on that tabling.

DR. REID: On the basis that the first meeting is almost certainly going to be devoted entirely to budget . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would you agree, then, that we bring it up at the first meeting after the budget process?

DR. REID: I think that's reasonable.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So we have a motion that consideration of all four of these positions be deferred until the first meeting of the committee after we've completed the budgetary process for 1984-85, with the proviso that we may take a look at the Hansard Editor position in the course of the budgetary process. Is that agreed to?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MRS. CRIPPS: A question on that. According to the appendices to schedules A, B, C, and D, there's an asterisk that says that the salary is presently in effect, whereas on the appendix to schedule E, there is no such asterisk. What does that mean?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that the Hansard Editor one?

MR. STEFANIUK: That's simply because that is a proposed salary, which you will see from schedule A. The present salary is at the \$35,700 level, and the proposal is for a salary of \$40,020.

MRS. CRIPPS: Why would the other four go into effect?

MR. STEFANIUK: Because those salaries are in effect now, Shirley. The order which is proposed would not change the present salaries. In the case of the Editor of Alberta Hansard, the order would change the present salary.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If I might refer Mrs. Cripps back to schedule A, the first page, the first three are classification changes and only the last one is a salary change. Consequently, under the first three the draft orders refer to the present salaries, in effect confirming them, and the fourth draft order, under schedule E, has the salary change in it; consequently no asterisk and no footnote saying "present salary".

MRS. CRIPPS: All right, then. Was the present salary of \$35,700 established on June 1 along with the others?

MR. STEFANIUK: On June 1, 1983, along with all the others except for Parliamentary Counsel, whose salary was established by the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices, which fixed his salary and then withdrew from any further responsibility relative to that particular position.

DR. REID: And gave it to this committee.

MRS. CRIPPS: Fair enough.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If Dr. Reid would like to move a motion of gratitude, I'll . . .

DR. REID: You transferred it to us.

MR. PURDY: No, I'm not a member of that other committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The fact of the matter is that that other committee is not appropriate for these purposes, because the Ombudsman, the Chief Electoral Officer, and the Auditor General are officers of the Legislature, which includes the Crown and the Legislative Assembly. It's a kind of creature I don't quite understand. But we are dealing with officers of the Legislative Assembly, wherein the Crown has no part except of course in the budgetary process. Okay; so much for item 8.

Shall we then go back to item 5? We made the constituency services Order No. MSC 2/83. The support material is under tab 5. We had some question under the promotional allowance formula. You'll see under 5A an excerpt from the minutes of the July 27 meeting and also a memo from Miss Blaney to Mr. Blain. I believe the committee asked for certain calculations, and those have been provided.

MR. HYLAND: It's just a change in wording, isn't it? To add "typewriter"?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, that's 5B.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, if I may, in effect we have a program in place at the present time which provides a base of roughly \$2,100 per member. What we have done in the appendix which accompanies the memorandum of August 29 is to take into consideration the latest census figures and adjust the budgetary allowance in the proposal, to reflect the current population figures in each constituency. So under this proposal, there would in effect be a variation in the amount of promotional allowance available to each member. I believe that reflects a concern members had raised at previous meetings, that concern being the inadequacy of the present formula, which did not take into consideration population growth and possibly even decline in certain areas of the province.

MR. KOWALSKI: This is an excellent document. I wish to commend those who prepared it. It's just super work. It's very, very clear and well-organized.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's the kind of staff this committee is dealing with.

MR. KOWALSKI: I just wanted to make that point.

MR. PENGELLY: That's great.

DR. REID: I'm like Mr. Kowalski. I think the work that's gone into this is obviously very well done. I think they've picked up very well we were trying to do, and they've covered the problems that bugged many members of this committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's just one thing. We've made the adjustments by means of increments. The question might arise whether the \$2,100 itself might be reduced in some cases in developing a relationship between constituencies with more and less population.

MR. PURDY: Mr. Chairman, a conversation I had with Miss Blaney after the last meeting we had was that I didn't think any constituency should be cut back from \$2,100. The base figure I came up with should be \$2,100, and then from there work on a population increase.

MRS. CRIPPS: I guess I would have real problems if any cut were going to be made. In

the rural constituencies, where you have a number of towns, villages, and hamlets, you have such a diversification of groups that you may actually have more need of some of these supplies than, say, people in an urban centre would.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, I don't think it's worth doing, because if we're going to use the 14,000 population, there is no constituency that is more than 1,000 below that. There only appear to be three constituencies that are below 14,000, so the total saving is going to be just a few hundred dollars.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any further questions or discussion?

MR. KOWALSKI: Again, I apologize for not having been at the last meeting, when the request for this came. Was the intent of this information to have the committee make a decision now to have this readjusted to the current fiscal year. Or, Bill, was this something we wanted in the event that we wanted to review it for the upcoming budget for 1984-85?

MR. PURDY: It was a budgetary item for 1984-85.

MR. KOWALSKI: Okay.

DR. REID: We've got to be careful, though, because anything that we do can become, under the new Legislative Assembly Act, almost automatically retroactive to April 1, 1983.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Except with regard to staff; that's June 6.

DR. REID: But the other items. Because of the wording of the Act, a lot of these items will automatically be retroactive to April 1, 1983.

MR. STEFANIUK: The bottom line in this memorandum proposes the figure for inclusion in the '84-85 estimates. So if that is in fact the committee's wish and the committee wishes to endorse this proposal, that is the amount that we would provide for this program in the 1984-85 estimates that come before the committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That wouldn't be a commitment at the present time; that would only be a decision that you want this figure shown in those estimates for your consideration.

DR. REID: If we approved it at that time, I presume that the members' handbook would include the information.

MR. STEFANIUK: It would.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it agreed that we accept the information under item 5A, the constituency services order promotional allowance formula, as information which will be included in the estimates for further consideration of the committee when it deals with the estimates?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Then could we go to 5B. There is a proposal there that we include "typewriter" under section 4 on page 2. Incidentally, there is a little problem in the text of that order that I'd like to bring to your attention before we leave it. I hadn't thought of it either when we were dealing with it.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, I think we should add the word "typewriter" just to make it perfectly clear.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So there is a motion that constituency services order MSC 2/83 be amended by including in an appropriate place the word "typewriter" in section 4 on the second page of that order. Is that agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is so ordered.

The thing that concerned me — I'm sorry, I said section 4; it's section 1(4). Does the committee agree with that amendment to the motion just made?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sorry, I was a bit previous there. It comes under the next item. Can we go to that now, item 6, the transportation and administrative services order? There was a suggestion there by Mrs. Cripps that we consider the inclusion of wheel alignments. The excerpt from the previous minutes is the first sheet under item 6, and a copy of the order follows. If we make the change, it would come under section 1(1)(c) on page 2.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, I have no problem at all with that and, in fact, would endorse it at this point. But I would like to give all members of the committee notice that perhaps at the next meeting, when we look at the budget for 1984-85, I would like to bring forward a proposal on the whole question of transportation expenses. At this point in time, I am still trying to formulate the one specific of the proposal that I want. It would seem to me that this is one area that we have made some very positive moves in, but I think as each meeting goes along, we add one, two, or three more items to the whole list. Perhaps we might have a better approach to it that would have an all-encompassing provision with respect to travel expenses for members that would reduce the need to start looking at a lot of these specifics.

Basically, I'm not sure at this point in time whether there should be an automobile allowance provided to members or whether there should be a mileage allowance provided to members for constituency service and constituency work that would in fact pay for such items as these, and we won't have to worry about all the bookkeeping entries on a lot of these items.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think there's a basic question of fairness here to members who have to pound the back roads with their cars.

MR. KOWALSKI: That's the whole intent of the proposal I want to bring forward.

MR. CHAIRMAN: First of all, we have the motion that wheel alignments be included. I don't recall if I put the question on that. If you are ready for the question, we have a motion that in the transportation and administrative services order, under section 1(1)(c), the item "wheel alignment" be included in the list of motor vehicle servicing items that appear in that clause.

MR. PENGELLY: Mr. Chairman, does alignment include wheel balancing?

MR. CHAIRMAN: You know, I used to think that lawyers were difficult.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, I think the point that Mr. Pengelly just brought up indicates that if we're going to consider suggestions put forward by the Member for Barrhead, who has considerable experience in transportation matters, maybe we should stop adding to this shopping list at the moment until we consider that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So we will leave it at wheel alignments, and we will not yet commit ourselves on wheel balancing.

DR. REID: What I am saying is leave it alone just now. There's no point in going to all the bother of changing this order and everything that's involved if there is a possibility that we're going to go on a completely different basis.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you suggesting that we make no change at all, or that we just leave it at the wheel alignment?

DR. REID: That we make no change at all at the moment.

MR. HYLAND: We can leave it noted for when we start dealing with the budget, and then maybe we'll have something.

MR. STEFANIUK: Is the motion withdrawn, Mr. Chairman, for the record?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is the motion then withdrawn?

DR. REID: I don't know who made the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think I was just sort of collecting together a consensus. I hadn't put it in anybody's mouth yet.

DR. REID: Mr. Kowalski's proposals are interesting. It would get rid of a lot of those discrepancies if it doesn't get us in trouble with the internal revenue department.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there a motion with regard to item 6 on the agenda dealing with the transportation expenses, that further consideration of possible changes to section 1(1)(c) be deferred until after we have a chance to consider such formulae as Mr. Kowalski may propose in connection with the 1984-85 budget?

DR. REID: Before we agree to that, Mr. Chairman, my accountant has brought out to me that section 1(1)(c) states very specifically "if they relate to the operation of the Member's privately owned or leased automobile". My accountant has pointed out to me that my automobile belongs to a joint professional corporation of my wife and myself.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Then it's leased.

DR. REID: No, it's not.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The corporation lets you use it.

DR. REID: I just wanted to put it on the record, before anybody else does.

MRS. CRIPPS: That's a deemed advantage, is it?

DR. REID: No, it's for other reasons.

MRS. CRIPPS: I was just kidding.

MR. HYLAND: Are you going to give a legal opinion on that, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not now. I am still wrestling with the motion I'm trying to get before the committee. That doesn't really change the motion to defer. Does Mr. Purdy wish to put his name on that motion?

MR. PURDY: What am I putting my name to?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That further consideration of the possibility of adding wheel alignment to the transportation and administrative services order in section 1(1)(c) be deferred until the committee has had a chance to consider such proposal that Mr. Kowalski may make with regard to the relevant budget item dealing with this matter for 1984-85.

MR. PURDY: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Moved by Mr. Purdy. Are you all agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Carried. That covers item 6 except for one concern I have with regard to that order that I respectfully suggest the members of the committee might consider. It's a matter of text or draftsmanship. If you will look at the beginning of that order, section 1(1) says

The following shall be provided to or for the use of Members on the condition that they are related to and reasonably necessary for the performance of their duties as Members:

Under (a) it deals with

regularly scheduled air travel service . . .

(ii) to or from points in Alberta where the point of arrival or departure, as the case may be, is a point outside Alberta and it is more reasonable and convenient to use air travel service between those points than between points in Alberta;

The problem that has crossed my mind is whether that text is sufficiently exact to prohibit, for example, a member deciding to go to Vancouver in the course of the performance of his duties, or, shall we say — to take a recent example — to Denver, and then claim payment under this order. He would be in the performance of his duty, as he sees it, going to Vancouver or Denver, and there would be one point outside Alberta and one within Alberta, and it would be more reasonable and convenient to use air travel.

Perhaps there is no problem there. It just occurred to me, and I'm suggesting that we might consider it. But perhaps the last line saves it, because it says "than between points in Alberta".

MR. PURDY: We had a discussion on this earlier, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On that very point?

MR. PURDY: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Because my suggestion was going to be that if you thought there was a problem, we say "for the performance within Alberta of the member's duties".

MR. KOWALSKI: That was always the intent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, no problem.

MR. PURDY: No problem.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, we'll forget about it.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Chairman, while you are on that area, in relation to Ian's problem, if the word "privately" were dropped in that order, it would solve the problem.

DR. REID: I think it's just a matter of semantics really.

MRS. CRIPPS: I know it is.

DR. REID: I don't think I'm going to get thrown out of the Legislative Assembly because of it.

MRS. CRIPPS: But I may drive a vehicle part of the time that's in my husband's name.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's right.

MRS. CRIPPS: A good many of us may be in that case where they're in joint names.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Suppose we refer that to Michael Clegg for consideration. Perhaps we can tidy it up, and then no one needs to scratch his noggin about what it means.

MRS. CRIPPS: I think if "privately" were eliminated, it would solve the problem.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Going on to item 7, members may recall having asked for some information as to cost and so on. You will find it pretty extensively provided in the supporting material under item 7. It arose out of a query raised by Mr. Hyland as shown in minute 83-267.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, first of all, could we have another — it's very difficult to read the coverage items.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I agree.

DR. REID: Could we have another copy sent to us without the punched holes and making sure they go right to the edge of the item that's being photocopied? The first coverage item is "Isory (C) or rary (V)".

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, I had to go over it and write them all in myself. That has a certain implication in it. Is that a motion by Dr. Reid that this matter be deferred for consideration, possibly in connection with the 1984-85 budget, and that in the meantime, a new set of photocopies be provided showing all of the information in the comparison that was made of other jurisdictions?

MRS. CRIPPS: Where is Alberta by comparison?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're not in there; we haven't anything.

MRS. CRIPPS: We haven't anything at all.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No.

DR. REID: That's why we're not on the list.

AN HON. MEMBER: But we have insurance.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Fatal accident, not life insurance.

MRS. CRIPPS: You mean the only way we can . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: You have to die to win.

DR. REID: It has to be accidental.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It has to be an accidental death. If you worry to death because of your job as an MLA, you don't collect.

DR. REID: We've had a few people who have had coronaries, but luckily all have survived.

MRS. CRIPPS: That's not an accident.

MR. HYLAND: It depends if you're in Executive Council or if you're an MLA; there's different coverage.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You will notice in the support material that there is a cost estimate given, under appendix II, as to what it would cost if the coverage were somewhat similar to what is now in effect with regard to management and excluded employees of the public service.

MR. HYLAND: That doesn't give total dollars.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In total dollars — I think it's farther on. I saw it somewhere. Around \$10,000 I think.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, is the question with regard to the cost to the Assembly for provision of the plan?

MR. HYLAND: That's my question.

MR. STEFANIUK: I have those figures, Mr. Chairman. The lowest possible cost — and this is contingent upon the options that members choose — would be \$6,948.48.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In total for all members per year.

MR. STEFANIUK: Yes, for the 77 members who would qualify.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. STEFANIUK: And only 77 would, because those over the age of 65 do not qualify for coverage at all.

MRS. CRIPPS: That's the total for the 77 members, not each.

MR. STEFANIUK: In round figures the minimum cost is \$7,000, excluding any options. The high end of that, for the enhanced basic coverage, would be \$17,154.12.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Harkening back to what Dr. Reid said a few paragraphs ago, is it the consensus of the committee that this be accepted for information and considered further when we deal with the corresponding budget item?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. HYLAND: Of the 77 members, there are 29 in cabinet that have coverage already. That's really a transfer within government. If the Assembly goes with the top coverage, then their departments wouldn't be paying that. So it really isn't 77 additional people covered, it's the non-cabinet members of the Assembly that receive the additional coverage. The cabinet is already receiving that coverage. There may be some commission depending on how . . .

MR. STEFANIUK: We have a slight problem in that when we institute a program through the Legislative Assembly, it should have universal application to all members regardless of their status elsewhere. Our practice in the past has been to consider availability of any program to all members; for example, in promotional allowance we provide a program for members. I don't think that it's known generally that cabinet ministers have access to promotional items which is perhaps greater than that of the upper-bench member.

MR. HYLAND: I don't disagree with it. All I'm saying is that it is a cost to the Assembly all right, but it isn't new coverage to 77 members. That's my whole point. Some members don't have that coverage and some of us who are not in cabinet — and I'm not sure if any of the commissions that do extensive travelling have additional coverage. Some of us travel further on ground and some travel in the air. We spend a lot of time travelling, and we're open to risk. If the motion is put, it's put, but for the actual cost to government — and I'm talking totally in government, not just the Assembly — you're probably looking at half of the \$6,900 or the \$17,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So the motion just approved, to defer for further consideration at the time we consider the budget, stands?

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, may we please have some guidance as to whether or not there should be some money provided in the budget for this?

MRS. CRIPPS: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, tentatively.

MR. STEFANIUK: We will then provide the high end of the scale.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Should there be another set of figures developed, considering the point raised by Mr. Hyland, that would indicate the cost if we covered only non-ministerial

members?

MR. STEFANIUK: I think what would happen in effect, Mr. Chairman, is that the Assembly would cover all members and the government would drop its coverage, which would reduce slightly the cost to departments of government.

MR. HYLAND: That's the way it should be. We should be providing that service. I don't think that the ministers' departments should have to provide the service because we're chinchy on what we provide.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Except that the risks may be different for ministers than for private members; if we can assume that they do more travelling, for example.

MR. HYLAND: But some MLAs are in a little bit different situation, because the distances travelled are more than the ministers.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I was wrong on that, because we've got the fatal accident thing covered. So the travelling is irrelevant.

Can we go on to item 9?

MR. KOWALSKI: I'm afraid, Mr. Chairman, I'm going to have to leave because of another meeting.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Item 9, training for constituency office — it says "secretaries", but I think we agreed to change that to "staff", because some people have assistants rather than secretaries.

MRS. CRIPPS: I thought we also agreed that it would work either way, didn't we?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That I am not sure is clear; in other words, that the allowance would cover secretaries from under the dome here or the Ag. building, or annex, going out to constituency offices. We had a discussion about this.

MR. HYLAND: I thought we had a discussion and agreed — maybe it wasn't — that if there was money in your constituency office you could do that, and then we were going to look at to see if indeed everybody had moneys to do that. If they didn't, we would look at it again as a different item.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The whole thing, constituency office staff?

MR. HYLAND: I thought it was either two trips a year by the constituency office staff to Edmonton, if your constituency office budget allowed it, or one from your constituency and one from Edmonton.

MRS. CRIPPS: Yes, it wasn't over and above.

MR. PENGELLY: I think that was under the constituency allowance.

MR. HYLAND: You could exchange it; you could work it whichever way you wanted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So in other words, the constituency office allowance could be used for two trips a year, whether they be from Edmonton to the constituency or vice versa.

MRS. CRIPPS: Right.

MR. PENGELLY: Or one from each.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right.

MRS. CRIPPS: But we want to allocate additional funding.

MR. CHAIRMAN: To allow travel from Edmonton to the constituency office.

MRS. CRIPPS: Or the other way around.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's understood that it's included in the existing funding.

MR. HYLAND: Unless we found that it was needed, then we would look at it again. But we didn't know if it was or not.

MR. STEFANIUK: In that case, Mr. Chairman, we may have to bring in an amendment to the order dealing with constituency services.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I was going to suggest that in view of the clarification that the committee has now provided, we would, between now and the next meeting, look at the possible need of an amendment. If so, we will bring in an amendment for your consideration at the next meeting.

MRS. CRIPPS: Do you mean that we've already allocated funding over and above? Is that why we need an amendment?

MR. STEFANIUK: No, we haven't allocated any funding over and above, Shirley.

MRS. CRIPPS: Okay.

MR. STEFANIUK: If, in effect, you're saying that from within the communications allowance that is provided to each member, that member may at his or her discretion arrange for constituency staff to come to Edmonton or secretarial or research staff in Edmonton to travel to the constituency, that member may do so.

MR. HYLAND: You said out of communications.

MRS. CRIPPS: Yes, that's right; you said out of communications.

MR. STEFANIUK: I'm sorry, out of the constituency allowance. So there is no additional funding for this program.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So in view of the clarification you've provided, we will look at the existing order. If it requires amendment, we will bring in a draft amendment for your consideration at the next meeting.

Can we go to item 10? That's really mostly an information item, and you have it all in your support material. Are you content with the message from the minister, or do you want us to pursue that any further?

MR. MANDELBAUM: If I could just comment on that. In terms of the [inaudible], I think it's fairly clear that what he means is that a government member could only use a building in his or her constituency.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A government member?

MR. MANDELBAUM: I'm sorry, a member of the Legislature, an MLA. I can see a few potential problems. One I think is just in terms of a matter of principle, that it's a difficult principle to accept that an MLA is restricted from the use of a government building anywhere. It creates some problems in Edmonton. For example, in Edmonton the government buildings are concentrated in a very small area, which means that a government member from outside those constituencies in that same city couldn't use a building unless it's in his or her constituency.

Also, in terms of any member of the Legislature performing their duties, just as a hypothetical example — on water diversion, let's say that a member from the Peace River area, not only Grant but any member that might not be a cabinet minister, decides to get some input from people from areas other than his own, and decides to go down to Chinook to get some input from people in that area on the importance of water diversion to that area. Does that mean that member couldn't use a government building unless he paid?

MR. CHAIRMAN: You're suggesting to hold a meeting.

MR. MANDELBAUM: To hold a meeting or just to talk to some people there, invite them on an individual basis, or whatever. It seems to be a very restrictive clause.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could I suggest this: could the Official Opposition set this concern out in a memo that could be shared by all members of the committee and put on the agenda for another meeting? Is that agreeable to everyone? Yes? No?

MR. KOWALSKI: I don't think this is an issue. I don't see any problem.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Official Opposition may think it's an issue. Suppose we get it on a memo, and then we can consider it.

MR. PURDY: I don't think it's necessary. It's already been decided and discussed.

MR. KOWALSKI: With due respect, Mr. Chairman, the members of the Members' Services Committee are those who sit in the House. As I recall, there is a representative from the Official Opposition on the committee who decided not to be here, and I would like to hear directly from an elected representative if it is an issue.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So what is your wish with regard to this item?

MR. PURDY: Item 10 was given to us for information, and that's the way I'm going to receive it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So we have a motion that item 10 be received as information and that we proceed to the next item.

MR. PURDY: That's right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: By Mr. Purdy. Agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Carried. Under "Other Business", I raised one matter and we've dealt with that. Is there anyone else who has any other business?

We have set the date of the next meeting.

MR. HYLAND: I am waiting for No. 13.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I was just going to say we're wide open for a motion under item 13.

MR. HYLAND: I move that we adjourn.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're adjourned. Thank you very much.

[The meeting adjourned at 10:08 a.m.]

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