

[Chairman: Dr. Carter]

[1:36 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. You've got your dessert or something to drink or coffee or antifreeze? Away we go.

Welcome to 1989. May you have a great time in '89. You too, Nick.

MR. TAYLOR: Things will be fine in '89.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MR. TAYLOR: Government's changing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We've had the call to order, more or less. Agenda: any other items, other business? We can always add later, but . . .

Okay, here we are: item 3(a), Approval of December 5, 1988, *Committee Meeting Minutes*. What is your pleasure?

MR. HYLAND: I move we approve December 5 minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MS BARRETT: I second it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour? Opposed, if any? Carried unanimously. Thank you.

Three (b), December 6 minutes. Rocky Mountain House, motion in favour?

MR. CAMPBELL: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Secunder? Westlock-Sturgeon. All those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried unanimously and expeditiously. Thank you.

Four (a), the report still being reported, hopefully by next week.

Four (b), Request to PWSS re Constituency Offices RITE Line Installation.

DR. McNEIL: I corresponded with the executive director of telecommunications services, requesting that each RITE line installation be reviewed to ensure that the RITE line is hooked into the existing system. I followed up on that last week. The information I got back was that they were doing a comprehensive study of the problem and that it would be completed by March 31. I indicated to them that I thought it was less complicated than that and that at least in terms of the offices I'd specifically provided information on, where the line wasn't hooked up and members had specifically requested that it be changed as soon as possible, they try to follow up on that as quickly as they could. They indicated to me -- and this is a technical issue -- that each telephone system has what's called an interface card, and they have to find out for each system what type of card it has, and that determines what they need to do to hook it into your existing system. They said they had difficulty getting information from their own information systems on what the setup in each office is. I indicated that I'd like more timely feedback from them on progress on that, so I'll follow up.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Which ones in particular are holding? Quite a number of them?

MR. HYLAND: Mine's not been.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, Mr. Hyland.

DR. McNEIL: Mr. Hyland, Ms Barrett, I believe Mrs. Mirosh have indicated to me that there was a difficulty there, and you wanted just the phone hooked into your systems.

MR. HYLAND: Nothing's changed.

DR. McNEIL: So nothing's changed since that memo went out in early December, after our December 6 meeting.

MR. HYLAND: How many have -- we've got what? Sixty-two or 63 constituency offices or something like that?

DR. McNEIL: Yes, but there are only about 40 in which the RITE line is hooked up at the present time.

MR. HYLAND: So we've got 40 offices, and this has been going on for what -- two months, three months? -- and it will now take till March 31. How the hell long does it take to have a guy or your repairman who is in the area go look at the thing? He can tell you right now what you need instead of looking through paper for three damn months to do it. I mean, one guy could travel all over the damn province and do it sooner than that.

DR. McNEIL: My suggestion to the individual that I talked to was that it would be much easier if contact was made with each office. Once we get some information on what's there, we can move more expeditiously to make those changes.

MS BARRETT: Let your fingers do the walking.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. So another good swift kick will be delivered this week conveying the frustration of Members' Services Committee. Thank you.

All right; item 4(c), Policy on MLA Travel Bonus Points. Motion, Mr. Hyland, Cypress-Redcliff. Chiefs of staff were to develop consensus.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, can I move the motion that's just been put in front of us?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Indeed.

MR. HYLAND: Moved by myself that:

Travel bonus points earned from travel paid out of Legislature committees, MLA administration and House services budgets may be applied to subsequent travel chargeable to any of those budgets.

Travel bonus points earned from travel paid out of Caucus budgets may be applied to subsequent travel chargeable as determined by the Caucus.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you want to treat it as one omnibus motion or two separate motions?

MR. HYLAND: Can I ask either Bob or Charlene maybe -- which is unusual for them to comment in the committee, but if this is the agreement that came out of the caucus administrators, chiefs of staff, whatever . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: All four caucuses?

MISS BLANEY: All three.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All three; okay. All righty; that should make it fairly easy with regards to discussion.

MR. HYLAND: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Moved by Mr. Hyland . . .

MR. TAYLOR: Just a slight point I want to bring up; I'm not sure I'm clear on it or not. Does the caucus need permission of this committee to establish an account so that it goes into the caucus account? See, that's the easy way to keep track of it if points all go to -- instead of the name being Taylor, the name being "caucus." Every bit of travel then goes into the caucus account and then they could use it. As it is now, there's a transfer, and the last time I looked, you couldn't transfer points from A to B within . . .

MR. HYLAND: You have to have a separate card.

MR. TAYLOR: I think you have a form of card, and this is which I agree, but then I'm saying: is it necessary to empower caucus to get a card? Does this do that?

MR. HYLAND: I would think . . . Remember, last time when we finished, we talked about the ability to have two cards under your name, and I think the example used was the Leader of the Opposition having one that he would use when he traveled as Leader of the Opposition and one he would use when he traveled as a member of the NDP caucus. And whether he's got an initial or a number behind one card or the other, then we have to trust them to slide it into whatever slot they want to slide it into.

MR. TAYLOR: Okay, it's a . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: "Apportioning" is a better word than "sliding."

MR. TAYLOR: Let's try it the way it's going for a while.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Okay. Now, everybody's comfortable with this motion?

MS BARRETT: Looks like it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour of the motion with regard to travel bonus points, please raise your hand. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

Four (d), Members' Benefits Subcommittee Report. Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll start with the report and then I'll ask other members to fill in maybe, because I missed the major part of the meeting there. I had a problem with the snowdrifts.

We had some discussion about extended health benefits some time ago, and we said we'd be reporting at a later date. I think it was at the last Members' Services meeting. After that date I asked the people in administration to look at the benefits paid to retiring civil servants under a program that the government had and see if they could do something in that vein to give to us so we had some options rather than us trying to develop

one. So it was given to us in some options, and we talked about that on Tuesday last. We have some recommendations to bring forward, and I wonder if, before I get too far into it, the Clerk or Cheryl has something to say. I think we've got some documentation to pass out that will help. Maybe Dave first.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Clerk.

DR. McNEIL: Mr. Chairman, in terms of the agenda the first item is the extended health care plan, and the second item is the extended benefits option. There's a reason for that order, because one will impact the other.

MR. HYLAND: I wonder. Maybe you should go into the options of the Mutual Life -- Mutual versus Blue Cross -- because that has an effect on them. Then I can cover what came out of the committee. That one has an offer in it no matter whether we do this or with our other medical benefits. So we'd probably hit two birds with one stone that way.

DR. McNEIL: There's a decision item under the first tab, under (4), requesting that the Members' Services Committee choose whether to continue contracting with Mutual Life for extended health care benefits or switch to an equivalent plan with Alberta Blue Cross. The background presented there -- you're aware that we bore a 30 percent increase in rates under Mutual Life in January of 1988. We were advised in mid-December that Mutual Life intended to increase the rates by about . . . They projected an increase of 204 percent; they would only increase the rates by 150. With that information we asked consultants to look at the marketplace to see if we could find a competitive bid from other insurers, and he came back to us fairly quickly with an indication that Blue Cross was willing to provide us with an equivalent plan as our present plan with Mutual Life had significantly reduced rates. The Mutual Life proposal is based on a rate increase of 114 percent for '89, which has already been implemented in terms of members having those increased rates deducted from their cheques starting in January. So the total monthly cost for the Assembly is going from \$1,900 to \$4,200 under the Mutual Life rates.

The Blue Cross proposal: as I indicated, they're prepared to offer coverage with plan provisions identical to those currently offered by Mutual Life. The proposed rates include an important feature known as stop-loss protection. Any claims experience exceeding premiums by 120 percent will not be included in the plan's experience. They have also indicated that they would be willing to provide extended health care coverage to retiring members for a fixed period after retirement, with costs being shared by the Assembly.

On the third page, under 4, the summary of the proposed costs compared Mutual Life with Blue Cross: Mutual Cross coverage 22.26 a month, Blue Cross 15.34 per month; per family 57.03 for Mutual Life, 38.31 for Blue Cross. Blue Cross also offered a direct-bill option where members would be provided with a card. Drug charges, for example, you could give the card directly to the druggist, and they would bill Blue Cross directly for those purchases. Those rates are significantly higher than for the normal plan under Blue Cross. The saving to the Assembly in moving from Mutual Life to Blue Cross is approximately \$16,500 a year for the same coverage.

Based on that analysis, it's our recommendation and the recommendation through the subcommittee that the Assembly adopt the standard Blue Cross package and it be implemented on

March 1.

MR. HYLAND: Maybe to get discussion moving on this, so we can put it on the table, I'll move the acceptance of the recommendation.

MS BARRETT: I'll second it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Moved and seconded.
Mr. Kowalski.

MR. KOWALSKI: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. The Clerk used two words that I want clarification of. They should be self-explanatory, but I think it's important. We've got a situation here where we can get -- the words that were used were "equivalent" and then "identical." Invariably what's happened in my experience in this committee is after we agree to follow those words, we come back three months later and say, "Oh, by the way, they weren't quite the same, and now we've got to refix and rebuild."

The subcommittee has made a recommendation to the committee, but is everybody assured that this is the identical plan, not an equivalent plan but the identical plan? Because invariably what will happen if it's not the same, we're going to be back here again having another discussion saying, "Oh, by the way." Do we have clarification? It's just simple. We're only talking about a comparative cost figure that one is cheaper than the other one, in which case I would support the motion. But is it identical?

DR. McNEIL: Our consultant advises us that it is identical.

MR. KOWALSKI: We have this in writing?

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

MR. KOWALSKI: And he's a professional consultant?

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

MR. KOWALSKI: If his advice is wrong, do we go back to the consultant?

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

MS BARRETT: Doubting Kenneth, eh?

MR. KOWALSKI: Pardon me?

MS BARRETT: Doubting Kenneth.

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, no. I think, Pam, you know as well as I do, the time that you've been on this committee, that we fix something one day and three weeks later we're rebuilding it again. I don't have any problem supporting the motion. I'll vote on the basis of the word "identical" meaning identical, meaning exactly the same, not a shade of gray and a shade of something else.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think my eyes are as wide-eyed as yours.
Cheryl, in your estimation it's identical?

MISS KVIST: That's what we've been told.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Thank you.
Other discussion? Call for the question.

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried unanimously. Thank you.
Next item: Extended Benefit Options.

MR. HYLAND: Okay. Under Extended Benefit Options, again earlier the subcommittee had talked about looking at . . . Members, once you're through, whether it's an election or whatever, when you cease to be Members of the Legislative Assembly, you can be part of plans and all of a sudden you're totally out and unable to access plans. So as a result of that, and in line with some of the other moves that we had made to help people over times, the committee has come up with a recommendation to have the same benefits that you have now. These benefits would kick in when you cease to be a member of the Assembly. They would be -- what? -- the same shared rate as members pay for those benefits. You directly would have to pay the employee's share, and it would be carried for a period of five years.

Now, the estimates that we've been given, at the rates that we have now -- and we assume that the decision would be made as the previous motion to go to Blue Cross. So now our numbers are correct, rather than assumptions.

The total employer cost per member would be \$1,060.78 per year, the total employee cost would be \$509.74, making the total cost by both groups \$1,570.52. This is a recommendation of the committee that that be available for members to choose, if they wish. It's not enforced; it's available for them to choose as they wish for five years. And if they make a decision somewhere along the way to get out, then they're out. The only condition on it is that if a person becomes 65 years of age within that five-year period, then it cuts off, because there are senior benefits that are somewhat similar to these.

MS BARRETT: I have a question on this. Is it understood that the former MLAs make their cheques payable directly to the insuring agency, such as . . . What?

MISS KVIST: What would happen is you would have two choices. If you chose to draw a pension when you ceased to be a member . . .

MS BARRETT: It could be deducted.

MISS KVIST: . . . then we could deduct it automatically from your monthly pension cheque. Or you would arrange to provide via personnel postdated cheques, which we would put through the system. So you wouldn't have to worry about paying directly to each of the different plans. You would pay through co-ordination of the personnel services branches.

MS BARRETT: You people are willing to live like this?

DR. McNEIL: Service with a smile.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Here to serve the members.

MS BARRETT: Oh, right on.

DR. McNEIL: That's our job.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, if there's a motion, can I ask a question with respect to this?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Absolutely.

MR. KOWALSKI: Fine; thank you very much.

I'll take you to item D(3), Group Life Insurance, the fourth point. It's for clarification as much as anything else. The statement reads:

A special option available only to MLAs under the current plan is the provision for Members 65 and older to receive continued coverage as long as they are a member.

And then it says:

This option could not be extended as part of the Extended Benefit Option.

My question deals with the words "this option." I'm not sure I know what this means. Does this mean that currently members who are over 65 have life insurance as part of the package, but if we go with this proposal, that would not happen?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Cheryl, what's your . . .

MISS KVIST: Consistent with the plan that was explained to me and what the provincial government employees did with their extended benefits plan, it's an either/or situation. If you choose not to take advantage of this proposed extended benefits program, and if you were older than 65, then you would be able to continue receiving coverage.

MR. HYLAND: But you're not asking that question.

MR. KOWALSKI: No, I'm not.

DR. McNEIL: My interpretation of this is that if a member is over age 65 now and they're still a member, they are covered by group life insurance. What this is saying is that if you're over age -- let's say you're age 66 now, then you retire. You can't have the option of continuing that coverage of group life past age 65.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can or you cannot?

DR. McNEIL: You cannot.

MR. KOWALSKI: But as long as you are a member, you are covered?

DR. McNEIL: You can have that group life coverage after age 65. As soon as you cease becoming a member, you are no longer covered.

MR. KOWALSKI: So this business that was identified a little earlier in here, Proposal Guidelines, under C(1) on the first page, "available to retiring members for a maximum of five years or until age 65," the option beyond 65 would not exist even under this new package if you're no longer a Member of the Legislative Assembly.

DR. McNEIL: Correct.

MR. KOWALSKI: If you are a Member of the Legislative Assembly, you continue to maintain a coverage package?

DR. McNEIL: Correct.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, the only thing was to buttress the hon. Member for Barrhead's argument. I think we should make double sure of this because it's an issue we had a little problem with before. So the absolute grammatic interpretation of that clause -- and it was lifted; I mean, it was done by yourself in a hurry a couple of days ago -- is different, but if this is lifted from the consultant's report, I'd be very concerned that you were right, that maybe . . .

MR. KOWALSKI: I would be concerned that I would be right; it's quite a frequent occurrence.

MR. TAYLOR: As a matter of fact, that's one of the biggest concerns I've always had.

DR. McNEIL: Mr. Chairman, extending the benefits will not affect the coverage of existing members. In other words, having this extended benefits program will not affect the coverage of those people who are members, which is the concern that you're raising.

MR. TAYLOR: My hon. friend's going to hit 65 before I do; that's why I'm concerned.

DR. McNEIL: It's a totally separate kind of a package for ex-members, and it doesn't have any impact on people who are members.

MRS. MIROSH: When you cease becoming a member, can you transfer this package to your own individual or another -- what you've paid into this? Is it transferable? So if you're no longer a member and you want to convert -- you've paid into this, right?

DR. McNEIL: But you're paying on an ongoing basis. The advantage of this is that you are still paying group rates. You can have coverage; let's take, for example, group life insurance. You can get group life coverage from the carrier. You can switch from the group to individual coverage, but your rates will go up markedly. So the ex-member would be a lot better off to stick under the group rates for that five-year period than switch to individual coverage with the same insurer. But that option is available if the member wants to switch.

MRS. MIROSH: Or another group.

DR. McNEIL: Well, yeah, if you can obtain group coverage from another group that you're a member of.

MRS. MIROSH: Well, then you just opt out of this one totally. That's what you're saying?

DR. McNEIL: Yes, exactly.

MR. HYLAND: I think the key to the proposal here is that it's optional. It's totally the choice of the member. It's there, and it's totally his or her choice.

MS BARRETT: Does that mean that you can choose some parts and not others? Thank you. That was a nonverbal affirmation.

DR. McNEIL: Just so it's on record: yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, thank you.

MISS KVIST: You can choose, though, only those options that you're presently receiving as a member.

MS BARRETT: Oh, sure. Yeah, that's clear, but for instance, you know, if you want to choose the life insurance and you don't want to choose the health care or whatever, yeah. That's fine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay? The Chair takes it that the motion of Cypress-Redcliff, that the recommendation as found on the top page of the last section, D(2) – that is the motion.

MS BARRETT: D(2)?

MR. HYLAND: D(2).

MS BARRETT: R(2)?

MR. CHAIRMAN: R2D2, yes.

All those in favour of the motion, please signify. Opposed, if any? Carried. Thank you.

I'm sorry. The section of the binder is D, last page.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Teacher.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sorry. For once I was in the right place.

Okay. The next item is Former Members Travel Policy from our last meetings. We did send out correspondence to former members who resided beyond the immediate environs of Edmonton, including those out of province. We also sent notification to members living within greater Edmonton so that they would be apprised of the program should they at some future date move to another location.

You have here in the binder two letters from former members, including a former Lieutenant Governor, and we've had a number of other letters into the office, inquiries as to what kicks in. We've also had some interesting interpretations by former members, but by and large it's being very well received. The last batch of letters that I looked at today were from Victoria and Vancouver, and so we have sent the material back to them, letting them know that the mileage, or 'kilometrage', kicks in at the Alberta border for their vehicles and to the time they leave the border, the Alberta-B.C. or whichever boundary. So there seems to be a very good response to what the committee did.

MS BARRETT: On the other hand, Mr. Chairman, I understand that at least one former member has made claim on this privilege with . . . I don't know how to say this without, I guess, respect for the real intent of the original motion. I am a little worried that it could be abused. Cases don't seem too likely to mount up in great numbers, but I wonder if we couldn't – we discussed this briefly in the MSC subcommittee on Tuesday and talked briefly about trying to establish some guidelines that would prevent that occasional abuse. Are you willing to entertain that discussion now?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sure. Taber-Warner.

MR. BOGLE: I think if we check the record, Mr. Chairman, we'll find it's either covered by motion or, if not motion, certainly intent that this program would be reviewed in ap-

proximately a year's time so we could determine how it's being used and whether or not any restrictions or refinements to the program should be addressed by this committee. I think it would be premature to get into that now on the basis of one former member, although the point is well taken.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, perhaps outside the meeting I could be apprised of it, because it's our office that's having to deal with it, the Speaker's office primarily. We had one former member we just had to spend a little more time with explaining to him what the real intent was and get that rearranged so there was no problem.

MR. BOGLE: We're talking about two trips to Edmonton per year and up to five days' accommodation, so we're not talking about a multimillion dollar program. But the intent of it is something that we want to ensure is respected and maintained. And I do recall, whether it's covered by motion or it's in the minutes leading up to the passage of that motion, that it was clearly the intent of this committee that we would review it within the year and come back.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair feels the desire to have about a five-minute coffee break and stretch, so we might do that.

[The committee recessed from 2:09 p.m. to 2:15 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Item 4(d)(iv), Resettlement Allowance.

MR. BOGLE: For the record, Mr. Chairman, are we speaking of the re-establishment allowance?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry. I jumped the gun as well with respect to our other conversation at the time of the coffee break. We will review the matter within a year but will keep an ongoing watch on it as well to see what develops. Thank you.

Okay, 4(d)(iv). Any questions, Taber-Warner?

MR. BOGLE: Well, are we speaking of the re-establishment allowance? If we are, I would appreciate if the agenda be corrected to reflect that.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I understand from a discussion in subcommittee a few days ago that the word "resettlement" appears in one or more motions that we approved dealing with this matter. Not that I have any objections, but if that's the case, we have to tidy up that language as well so that "resettlement" appears instead of "re-establishment."

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay; thank you.

It was pointed out by Parliamentary Counsel that the Members' Services order says "resettlement allowance."

MR. BOGLE: What do the minutes say, Mr. Chairman? It won't be the first time we've found an order that doesn't reflect the minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This follows along from the minutes of December?

MR. M. CLEGG: Yes, the minutes as noted: MS 88.158.

MS BARRETT: What's the concern, by the way, between

resettlement and re-establishment?

MR. BOGLE: I do not recall the term "resettlement" being used with the re-establishment allowance. That was a term we borrowed from Ontario, where the practice has been in place for some time.

MS BARRETT: "Re-establishment" was borrowed from Ontario, because I remember when Nick talked about this, he was always saying "resettlement." So that could be where the confusion arises.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. We're in the midst of the search for a moment, so it's time to recharge your cups.

MR. CAMPBELL: Mr. Chairman, probably on that particular point, personally, you know, I don't look at this as resettlement. I mean, this sounds like we're going somewhere else, eh? This is re-establishment.

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, the minutes do refer to a re-establishment allowance. The motion that was passed by the committee contains the expression "re-establishment allowance" in it. I do not recall whether the order was presented to that meeting. In many cases the orders are drafted before the meeting at a member's request and presented to the meeting and the order is approved, but the actual wording used in the discussion may be different from the order. Now, that may be the case, or it may have been that the order was prepared afterwards, and I don't know whether my files will enable me to check whether the wording was actually changed in the drafting of the order or whether the order was drafted before the meeting and was not changed by the committee. I think that in fact in this case the order was prepared by me several days in advance of the committee with the word "resettlement" in it.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, I think you're right. I think I've got it downstairs.

MR. M. CLEGG: And the order was approved by the committee.

MS BARRETT: It can be changed.

MR. M. CLEGG: If the committee were to so direct, we could revise the order just by an editorial revision.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Who wishes to make that motion? Taber-Warner?

MR. BOGLE: No, I won't.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Anyone else?

MR. HYLAND: Can I?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Okay. Resettlement. At the moment, it's still resettlement.
Comments, Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: What I was trying to get him to make is a motion to table things. Now we've got a different view of what we think it was called. We've got several views on how we think

it's going to be interpreted. I'd like to move that we table it for our next regular scheduled -- whenever that may be -- non-budgetary meeting.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right.

MR. TAYLOR: If I may, maybe just on a point of information. I did get a chance to talk to the income tax people yesterday. So I'm ready to make my report just in case you want to dispose of it.

MR. HYLAND: The trouble, I think . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hold the phone. There's a motion on the table to table. We're going to have a coffee break, or we could deal with it.

MR. HYLAND: You and I could talk afterwards. Okay?

MS BARRETT: Yeah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So I don't see any problem with this. Is that right? All right.

There's a motion to table. Those in favour? Opposed? Let's try it once more. Those in favour of the motion to table? Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

MR. TAYLOR: Is this tabling this till tomorrow?

MR. HYLAND: Well, we've got to get it all straightened out.

MR. TAYLOR: Okay. We can bring it up as quickly as you want.

MS BARRETT: Easily done. Sure.
Mr. Chairman, I have a motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I've just got to do a little clarification of the last one.

MS BARRETT: That's what I was going to move, that we strike the reference to nonbudgetary in this prior motion. Trust me; it just enables us to do it tomorrow. Just say yes.

MR. HYLAND: I think this is going to take longer than tomorrow.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Well, the secretary had heard, and the motion reads, please.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Moved by Mr. Hyland to table till the next regular nonbudgetary meeting discussion of this item.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. So it was passed. Whatever the committee as a whole determines outside the bounds of the committee is fine. All righty. Thank you.

Item 4(e), PHH Card Implementation. David McNeil.

DR. McNEIL: I just wanted to update the members on implementation of PHH cards. There appear to be a few difficulties with the card. In one instance we had a member who was required to fill out a fairly comprehensive invoice for the services he received, and that is a function of the nature of the infor-

mation system PHH has, that they can supply the cardholder or the employer with fairly detailed information on maintenance on vehicles.

It's my suggestion that I correspond with the members just to advise them that this may happen in some instances if they're getting any maintenance done beyond an oil change or gasoline charges on the card.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. What does that mean? That they were charging something that was not supposed to be covered by the card?

DR. McNEIL: I don't believe so.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MR. BOGLE: Could we get a little more information, please? Are we talking about Shell or Esso? Who are we talking about?

DR. McNEIL: We're talking about, I think it was, a Mr. Lube location.

MR. BOGLE: All right; okay.

DR. McNEIL: So we're not talking about one of the major gasoline suppliers.

MR. BOGLE: Has that now been corrected, or will someone wishing to use Mr. Lube continue to have that problem?

DR. McNEIL: Someone wishing to use Mr. Lube will continue to have that problem.

MR. TAYLOR: Pardon me, Mr. Chairman. I don't understand that. Mr. Lube can only lubricate. What's the problem?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The problem was that we were dealing with major gasoline credit cards. Now, if we're getting off to Mr. Lube and all the rest of it, they weren't part of what we originally envisioned, were they?

MS BARRETT: Yes, that's right in the orders.

DR. McNEIL: The order covers lubrication.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, it covers lubrication.

DR. McNEIL: You know, oil changes and things like that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But we were thinking of major companies, rather than . . .

MR. TAYLOR: But I use Mr. Lube, and I haven't seen them do anything. What the hell could they do?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Maybe they didn't give you a lube job.

All right. Here we are. So Taber-Warner wants some more information.

DR. McNEIL: In that particular location they fill out a more detailed invoice for the service and put the various items in different categories. Now, the reason they do that is so PHH computers can log that information and feed it back to the employer.

So especially for companies that have a massive fleet, they can get very detailed information on their operations and their operating costs.

So my guess is that it won't happen on very many occasions. I just wanted to indicate that that might happen in some instances at some locations.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. So the service was still performed on the car.

DR. McNEIL: The service was still performed.

MS BARRETT: If I'm not mistaken, Mr. Lube isn't even listed on the inside of the credit card package. So chances are the member was lucky that the member could get that work done at Mr. Lube.

DR. McNEIL: Well, they accepted the card, so all that's all we need to worry about there.

The other issue related to cards is that not all the members have returned the other credit cards that are out. It would be my suggestion that I advise the individual chiefs of staff as to who those members are and that they might assist us in obtaining the cards that are still out.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Agreed; PDQ. Okay. Any other questions on PHH? Comments? Thank you.

Item 4(f), Constituency Office Computerization.

DR. McNEIL: There is a report under tab 1, under F, that indicates the present status of the computerization project.

We sent out requests for proposals to 152 Alberta vendors. We received 24 offers from firms. The names of the firms are on the second page there. We are presently evaluating those tenders with a view to establishing a short list by the end of the week or early next week.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

DR. McNEIL: Are there any questions with respect to that project?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next.

DR. McNEIL: The second item under that is a memo from Mr. Wright to myself asking for an interpretation of the decision of the committee, and my response is in the last page of that tab. The second paragraph says:

I believe that implicit in the Members' Services Committee's decision to proceed with computerization of constituency offices was acceptance of the Pilot Project Steering Committee's recommendation that the funding of computerization be centralized in the Legislative Assembly office during the implementation phase of the project.

MS BARRETT: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Well, it has the support of Edmonton-Highlands. That's pretty essential in your caucus.

MS BARRETT: That's right. Well, no, Gordon and I disagree profoundly on this entire subject. But what I want to know is:

is he really asking if we can sell back to the government any equipment we've already bought? Is that what he's really asking, or is he asking something else here?

DR. McNEIL: My interpretation would be that he's asking whether those members who have purchased computer equipment already will get some return on that because they've done that. I guess my interpretation is that that's a sunk cost and any decision to provide equipment to those offices will be to bring it up to the standard. Can that equipment be brought up to the standard by purchasing certain items to bring it up to the standard, or is new equipment required in order to meet the standard that has been established? That's my interpretation of the committee's decision.

MS BARRETT: Yes. I agree.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. All right. Press on from there. And all of this information has then been folded in in terms of next year's budget?

DR. McNEIL: Yes, in terms of the computerization. That's part of the budget to go.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. We are now down to item 4(g), Report on Facsimile Machines.

DR. McNEIL: The request, I understand, was to do a bit of research on the cost of fax machines for constituency offices. A basic fax machine for a constituency office would cost about \$2,500 to \$3,000 retail. If one bought in bulk for the Assembly, you'd probably get the price down to \$2,000 for a reasonable machine. At the present time, buying a fax board for a computer and buying a scanner to read that -- to read letters and so on -- would probably cost you around the same amount or a little more. So in order to provide fax technology to a constituency office, you're probably talking \$2,000 to \$2,500 for a basic machine.

MS BARRETT: Well, I wonder why so much. You know, I see them at Future Shop for, like, \$1,300. What gives? What's the difference?

DR. McNEIL: One of the big factors is whether or not you get a plain paper fax machine or a thermal fax machine.

MS BARRETT: Yeah.

DR. McNEIL: It appears that the newer technology is going to plain paper so that you have a permanent record as opposed to something that fades. The quotes we got were for the plain paper fax machines. We didn't go out with a specific, asking for bids or anything like that. My interpretation of the request was to get off some ballpark numbers as to what it might cost.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So at this stage of the game it's a matter of just gathering the information rather than having immediate budget implications, I assume. Is that correct?

MS BARRETT: Well, it occurs to me that -- you know, the request was that they be provided, and I have no objection to that. But unlike Gordon and a lot of MLAs, I take from my constituency budget to buy my computers. And I do mean plural.

If I want a fax machine, I find it in my constituency budget, and if I can't afford it this year, I wait. The one thing I don't want to see jeopardized at this point is the computerization project. I just think that's a higher priority, especially given that the computers cost a lot more, you know. I think our budgets allow that flexibility if you want a fax machine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Including in the constituency of the member that raised the issue. Thank you.

Item 5, New Business. Grande Prairie.

DR. ELLIOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that is an old piece of business now, and I'd like to withdraw it from the agenda, please.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It has now been covered by the other discussion on the RITE line. Thank you. Any other business that has come to mind while we've been moving through the agenda? We are then in a position to start to do the overview of the budget.

Okay. Budget books. It's my understanding that we'll do the overview again today and then we go into it in more detail starting tomorrow morning. Thank you. Clerk, please.

DR. McNEIL: The way the budget was developed this year was to have the A budget incorporate the cost of maintaining existing operations and that the B budget component be those one-time items that will not likely be an ongoing funding requirement. In terms of the '88-89 budget figures, they include special warrant funds which were approved last week. This is the standard approach used by Treasury in terms of incorporating special warrant funding into the present-year budget and then comparing the original budget plus the special warrant funding to the '89-90 estimate.

Looking at the A budget totals, we project a 3.8 percent increase in the Legislative Assembly budget for '89-90, taking into account the special warrant funding. We've developed two B budgets. Both B budgets include funds for the CPA regional conference, for the Public Accounts conference, for a couple of special projects in *Alberta Hansard* and in the Legislature Library. The first B budget also contains funding for constituency office computerization over a two-year period, and the requirement in the first year is \$377,805. The second B budget, as per the request of one of the members of the committee, phases in the constituency office computerization in one year as opposed to two, so that budget for one-year implementation of the computerization would be \$731,485.

In terms of the overall budget, then, including the A and B budgets, the A plus the B-1 budget, we call it, which is the two-year phasing in of the computerization, results in a percentage increase of 7.8 percent, and the A plus the B-2 budget, which involves the computerization in one year -- in other words, in '89-90 -- doing everything in one year, results in a projected increase of 10 percent. Doing everything in one year results in a projected increase of 10 percent.

Now, that's a very brief overview of the budget in very broad terms.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Then following that, actually do you want to go on and together read through the summary of each of the main sections? And then we're up to speed and then we come back.

Behind General Administration, first page.

DR. McNEIL: Again the overall increase here is 5.6 percent. The major increases in manpower relate to merit adjustments and an increase in various benefit premiums. Throughout the whole budget one of the significant increases in benefit costs is the 30 percent increase in the cost of Canada Pension Plan, unemployment insurance, and group life insurance. So for anybody who's receiving that benefit, there's a 30 percent increase in that benefit all the way through.

Under the General Admin budget, Supply and Services, the increase there relates primarily to higher rental fees and maintenance fees on more sophisticated computer equipment. For the new members' accounts payable system which is to go in place on April 1, we've been required to purchase much more sophisticated equipment, and therefore significantly higher maintenance costs to maintain that equipment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And the PWSS charging for printouts.

DR. McNEIL: Yes. That's about a \$5,000 or \$6,000 increase from PWSS for billing that we weren't billed for before.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Two, MLA Administration.

MR. HYLAND: Whatever happened to computers coming in and things were supposed to be cheaper?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ha ha ha.

MS BARRETT: It's never been true.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Faster but not cheaper.

MS BARRETT: That's right.

DR. McNEIL: That's an illusion that the computer industry has propagated for years.

MS BARRETT: That's right. It means you can do more and file more, but it doesn't cost less.

DR. McNEIL: The MLA Administration increase overall is a result of the increase in the payments to members in the Members' Indemnities budget: 5.6 percent overall. Also included in this budget are the two alternatives with respect to the constituency office computerization. One would increase the budget 9.4 percent, the other 12.9 percent: the two-year and one-year implementation of the computerization.

MR. HYLAND: Can I ask a general question without relating to numbers?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sure.

MR. HYLAND: Unless I'm in the wrong part, is this the one, per diems and allowances -- i.e., mileage, air travel, and everything?

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

MR. HYLAND: Did we go to the system -- I know we talked about it at one time; at least you and I had some discussion about it -- of taking what we used last year for air travel, road travel, instead of going the maximum that could be used, and

every time we changed it, it threw the balance out?

DR. McNEIL: In a number of those allowances we did. We budgeted based on, I guess, our estimate of actual expenditure as opposed to the potential maximum expenditure. A good example of that is the MLA travel allowance, where you've got to travel within the constituency in 52 trips. Potentially, if you budgeted for the maximum allowance there, you'd have about \$1 million. Based on an estimate of actual expenditure, we're talking about \$600,000. So we did budget on that basis in those areas where we felt we had a good handle on what the expenditure would be. And I think that was the direction of the committee at the meeting in December.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. The main thing on this summary page for MLA Administration is to make note of the fact that we have to come back and deal with option 1 and option 2 of the B budget proposals.

All righty. We can go on to House Services, the overview, section 3. David.

DR. McNEIL: Under Manpower, the major increase here again relates to merit and market adjustments in the increased benefit costs. In addition, we moved the security staff from a contract basis to a situation where they're provided with some benefits, and we implemented a disability plan for them in the event that they were injured, which was not coverage they had in previous years. As a result, there are some increases in the manpower costs.

Under Supplies and Services we've got a reduction of about 23 percent primarily due to the fact that the travel is significantly reduced because of where various conferences are and the fact that the CPA regional is in Calgary and Edmonton this year.

Under Other Expenditures we allocated funds for the payment of daily allowance for attendance at parliamentary conferences, which was not budgeted previously. The B budget item, the CPA conference, is part of the House Services budget, which would be a one-time-only expenditure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Item 4.

DR. McNEIL: The Speaker's Office. The only increases there relate to manpower and merit market adjustments, 2.5 percent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, with that, I think we move... We've gone to government members; we'll come back to that when we go into detail. The Official Opposition, the Liberal opposition, the Representative opposition.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, I'm in a little trouble with this Representative opposition. The leader of the Representative opposition has announced that he's joined the Conservative Party. Now, do we still have a Representative opposition? If we have, it should be half size.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I've taken the matter under some consideration, and there is still the Representative opposition party until such time as they either go through an election or cause a resignation or cross the floor, and I've not been notified of any of those. So we work on the theory that there's a Representative opposition in the House until whenever an election occurs.

MR. TAYLOR: You mean anybody can sit where they want, and you have to accept that?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is correct.

MR. TAYLOR: It's hard enough questioning the government anyhow without somebody snapping at my ass now that's on the government side.

DR. ELLIOTT: Come across where it's safer, Nick.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, I think that's ridiculous, to have a guy that says he's joined the other party and you're going to allow him to sit there and ask questions and everything else.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He was elected as a Representative. Therefore, he sits there until he chooses to . . .

MR. TAYLOR: But he's announced to all and sundry -- and I do mean "sundry" -- that he's crossed.

MR. CAMPBELL: He'll give an indication of when you're supposed to stand, Nick.

MR. TAYLOR: For the Lord's Prayer.

MR. BOGLE: It's my understanding that the leader of the Representative Party made it very clear that while he would seek a Progressive Conservative nomination for the upcoming general election -- whenever that may be -- his plans were to continue to sit as leader of the Representative Party, keeping in mind he was elected as a Representative candidate in the last general election. He's made that very clear to his constituents and to his party supporters in the province. So I think the Speaker, the chairman of this committee, has outlined his responsibilities very carefully, and our committee has no choice other than to respect the fact that there is a Representative Party at the present time. There are two members sitting in the House, and until they decide to do otherwise, they're treated as they have been for the past three budgets: as a party, just as the Liberal Party is treated as a party in the Assembly.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, I don't think I'd have the gall to sit on the Liberal side if I announced that I was going to run as a Tory next time. Mind you, I might not have the gall to even go home, but I wouldn't go far enough as I'd get out and announce that I'm sitting there taking public moneys, taking turn in everything else.

MR. CAMPBELL: What do you mean? You could go home, Nick.

MR. BOGLE: You can call a press conference after this meeting and say whatever you like.

MR. TAYLOR: I will. Where were you when I needed you?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The other thing would flow, that if perchance one of these actions took place, then we would adjust at that time. But until something occurs, this is the way it is.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, I had visions of dividing up their allowance amongst the rest of us.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I second that motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Surprise, surprise.

MR. BOGLE: You have a lot of visions, Nick, few of which come to fruition.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Item 9, Legislative Committees. Clerk.

DR. McNEIL: Projected decrease there of 18.4 percent due to decrease in travel expenses, and a B budget item there for the hosting of the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees, approximately \$33,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Which occurs in Edmonton just prior to the CPA conference in Calgary and Edmonton under the chairmanship of Mr. Pashak.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, in the past on one occasion or another -- and this has not been a traditional occasion, to be done every year -- from time to time we've had the chairmen of these various standing committees come before this committee. Is it the feeling that we would want to have that done this year? Has this been looked at, discussed, thought about? I ask only in the sense of looking at my own schedule over the next several months to see how many more days we're going to have to spend in this committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's the wish of the committee, whatever you determine. Legislative Committees are down . . . What have we got here? Heritage Savings Trust Fund down 18.7. Law and Regulations stays the same. Legislative Offices. Members' Services: we should be able to call that group fairly easily. Public Accounts. Private Bills. What is your pleasure? Which chairmen would you like?

MR. BOGLE: Well, Mr. Chairman, we established a practice in the past of inviting the chairmen of some or all of the committees to come forward and give this committee some indication of their activities and what the funds are being used for. I think the hon. Member for Barrhead has made a good point, that we should continue with that practice. I'd like to see the chairmen invited to attend during one of our next meetings to give us a brief overview and to respond to any questions members may have.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All committees, or any committee in particular?

MR. CAMPBELL: All the committees.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'll see if I can find some of them for tomorrow. We're also planning to meet Monday, are we? So we've got some room to try for tomorrow, Monday, and/or Tuesday. Okay; we'll go and start the phones. Thank you. I think it's good practice, because they need to know that they fit under an umbrella.

MRS. MIROSH: That's right.

MR. KOWALSKI: On that point, I don't know if they do. I guess one of the clarifications members of this committee should understand is that these are committees of the Legislative

Assembly as well. So it's as much, I think, a protocol on our part to show an interest in our colleagues and what they're doing, but it's certainly not an in-depth evaluation of their recommendations or the proposal, and we should be here to facilitate.

MR. BOGLE: Well, we adjusted some budgets last year, and we wanted their input before that was done.

MR. KOWALSKI: Agreed. Yeah, I agree.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Good. Thank you.

MR. BOGLE: And that's exactly the point.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
Item 10, Legislative Interns.

DR. McNEIL: This budget is projected to decrease by 14.6 percent, primarily due to the reduction in the number of interns from six to four. We funded six for part of the year last year, so we're funding four now for the whole year. That's why that budget is decreasing by that amount.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. May we move on to item 11, *Alberta Hansard*.

DR. McNEIL: *Alberta Hansard*: a slight reduction of 1.8 percent in the A budget. The main reason this A budget stays pretty well the same is that we went to the marketplace -- it's an open tendering process for printing -- and have a realistic estimate of costs based on usage this year.

The only other items there to mention are the B budget items that are presented, which would bring the budget up to a 3.6 percent increase, if they were approved.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Item 12, Legislature Library.

DR. McNEIL: The A budget for the library represents a 4.3 percent decrease. This primarily is a result of the reduction in funding required because of the abolition of five positions from the research services unit last year. But we had to budget for three months of their salaries because of the notice requirements under the abolition process. So that funding is no longer required. Therefore it's a decrease, then, and there are two B budget items proposed.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, will you make arrangements for Gary Garrison and Blake McDougall to come in at appropriate times? I'm assuming all members would agree that we would adjust how we're going through the budget to accommodate the timetabling.

MR. TAYLOR: Interesting how he explains \$15,000 for indexing *Alberta Report*. It should all go under C for crap.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that a request on your part to give them a dollar, and you'll take the other \$14,999 for your analysis?

MR. TAYLOR: Could we pass it on to Mr. Byfield.

MR. CAMPBELL: Just an editorial comment.

MR. TAYLOR: Yeah. Fifteen thousand dollars to categorize *Alberta Report*; that's more than it costs to publish it many years.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think you'll find there's another problem associated with that when Blake McDougall is here.

Well, we can certainly have people here for items 11 and 12 for tomorrow.

MS BARRETT: How do you know so fast?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Because they're our employees.
Yes, David.

DR. McNEIL: Mr. Chairman, it would be helpful to me to know how you wish to proceed tomorrow in terms of... Is there any particular sequence that you want to go through this process in terms of the availability of Blake and Gary and the availability of the committee chairmen and so on?

MR. BOGLE: Well, in past years, Mr. Chairman... I think I did outline at our last meeting, when you slipped out for a couple of moments, that we would in all likelihood proceed the way the items appear.

We might want to give some consideration under the MLA Administration category. I'm thinking of the constituency office component of the Members' Services allowance and whether we want to hold that final discussion and tie it in with the discussion on caucus budgets, because of course there is that tie-in between the two. We normally do the caucus budget items at the very end, once we've dealt with everything else. So with those two exceptions, I'm assuming we would deal with it in order.

I did suggest a few moments ago, though, that when we're calling the two gentlemen forward, rather than having them sit and wait for hours and hours -- you know, through the co-operation of the Chair, if he wants to deal with them at a particular time, I think we'd be agreeable to deal with *Hansard* and the library at the call of the Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I'm certain we can have them for tomorrow. So roughly, we'll probably deal with 1 and 3 -- we'll hold 2 for a bit later. So 1, 3, 4, and then we go on to 9, depending on the availability of chairmen; then we can go 10, 11, and 12. We might start with 11 and 12 tomorrow, whatever we can arrange. All right? Agreed.

Any other business for this afternoon?

MR. TAYLOR: Another thing I might suggest, Mr. Chairman, is the availability of committees. We could wrap ourselves around. In other words, we shouldn't be too hidebound with 1, 3, 4 and that. If the committee is available earlier or something, that's fine. Get them in then.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Agreed. But for the moment, we're planning on being back here tomorrow morning at 9. Is that agreed?

MS BARRETT: Nine-thirty, I think.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nine-thirty. Thank you. We also have kept aside Monday and Tuesday.

MS BARRETT: Monday afternoon and Tuesday morning, I

hope.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. With your other main binder, do you want to just for a moment turn inside there so we can check up on the Follow-up Items to see what is cleared up?

The item that's carried over for some time was vision care for members under the extended health care package. Have we really felt that that's covered as far as we can take it at the moment, Member for Barrhead?

MR. KOWALSKI: At the moment we're currently up to date, and I would like it carried on the agenda.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just keep carrying it?

MR. KOWALSKI: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

The next item, issue of identification cards -- that's on hold until after we get the security report.

The next item, PHH credit card -- that's off. The next one, we're waiting for that. Members' Services Committee order re constituency office guidelines.

MS BARRETT: It's done.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's done. The next one is on a continuing basis after the report today: Rite government installation.

Alternate budget scenarios re computerization -- that's been done. We'll be dealing with it. Fax machines -- that's been done. Long distance telephone calls -- the Member for Grande Prairie has withdrawn that.

Now, implement parliamentary meetings order.

DR. McNEIL: That's done.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh yes. All right. Thank you. That was done.

To implement constituency reference order.

DR. McNEIL: That's done.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The next one is done: bonus points.

MS BARRETT: Done.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The next one: re use and nature of visits of former MLAs -- we've carried that as a continuing item because we'll do it on an ongoing basis. The next section -- yes, they've been advised.

Now, December 5, 88.200.

MS BARRETT: That's done.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right you are.

Temporary residence. To amend and implement new Members' Temporary Residence Claim form.

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. The Clerk also followed through on the December 5 88.203 item.

MS BARRETT: Can I just ask what that was? I can't remember. It's about AGT and Edmonton Tel residential listings.

MR. BOGLE: Well, the issue was that Edmonton Tel and, I believe, AGT were insisting that if they listed a telephone with the member's name and MLA designation, they were charging a business rate. I objected strongly to that because we had had a residential telephone for years listed under my wife's name with "Dr." in front of it, and that was a residential rate. And it just seemed like a rip-off for the Assembly. The only way we were getting around it was to have an unlisted number, and then they allow you to have a residential rate. But it's been worked out now. We're now getting a residential rate, and it can be listed.

DR. McNEIL: With "MLA" behind the name.

MS BARRETT: Instead of "Dr."

DR. McNEIL: Not in whole, but if you have "MLA" behind the name you'll still qualify for residential rates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And that saves a fair amount of money.

DR. McNEIL: It saves about \$12,000 a year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right.

Minute 88.205. Chiefs of staff are keeping a handle on that, I trust, so we don't get into this end-of-year grumpiness from certain members.

MS BARRETT: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Great. I think we'll still leave it on there though. If we could get through one year without having anybody upset at the end of the year as to the expenditure of their funds, then we'll all probably have a quiet little party.

Okay; the last one. That's been done as well.

MS BARRETT: And did they agree? Did the Treasurer agree to that?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, we're not submitting material . . .

MS BARRETT: Do we have the power to tell them? I wonder how a cabinet minister feels about that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not thrilled.

MS BARRETT: I'll bet.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right.
Member for Grande Prairie.

DR. ELLIOTT: I withdraw. I'll have to ask it after lunch. I missed the meeting before Christmas, Mr. Chairman, and I think the topic I want to ask is in the minutes, so I will check that out.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, we've got tomorrow.
All right. Yes, Barrhead.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, the reference to item 87.403 has been resolved, and so it can come off. The first one.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All agreed?

MS BARRETT: Yeah. The visual care package.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It has been resolved. All right.
A motion to adjourn?

MS BARRETT: So moved.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Edmonton-Highlands, seconded by Rocky Mountain House. All those in favour, please pick up your books and walk, and we'll see you tomorrow morning at 9:30.

[The committee adjourned at 3:07 p.m.]

