

[Chairman: Dr. Carter]

[9:12 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, ladies and gentlemen; thank you for joining us here in July. It's obviously a high priority item on your agenda to be here rather than being back home in the sunshine.

We have an agenda, which has been distributed to you. Any other items of business you'd like to add to this? We always have the right to add some more later on if you so desire. Could we have a motion to adopt the agenda?

MRS. BLACK: So moved.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Calgary-Foothills. All those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Now that the agenda is approved, if you have some extra copies, you can give them to the media if they would like, unless of course they don't want to have a copy of the agenda.

All right. Item 3, the minutes of the February 14 meeting. You've had those in your binders. Any errors or omissions?

MRS. BLACK: I make a motion that they be approved as circulated.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. All those in favour of the motion to approve the minutes of February 14, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Opposed, please say no. Carried. Thank you.

Business Arising from the Minutes. David McNeil, please.

DR. McNEIL: The chiefs of staff and I met - I think it was on May 21 - with respect to this issue. The issue is really whether or not there needed to be more definitive guidelines written with respect to caucus and constituency office expenditures. The conclusion this particular group reached, the consensus reached at that meeting, was that in reviewing the few questions of interpretation that had come up, at least at this point in time it didn't feel more elaborate guidelines were required in that there was a general consensus that there hadn't been a great many difficulties in interpretation and, when difficulties had arisen, there had been the ability between chiefs of staff and the administration people in the Legislative Assembly office to discuss and resolve any particular difficulties.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

DR. McNEIL: That was the general consensus. That's not to say that those guidelines are absolutely clear cut. There are always going to be situations that arise where there's some difficulty in interpretation, and I think we felt the important thing was the dialogue between the parties involved to attempt to resolve it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.
Taber-Warner.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, through to David. What was the date of that meeting? Do you know?

DR. McNEIL: I believe we met on May 21. The chiefs of staff and myself met just after an EDP committee meeting.

MR. BOGLE: I do have an agenda item, 5(f), which relates to this . . .

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

MR. BOGLE: . . . but I'll hold it till that point in time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. There's one chief of staff here. Everything's fine as far as you know?

MRS. AINSLIE: Yeah, that was the consensus at that time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thanks.

MR. McINNIS: That's my understanding too. I think everybody's happy.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you, Edmonton-Jasper Place. Item 4(b), EDP Update. David.

DR. McNEIL: There's a short briefing note in your binder. The essence of the briefing is that the installation of the computer equipment in the constituency offices has been completed; in other words, the equipment is in all offices that have requested equipment. That's 77 offices. And the formal training courses have been organized and are under way for those individuals who have yet to be trained. That training will continue until the end of August, at which point staff in all those offices which have computers will be trained in their use. As well, the information systems staff have scheduled trips out to each office, and those will be completed within the next couple of months as well. So in terms of the installation of the constituency office computer equipment, I would say that is virtually complete. There seems to be a fairly high level of satisfaction with the equipment and its use. Although in particular instances there were some individuals who were a little afraid of the equipment at first, the training and the on-site visits seem to reduce that anxiety level a great deal.

With respect to the allocation of computer equipment in the caucus offices for this year, both the Official Opposition and the Liberal caucus offices have been equipped. At the request of the Conservative caucus, the installation was delayed until the end of session, and that is now taking place, with a target to have that equipment installed by the end of July and the associated training taking place subsequent to that point. So in terms of the EDP plan and our progress toward it, I would say that we're on target, and there seems to be a general satisfaction with the kind of capability it does provide to the caucuses and the constituency offices.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any questions?

MR. McINNIS: There are two more years until the installation's complete?

DR. McNEIL: We expect to be finished by this year-end.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But there are very few holes left.

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Very few. It still ranks about the best in North America. The main thing is that we're on target, and in the operation of it there aren't too many bugs that have developed.

DR. McNEIL: You know, we have glitches every once in a while, but we have the capability to solve those. I would say that the EDP management committee, that involves the caucus chiefs of staff as well as Legislative Assembly staff, is working together very effectively, and any problems that do arise are resolved quite quickly, in that any operation problems, any policy issues will come back to this committee for resolution.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Further questions?

Item 4(c), facsimile machines in constituency offices and also the matter of direct telephone linkups. In your binder as well you'll find two items: one that relates to the previous action of the committee whereby it ended up being tabled to this meeting, and then there is a brief letter from the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud.

So does anyone wish to take the item from the table? If not, perhaps we could then go to Edmonton-Whitemud to deal with his correspondence.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I'll move that the item be received as information. Speaking to it, with the ongoing progress with the electronic data processing system, the need for fax machines that may have been visualized at one time I don't think is going to be there to the same degree. For the expenditure related to it, I'm not sure the benefit is worth while.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. The motion is to take the letter as information. Further discussion? Call for the question? All those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

Okay. The other information that's there from the minutes can be used if any member feels they have to deal with the matter.

All righty. Item 4(d), Clerk.

DR. McNEIL: This matter arose as a result of a request from one of the former members on the possibility of extension of benefits past the five-year period which is now possible. The carrier has advised us that they cannot extend the coverage for former members past the present five-year extension period. In their opinion, it would not be sound underwriting practice to contemplate that. We would have to do it completely on our own and self-insure it and not do it within the context of the plan.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You will recall that we had a letter from a former member to look at the matter of whether the coverage would be extended or whether it would be dealt with in some other fashion. So this is again a reporting back function to the committee. At that time I didn't have any feeling that the committee was prepared to try to extend the coverage any further. The initial reason for doing it was to cover some members who we thought might have some medical problems in the first place, and that seems to be well in hand.

Any other questions or comments on that? Okay. Thank you.

Item 4(e) is also a matter of just briefly reporting back. As you know, we did go on the hook to ensure that the people of

the province would have all the considerable benefits of watching question period and listening to it, so we put out a considerable amount of money, in the nature of a \$50,000 budgeted amount for this year. By the time we get through the end of the year, we'll have expended most of the money we provided for it. So again, in making sure it was covered by Videotron and from there the linkup with ACCESS, the coverage has continued, so we really have not had any reason for this particular subcommittee to meet in terms of that previous decision. However, Robert, you met with the parliamentary secretary to the minister of telecommunications. Is there anything additional?

MR. R. DAY: The Minister of Communications, Mr. Chairman. Jim Edwards, who is a federal Member of Parliament from Edmonton and the parliamentary secretary, had advised me that the letter we received from Mr. Spicer gives a very legal description of an interpretation of what community programming means. It is difficult for us to appeal a process where there is no good definition for the word "community." He has conveyed that information back to Ottawa with a request that we be extended an explanation as to specifically what "community" does mean and how we as a community might undertake community programming to fit the CRTC definition. So I would expect that sometime in the fall.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions? Comments? Okay doke.

Item 4(f), Re-assessment of Space Allocation in the Legislature Building. In your file there under 4(f), you will note that we have a few letters that have been received. One is from Edmonton-Highlands, raising two issues. One is from Mr. Wanagas as president of the Legislature Press Gallery Association. Others are from Mr. Field, executive director of *Edmonton's Newsday* of the CBC, and from Gillian Stewart, the managing editor of the *Calgary Herald*, and then another letter which is somewhat related from Patrick Harden of the *Edmonton Sun*. Behind that, of course, we have the various appropriate minutes with regard to the space allocation.

Basically, what we're talking about are the opposition members' lobby and the government members' lobby, in which at the moment we are situated. The items are being brought forward at this meeting, as I had indicated to all concerned that I would. So I leave it open to members of the committee for discussion.

Member for Edmonton-Whitemud.

MR. WICKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's a matter I spoke on on one of the other motions prior to the House being recessed after the spring session. From my point of view, I saw the problem increasing as time went on. It became more and more difficult to leave the Legislative Assembly and try and get down the hallways because of congestion of the media and other people in the hallways. I don't think it's a good situation.

I agree with the comments from the Member for Edmonton-Highlands, that it should be reviewed, that it should be looked at. We have to recognize that the media have a role to play and a job to fulfill, and they're attempting to do that job. I believe we're making it difficult for them; we're making it difficult for ourselves. The other situation prior to that decision may have caused some problems, but I think it was a lot better than what we have at the present time. I'd be quite content to simply see the whole decision reversed and go back to what we had prior to that change, at least until such time as we can find something

more suitable, something that can be worked out in conjunction with representatives from the press corps.

MRS. MIROSH: Mr. Chairman, there were a number of concerns expressed to me by members of our caucus committee. We're here to serve our members, not the media. There were a number of days when we sat till the wee hours of the morning, till 2 or 3 while I was away, I understand. Even before I left, I know that we sat until at least 2 a.m. We spend a lot of hours in that Legislative Assembly, and when we take our break, we need space and a place like this. Our members commented that this was one of the best moves you have made, and I would recommend that we leave it the way it is. Again, I'd just like to reiterate that we're here to serve our members.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Grande Prairie.

DR. ELLIOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to reflect a personal observation. From my personal point of view, I found that the whole setup we used to have was becoming more and more offensive. The problems I personally had getting from that door to that door were absolutely unbearable and unnecessary. I just can't believe that we'd ever want to try to go back to something like that.

I also want to point out that one of the positives from the changes we've had that I really enjoyed was working with staff. We have interns, students, secretaries, researchers. As far as I'm concerned, being able to meet with them with the arrangements we have now just sells the system beautifully to me.

MR. McINNIS: I have to say I'm certainly happy the government members have a quiet space like this where they can meet with their staff and relax in a late-night session. The same doesn't apply on the other side of the House. The space over there is shared with the two opposition parties and the Clerk's office as well. It's also in the vicinity of a public corridor. So you buy yourself some peace and quiet and the ability to use a private corridor to get out of here or another escape avenue down this way at the expense of pushing all the traffic over on the other side. That's just a fact of life as far as this arrangement is concerned.

What we have to be concerned with is whether the earlier decision made on February 14, on Valentine's Day, in fact works. The purpose of bringing it back at this time is to reassess it. I don't think we need to hash over the arguments we made originally, but I think every member of this committee must realize that what happens outside that door did not work satisfactorily in the last session. It was absolute anarchy and chaos out there. There was an effort by the Sergeant-at-Arms' people to try to keep the top of the stairs clear for reasons of safety. The correspondence does reflect the concern that when people are doing scums, there are roving scums on the stairwells. That's a dangerous situation. However, we did have a lot of roving scums going down the stairs and the business of sort of barking commands and getting scums that were already in operation moving in order to meet the safety requirement and a great deal of congestion in the corridors between people trying to get by scums. Some of the government members, some members of the cabinet, decided to take it upon themselves to physically clear their way through some scums that I was involved in to the point of nearly assaulting members of the media, certainly hitting cameras and microphones and things like that. It was not at all clear where this business was supposed to take place.

Now, when we were in here we had that corner – in fact, toward the end it was actually cordoned off: an area where the media could operate, an area where members could walk – and it was at least clear where the thing was supposed to take place and where it wasn't supposed to take place. Moving it outside into the hallway left it happening all over the place, and there were advantages and disadvantages. I suppose from a media relations point of view the government suffered from it more, so the opposition parties can't be too unhappy about that. However, I don't feel it worked very well at all from the human point of view, and indeed humanity does extend beyond the members of the government caucus. I think that point should be made before we pass this thing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Calgary-Foothills, and then Red Deer-North.

MRS. BLACK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know, John. Maybe I didn't attend the same session you did, but I felt that it worked quite well. From the standpoint that they were doing articles in the paper and just as many interviews on television, I don't think the press had any problem accessing members.

I think what happened that needed to be rectified is that in fact there was a direction given from the Speaker that interviews were to be handled down at the bottom of the stairs by the fountain. That was made perfectly clear on several occasions, to the point where in fact the fountain was even turned off so it would not affect the audio for the television cameras and the tape machines. Now, I don't see how much more co-operation you could have from the Legislature as to providing a place for interviews. There's also in this building an actual press room. It's a beautiful room, and it should be utilized by the press and by people giving interviews.

Now, I think one of the things that has to happen is that all parties should abide by the direction from the Speaker that interviews be given at the bottom of the stairs, thus eliminating the problem of the scrum at the doorways. That would secure the safety factors involved. I think actually there was just as much coverage of this session and just as many interviews given in this session as there have ever been, and it had no bearing on whether they were in this room or outside. The press made access to people on a daily basis; at least I saw cards coming in and out all the time.

So I think that argument that we were cutting the press off is utter nonsense. I don't think it's valid at all. The fact of the matter is that logistically they have to give interviews where designated areas have been assigned to them, and that takes co-operation not only from the press but from members of this Legislature. I think overall, Mr. Chairman, this whole arrangement was very successful. I think it was beneficial to allow people from the public that were in Edmonton or in the Legislature to be able to all of a sudden have a quick meet with a member in this room. You couldn't do that before. I think it was absolutely advantageous that we have this room left as is and the room on the other side left as is and we start adjusting and saying, "Let's go do our interview down by the fountain or in the press room, where we are supposed to be, but not in the corridors." That takes a commitment from everybody, members and press.

MR. S. DAY: Mr. Chairman, I think co-operation is the operative word here, and there's no question that we have a need and should have a desire to co-operate as fully as possible

both with the Speaker and with the media in terms of helping them do their job.

It's been raised by the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud that he had some difficulty in accessing the hallways. I'd like to suggest a co-operative aspect be looked at there, because it's not lack of willingness on the part of MLAs to go down to the bottom of the stairs. That was something that was certainly communicated very clearly to our caucus, with full agreement. Whether the opposition did not communicate to their own caucus members that they should involve themselves in that process and try to make it easy for the media to meet them down there, I don't know, but that is something that was communicated and that our caucus members are certainly willing to do. If they are stopped by a barrage of cameras and tape recorders as they leave this door here, it becomes difficult for them to push a group of media people down the stairs. I don't have the opportunity to be interviewed as often as the illustrious Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, but the times I did, many people involved said, "Would you come down to the flat area on the stairs there where we can talk to you?" I found it very conducive to be able to do that.

So without rehashing all the reasons for this move, I think we also need to remember that this room was never intended to be a media room. It happened by default, more than anything else, over a slow process of time. It's just a matter of the environment being brought back to its original purpose for the greater enhancement of the entire environment. So I'd like to suggest maybe a discussion, again with members of our caucus plus the media, in terms of that co-operative aspect of meeting. And this thing about members going down backstairs – and it's brought up in Terry Field's letter, the CBC – rarely, if ever, would have happened anyway, and the media being in this room or not being in this room has nothing to do with the members going down those stairs. I think you would find that in 99 percent of the cases members, receiving that little orange card, as they have done while they're in the Assembly, and being asked to meet with the media outside, are most co-operative in doing that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Cypress-Redcliff, Taber-Warner, Edmonton-Whitemud.

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, I'm sorry. Edmonton-Jasper Place, then Edmonton-Whitemud. Thank you.

MR. HYLAND: Just some comments related to Ms Barrett's letter. She noted in her letter to the committee, or to you as chairman, that the area proved to be underutilized. Now, I don't know what went on on the opposition side; that may be true. On this side that wasn't true. The government members' lounge, because of the motion that was passed in the Assembly on no smoking, was where our members came to smoke. It wasn't just them in here; it was quite a number of members. When you're counting numbers, it was the Whip; there's the Deputy Whip. The two of us found it useful to have our members close by rather than going back to their offices or somewhere to have their smoke. You could get your hands on them fairly quickly.

As far as congestion, when I was in Ottawa I noted that there they just have a simple yellow plastic rope down the middle of a corridor. The members walk on one side of that rope and the opposition walk on the other, and they never seem to get in each other's way. Somehow it seems to work.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The opposition or the media?

MR. HYLAND: The media are on one side of the rope and the members are on the other side of the rope.

One day we were waiting in front of the Conservative caucus room. People came out of there and nobody crossed that rope. They stood there and gave their interviews or answered questions, and nobody tried to get in there to push out of the way or anything. There weren't security people standing there stopping it or not. Both sides seemed to observe that that was the dividing line and both sides seemed to stand with it. I think over time that's what will happen here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Taber-Warner.

MR. BOGLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The original motion called for the Confederation Room to be designated a government members' lobby and the west side of the Chamber to be designated an opposition members' lobby. Thus far in our discussion today both Edmonton-Whitemud and Edmonton-Jasper Place have expressed some concerns with the arrangement, primarily as it relates to the media. The motion itself did not address the question of members' access to the media and vice versa, although I do recall that at the time the motion was discussed, there were indications from the chairman, in his capacity as Speaker, as to how that would be handled.

Further noted from Edmonton-Jasper Place was a concern about the arrangements on the opposition members' lobby side, that there isn't the privacy that is enjoyed by government members on this side because you've got two caucuses using a lobby plus the Clerk's office.

MR. McINNIS: The corridor's off it.

MR. BOGLE: And there's a corridor that goes past, which I believe is used by pages, although not government members.

MR. McINNIS: It's used by the media and government members who sit on that side of the House.

MR. BOGLE: I don't know what government members are . . .

MRS. BLACK: No, no, no. I sit on that side of the House and I've never come down there.

MR. BOGLE: In any event, the question I wanted to pose back to Edmonton-Jasper Place and Edmonton-Whitemud is that if there are concerns by the respective caucuses, have those concerns been raised with the Speaker in terms of what arrangements might be made to possibly divide the lobby into two sections so there would be a section for each of the two political parties. That's my first question: has that happened? Well, might the parties take that into consideration? I think both members have indicated they wish to speak again in this discussion; that's something you might consider raising.

I'd like to add one further point to the points raised by members who have suggested that the current arrangement continue in practice. My office is in the Legislature Annex, as is the case with a number of both government and opposition members, and if I have a special guest in, either from the constituency or someone I'm meeting through one of my other capacities in the Assembly, to go back to my office takes me away from the House, and as has been indicated by the Deputy

Whip for the government side, it's more difficult then to be called back to the Assembly on short notice. This room has worked very well in that sense. I can sit down and have a brief discussion with a special guest, and if I'm needed back in the Assembly, I can go back in.

I think we should focus on how to correct the concerns on the opposition lobby side in terms of privacy – and that is something that should be done between the opposition caucuses and the Speaker – and in terms of relations with the media go back to the original request of the Speaker that the interviews should be held at the bottom of the stairs and that where an issue is of greater importance, let's go back and use the media room. As stated by the Member for Calgary-Foothills, we've got a beautiful media room downstairs. Let's make better use of it.

I conclude my comments by noting that a further motion will be required today if we are in fact to continue with the arrangements we used during the first sitting of the Second Legislature. The motion that was passed was for the first sitting only, so unless another motion is made, we would automatically revert to the old arrangement. I would urge that we do in fact continue with the practice, because notwithstanding the concerns raised by some members, concerns which I believe can be adequately responded to, I think this is a very good arrangement.

MR. McINNIS: Well, I think we have a misunderstanding about one thing anyway. I don't believe there was ever a directive issued as to where meetings should be conducted – at the bottom of the stairs or any other such place. At most there would be a directive as to where a meeting should not be carried on.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: There was.

MR. McINNIS: It's not a directive. I don't understand it to be a directive. I understand there are certain areas that are off limits, but the Speaker does not tell the media where they interview people. They interview people outside on the lawn, down in the TV room, by the fountain: anywhere that's not off limits.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Forgive me for half a moment. Standing Orders is with regard to the galleries and the lobbies. The Chair has never thought anything about the front doorstep or the grounds of the building. Let's not get too far on your casting.

MR. McINNIS: I'm not casting. I just want to make it absolutely clear that it was never communicated to our caucus that there was a directive that they shall conduct interviews by the fountain. To my knowledge, no such directive was ever issued. I don't believe that's what we're about here: telling the media and MLAs where they do their business. At most we can tell them where they can't do their business and declare certain areas to be off limit, and that's what's happened.

As far as Mr. Bogle's point about things being communicated from the opposition, our position was communicated to the Speaker by Pam Barrett's memo of June 22. I think the position is absolutely clear, insofar as the view of our caucus is concerned, about this entire arrangement and what should happen from here on in. So it was communicated.

I think we're all prepared to co-operate, although it does seem to me that the central point here is that there is a benefit by having this room made available to the government members which is not available to anybody else, and from our point of view it doesn't work. It works to your advantage but not to the

advantage of anyone else. I don't deny the value of having a place where the members can smoke and hold meetings and be close at hand. That does appear to have a benefit, and the benefit should be conferred equally on all members if we're going to look at it on that basis.

The thing is that we as a committee don't tell the MLAs and the media where they do their business; we can only tell them where they can't do it. That's the way I see it.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Chairman, there are two points I'd make. One, reference was made to where interviews are conducted and the oppositions' need to give direction to their caucuses as to where those interviews should be conducted. If you have a feel for how the operation seems to work, it's not so much opposition members that are being interviewed on the third floor. It appears, to me at least, to be cabinet ministers who are stationed on the third floor and leave their offices as they're heading towards the Legislative Assembly Chamber. You can't expect them to go down to the main floor and then come up the stairs, whereas opposition members come up the stairs, and in more cases than the other way around they're interviewed at the bottom of the stairs. When I try and get through, I don't see members from the Liberal caucus or from the New Democrat caucus being interviewed that often. It is normally the cabinet ministers that are being interviewed. It occurs prior to the House sitting, and it occurs after question period. It is a problem; there's no question that it's a problem.

As far as our lounge is concerned – and there's the third lounge that we all share, where there's coffee and such. I'm not sure how the New Democrat caucus feels about this, but our caucus would have no objection to saying: give up that lounge that we now share jointly with the New Democrat caucus – we'll be content to jointly use the other lounge at the back, where the coffee and such is – move the government lounge over to where we are at the present time, and free this one up the way it was before. I quite frankly don't see that lounge being that beneficial to us.

MR. HYLAND: You shouldn't have had a no-smoking policy in there, Percy, so you had to spend all your time outside.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sergeant-at-Arms, would you just sort of like to reflect on the changes made in terms of the different arrangements for the media and members, the utilization of both of these main lounges?

MR. LACOMBE: Well, I found that the people at the front door were having quite a problem congestionwise. Some of the ministers, when requested to go down to the bottom of the steps or move away, comply. Some of the opposition are quite good; some aren't. I find that pretty well all of the media comply with the request. A lot of them just look at you and move away kind of slowly.

I find that the opposition doesn't use those as much as they do here. In here they do a lot of smoking, interviewing, and that sort of thing. We get a lot of complaints from the media about their being harassed at the front door, being asked to move on to let people in and out. They don't like that sort of thing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Where did most of the interviews take place outside these doors?

MR. LACOMBE: In the hallways, that side and this side. Some down at the bottom of the steps; not that many.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would you say that the bulk of the interviews were being done by media with cabinet ministers, or what kind of proportions with opposition as well?

MR. LACOMBE: Opposition: quite a lot. Quite a few of the cabinet ministers and some of the chairmen of committees and that sort of thing. I would say: about 60-40, cabinet ministers and opposition.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. The other thing that I noticed that occurred was that we no longer had all of this group of people up and down this corridor.

MR. LACOMBE: That's correct. We kept that clear.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

Red Deer-North, followed by Barrhead.

MR. S. DAY: Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't think we want to protract this debate, as I said earlier, but I do think there's somewhat of an attempt to create a tempest in a teapot. We're talking about a room which has always been a meeting room, and over a period of time that purpose was lost by default. I just want to address a couple of areas that have been brought up.

First, in terms of benefits accrued, I don't know where the opposition members have been when they say that their members don't get the benefit of that lounge. I've had opportunity when I've had to meet in that lounge, say, with an opposition House leader or other opposition member for a number of reasons, to see other members in there relaxing, smoking; not that I'm trying to make life easy for smokers. I've seen an NDP member sleeping on the floor in that lounge. So they have accrued some benefits. There is privacy; there is a wall that separates that public corridor. I do think it'd be a great suggestion, should they desire, to have a wall that would separate the two opposition parties, if they need that privacy. I would support them on that.

In terms of making that room over there available to the government caucus, we're talking about a small lobby area here for 59 members, albeit not all at once, as opposed to a room over there which can accommodate 24. I can hardly see that that space would accommodate a caucus of 59 members, so I see that as being entirely impractical.

Again referring to the media question, we have a wonderful, large building here; we have beautiful grounds outside. Somebody's already talked about interviewing outside. We all have offices. We have a wonderful, beautifully constructed media room. We have all kinds of access to the media and them to us. My experience has been that they use that wisely and that I can use it wisely. Let's put aside this little tempest about a room here which serves a very good purpose and a few feet of corridor space outside the door which should be kept clear. Let's talk about the bottom of the stairs, all the rest of the building, the grounds, the media room, and our own offices, and let's put aside this tempestuous situation here.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, just to put in perspective the space allocations in the building, because the space allocations always do come up as an interesting question periodically, we've bent over backwards in an attempt to provide office allocations and space allocations to the two opposition parties in this particular building. It strikes me as a surprising statement from the two representatives this morning to say that the lounge area

on the other side of the Legislative Assembly is not required by them. I appreciate being told that, because in the past several years their leaders have come to me and said, "Hey, we in the Liberals need additional space in this building because our caucus requires it," irrespective of the fact that part of their offices are in the Annex. They have a special room allocated to the Liberal Party just down the hall on the second floor, and it may very well be that they're using that room instead of the lounge on the other side. It could very well be that in fact we have a surplus of space allocations there, and I'll be meeting with the Liberal House leader before too long to discuss space allocations.

In terms of the NDP, of course, we've also accommodated their request to ensure that they did have a caucus room in this building, close by the Legislative Assembly, where they might choose to meet, rather than the lounge on the other side. So it could very well be that in fact we've provided too much space, and that the two lounges on the other side of this Legislative Assembly are perhaps not necessary. But that doesn't mean there is not a requirement for the government caucus to have such a room, and the decision that was made with respect to the utilization of the Confederation Room for the 59 members of the government caucus I found worked extremely well. Heck, I even noticed on numerous occasions that opposition members were in here, in this Confederation Room, from time to time.

MR. McINNIS: Name names.

MR. KOWALSKI: Certainly. Rev. Roberts was here periodically stealing pizza and what have you, and Mr. McEachern was here frequently. Derek Fox planted himself at the door and said that he wanted to become a member of the government caucus periodically; he wanted pizza and other stuff from us. Very, very friendly chaps. And I'm sure I could go down the list. Perhaps, Mr. McInnis, you're the only person who didn't avail himself of this hospitality. Ms Barrett was a regular, frequent participant. So we can name names.

MR. McINNIS: You were bribing them with food.

MR. KOWALSKI: They certainly took advantage of the opportunity to sit. Now, maybe that same kind of spirit did not exist on the other side.

The arguments that have been put forward by government caucus here, I think, are very, very valid ones. There certainly is ample, ample space in this building, outside of this building, in the Annex, for all kinds of interviews. I never found it an inconvenience as a cabinet minister to migrate my way to the third floor. My offices are on the first floor, and I had no difficulty at all finding my way here, and I'm not aware of any media persons that had great difficulty getting hold of me anywhere that they wanted to. In fact, a lot of media people invariably would come and see you after question period and say, "Hey, we'd like to talk to you," and then, looking around to make sure that none of their colleagues would know that they wanted to talk to you, "Let's go down to the bottom of the steps," so they could get their own interview, which was their own story that they could file in their own way. The flexibility does occur within this building. There's ample space.

I also appreciate being made aware this morning that we may have provided too much space to the opposition parties, because there is a deficit of space in the building.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, there are a few comments I'd like to make too. One of the things that concerned me when we set out the guidelines for access to the Chamber and made the route through the library more available was that perhaps some cabinet minister who felt himself to be somewhat beleaguered might take advantage of ducking out that way. I think the experience we've noticed is that there has been very little of that: you know, less than a handful of occasions of people trying to skedaddle away from the media. They would come out through these doors and deal with that in their own fashion rather than trying to sneak away. So I think that needs to be put out as a reminder; I think people are indeed willing to be available. Then it becomes the question of where.

I'd like to point out that the Legislative Assembly, as you know, is not a department of government. In terms of space, in the four years since I've been here we have bent over backwards and have given up more space to other members. It's worked to the detriment physically and from a mobility point of view for us to be able to serve all members of the Assembly. I give you a few cases in point. This area here from this thermostat back to here was always the Speaker's robing room. When I came into this role and I realized that there was no real need for that, we took down the walls in the renovation so that this whole area could be a larger meeting area for all members when the area needs to be used as a meeting room. Then, again, that helped to ease some of the congestion in here. We also did it to remove the funnel effect that was happening here, like going into a corral with the cattle. So this room in itself has become much more usable for all members.

Let's go back to the lounge out the back here. In the very first month that we were here, we went through working with Public Works, Supply and Services so that we could get carpeting and a few of those chairs out on the back porch so members could enjoy the fleeting moments of springtime and summer that they have to see here from the balcony. You know, that back area is an all-members lounge, and that's the way it will stay. It has to, because that's the main door access for members to the Chamber with the exception of the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud. So any thought of trying to make that divided or given to one or two caucuses is just not workable.

With regard to the other side, we again made adjustments in there because that's Legislative Assembly space; it's indeed a lobby. This is a lobby of the Chamber of the Legislative Assembly. In this past session we moved all of our staff out of there at some inconvenience and at some expense through Public Works, Supply and Services. We moved them down the hall to where previously we had the Deputy Speaker and the Deputy Chairman of Committees. Those in turn we bumped up another floor into smaller offices, so that those two members as MLAs have the smallest offices in all of this complex, yet they also have those extra responsibilities of helping to deal with the operation of the House.

So who did we move out of there? We moved Parliamentary Counsel out of there, and both of them are absolutely essential to the operation of the House. We now have them combined in one tiny office up on the fifth floor, and in order to get that office, we bumped out the front door policeman as security, so he didn't have a space any longer; he had to move to the Annex to be able to find locker space. The Sergeant-at-Arms got bumped upstairs into office space on the fifth floor, which is inconvenient not only for the operation of the Sergeant-at-Arms but also in case there's any incident in the galleries whereby we need to apprehend anyone and move them out. That's been

done at great inconvenience to this staff and their ability to be able to service members.

What did we do upstairs for dealing with the pages and the security staff? Again we had to move out vacuum cleaners and floor cleaning equipment and shove it somewhere else in another nook and cranny. We took over a space that was a storage closet before; it's all of three feet wide and about 30 feet long. We put a divider in that, and then we divided them up between male and female in terms of their locker space.

In time past we yielded up three office spaces which we really needed as vital to the operation of the library so that the Liberals could have three offices in this building. I assume and trust that they're using them throughout the full year and not just during session, because if they're not using them, I need them for the operation of the Legislature Library. What did I do? The Librarian now operates out of the Annex. I mean, we've moved more staff out of this building over there, yet these are the people that are here to be able to service you when you're in session as well as service you when you're not in session.

The whole building is short of space. So that brings us back to that very operative word about the matter of co-operation and trying to deal with all this issue.

Now, the use of the opposition lobby: yes, there's a hallway there because we have to have some way to access the TV cameras to get in and out of the House together with their reporters. I have seen very few members of the government use that corridor in this past sitting. Certainly the Table officers and myself use both sides in order to access the Chamber, and we'll continue to do so. The Clerk's office is going to remain there because we have to have some place that's adjacent to the Chamber for the Table officers to be able to have instant consultation, and we had to do that more than once. So the Clerk's office is not just simply the Clerk's office. It's a place for both Parliamentary Counsel, it's a place for the Clerk Assistant, it's a place for the Speaker to have to get out to in a hurry. As pointed out by the Member for Red Deer-North, in that space over there you have 24 possible persons at the moment – till another election occurs – from two political parties, whereas over here you have about 59 to 60. But all of this is indeed part of the matter of the pressures of the building.

Once the Carillon Room has been completely repainted and refurbished, this furniture that's in here now will go back upstairs, and the tables that were in here before – I understand they have now been repaired from the damage that was done to them – will be moved back in here. So this will become meeting space until session occurs or whatever, depending on what you decide in a motion of the committee. But, again, it's not like this room has been taken out of circulation for all parts of the year; it's been used as a meeting room.

The Chair is just willing to listen to whatever other comments or whatever constructive suggestions want to be made, certainly willing if the Liberal Party and the New Democrats want to talk about trying to subdivide that space over there. I suppose there's some way of looking at it because at least there are two doorways there. We can certainly look at that, if that's indeed the will of the committee.

Now, as for the other aspects, the media and their access to members, what's happened is that it's like pushing mercury around on a tabletop. That congestion is going to occur wherever. Indeed there have been a number of memos here. Robert, you've had the chance to go look at them because this was raised by Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: This is the directive?

MR. R. DAY: Would you like me to circulate them, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sure.

We have memos on March 6, 7, 13. We'll wait until you get that distributed. While it's being distributed, the memo of March 13 deserves to be read out, I suppose.

On Thursday, March 8, 1990 I sent to each [member of the Assembly] a copy of Standing Order 111 – Revised Press Gallery Regulations, with a request that you review and acquaint yourselves with these revised regulations.

Free and open access to the Chamber and its environs is a right of all Members.

So that members have a chance to get in and to get out. We also then go on to "the courtesy of access to the proceedings that take place in the House."

During Session there is a problem of congestion outside the Chamber. To ensure that all Members are able to enjoy their rights of unrestricted access to the Chamber and its environs, and to assist the Members in accessing the media without being subjected to congestion and inconvenience, some limited access control for the media and public has been put in place.

Additionally, a podium has been placed at the foot of the main staircase, and the fountain is turned off, to facilitate Members and the media with interviews.

I encourage all Members, once having left the Chamber after Question Period, [to] exit down the main staircase.

Attached to the document that is dated March 7, 1990, which was sent to all members of the Assembly, are the press gallery regulations. The last page of that, page 2, reads:

5. No interviews with individuals or groups will be conducted within the confines of any gallery in the Chamber or lobby of the Assembly.

All major interviews must take place in the Media Interview Room . . . which has been specifically designed for this requirement.

That's major interviews.

Interviews may also take place at the foot of the main staircase. The fountain will be shut off every day after Question Period to facilitate interviews.

Interviews may be conducted outside the entrances to the lobbies . . . but must not in any way block or impede access to the Chamber.

Is there to be any motion before we have any more discussion?

MR. McINNIS: I would like to move that the Confederation Room be reinstated for use by all MLAs and reporters as they choose and that the former Table officers' administrative office be redesignated for Legislature office purposes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. McINNIS: I'd like to speak to it, if I may.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Absolutely.

MR. McINNIS: There's some confusion here between what's public space and what's private space. Under the temporary policy that we operated under this last session, this room became private space for the government caucus, and if they invited other people, including opposition members, that can hardly be anybody's responsibility but the people who issued the invitation. What was provided on the other side is not private space. It's space that's shared by two caucuses and the Clerk's office and a semipublic corridor into which you can see.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry, hon. member. That's not accurate. It is shared by two opposition caucuses.

MR. McINNIS: And a public corridor, a semipublic corridor . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: A public corridor, yes, but . . .

MR. McINNIS: . . . and an office of the Clerk of the Assembly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. I'm sorry. That's a separate area.

MR. McINNIS: There is such an office in there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But they don't have anything to do with your opposition lounge.

MR. McINNIS: Oh, I see. Well, except that they have to go through the opposition lounge to get into the . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: You would rather that I cut a hole in the wainscoting of the building just for that purpose?

MR. McINNIS: I'm not asking that any holes be cut.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry; I'm indulging in debate. It's questions. But carry on.

MR. McINNIS: I'm not asking that any holes be cut into walls at the moment. I'm asking that that space be redesignated for Legislature office purposes.

There's private space and there's public space. Now, within some of the public space there is restriction on access, and reading these documents very carefully, it's clear that members were encouraged to go to the bottom of the stairs and that a podium was put there for that purpose. I don't believe I ever saw anybody use that podium during the last legislative session.

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, that's not so.

MR. McINNIS: Well, I said I don't believe I ever saw anybody. And that is so. If you . . .

MRS. BLACK: Did you attend the same session as the rest of us?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. I'm sorry. The Chair was most at fault by asking questions.

MR. McINNIS: So we have some space that's private space, some space that's public space, and within what's public space we have forbidden space as far as media access is concerned and permitted space. Most of the space is, in fact, permitted space. In fact, it says very clearly that "interviews may be conducted outside the entrance to the lobbies" – that's out here – as long as it doesn't "block or impede access to the Chamber." And that's where the administration got into it. Oscar, the Sergeant-at-Arms, was talking about it. They had to make judgments, and I think they made reasonable judgments. But it was difficult, because some continued to see the corridor as being public space and didn't respect the fact that media were allowed to do interviews. There was a cameraman physically assaulted by a member of the cabinet in my presence because in a public

corridor he felt he should get by immediately. That's the basis for saying that that arrangement out there as it was didn't work.

Now, what's the convenient way to remedy the problem? Well, some people have suggested we take away the opposition members' lounge. I guess that's a convenient way to remedy the situation. It does seem to me this arrangement was quite a bit more inconvenient than this committee was led to believe when it was first arranged. We were told it was without cost and without a great deal of disruption. But it did turn out that the Sergeant-at-Arms had to be moved, Parliamentary Counsel had to be moved, the police had to be moved, the Clerk's office employees had to be moved, and there was some expense involved in that. I'm not sure whether the Librarian was connected with that or not; I don't think so.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not at that time.

MR. McINNIS: That was a different matter altogether.

So what I'm suggesting here is a way to resolve some of these difficulties at the least expense rather than the most expense, and I'm sure that Red Deer-North, having regard for the tender feelings of the taxpayers, will see the logic in that and support this position.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The cost of the move will be less than \$6,000. Thank you.

Edmonton-Whitemud, followed by Taber-Warner.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I'm going to support the motion. I just want to make it clear that when I brought forward the suggestion that government members could use the lounge we jointly share with the New Democrat caucus, it was on the basis of trying to look for a workable solution, not that the space is not required at all. To simply take it away from us and use it for some other purposes and leave this as is was not what I was proposing. What I was attempting to propose was a workable solution.

It's felt that there's a need, that there has to be those private areas, and prior to last year that same need apparently wasn't there. We got along fine; at least I thought we got along fine. We had the lounge at the back that we all share. I like the proposal that has now come forward that this be shared by all of us, that it also be used as the media area, and that the lounge on the other side then be utilized for legislative space. That puts all three caucuses, I believe, on an equal footing in that we all jointly share rather than having the situation now where government members feel they have to have their own private nook at the expense, I believe, of creating a great deal of inconvenience to the media, to Members of the Legislative Assembly, and to members of the public that are trying to access the corridors.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, speaking against the motion put forward by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, there are really two key elements to the motion. The first is that the opposition members' lobby is not private whereas the government members' lobby is private. I believe, as I've said earlier, that matter can be addressed if the two opposition parties work with the Speaker on the physical arrangements. If a temporary wall needs to be put in so there are actually two separate areas, I'm sure those details can be worked out.

The second element to the motion relates to the media. Again, if we go back to the memos put forward by the Speaker of the Assembly requesting members to use the area at the foot

of the stairs – and I am very surprised that the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, first of all, was not aware of the three memos circulated by the Speaker and is not aware that many interviews have occurred at the bottom of the stairs. I think that if you check with the two members of the media who are here today, you'll find that they have been involved in numerous interviews at the bottom of the stairs themselves.

I don't believe there's any need for this motion. Both of the concerns raised by the member can be addressed in other appropriate ways.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Additional, to the motion?

MR. McINNIS: Well, simply that I didn't say that nobody . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is this in summation? Then just wait. Additional?

DR. ELLIOTT: I have a question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Grande Prairie.

DR. ELLIOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is relative to the media. It seems to me that the missing thing here is whether or not the media was really instructed or whether they understood the instructions with respect to their role in this whole discussion. I, too, observed them just outside the entrance to the Chamber; I've seen them in the hallways, even though I've been part of this table here in discussing things like interviews at the base of the stairs, turning off the fountain, a podium down there, and all the other things that were discussed and put in place to make that system work. It seems to me that there's – well, I think it was mentioned earlier there was a co-operation and understanding of what was intended here. I'm just wondering by what effort that was either communicated or understood or misunderstood or ignored.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Robert, do you want to comment about the number of meetings that were held with the press, please?

MR. R. DAY: Mr. Chairman, previous to the change within both this room and the opposition members' lobby we met extensively with Mr. Wanagas, who is president of the Legislature Press Gallery Association, and his vice-president, Ashley Geddes. All the steps along the process were reviewed with him at the time the motion was passed by the Members' Services Committee to make the conversion. We also reviewed the revised press gallery regulations with both Mr. Wanagas and Mr. Geddes, and individual copies were delivered to each member of the press gallery association. The regulations, most specifically page 3 of the press gallery regulations that have the covering memo from the chairman, are very specific with respect to interviews, where they should take place.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Additional? Calgary-Foothills.

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Chairman, I'm having . . . I don't know. Percy's backpedaling over here on his position, so I guess I'm going back to Edmonton-Jasper Place. I don't really get what your complaint is. Is it the fact that you don't like the space you have, that it's too small, or that you have to be with the Liberals? Or is it the fact that you don't feel you get enough press interviews? I'm not really following what your big complaint is. You've got allocated space for your caucus.

You've got the press out there. You get lots of interviews. What's your real complaint? Or do you just not want anybody to have a caucus room around the Assembly? I don't really know where you're coming from. Could you explain that?

MR. McINNIS: I come from Edmonton-Jasper Place.

I don't think there's any problem with communicating policy. I don't have any complaint in that regard. I think there's some problem understanding policy in some people's minds, in this room anyway. We're here to review a policy decision that was made by this committee in the spring. In fact, the committee decided when the policy was introduced that we would review it, so I don't believe you deserve to have your motives challenged when you state your view on what the policy should be. Red Deer-North feels I have too many interviews, and he may be right; sometimes I feel that as well. But that's not the point. The point is that we have a situation that we've tried, it hasn't worked to everyone's satisfaction, so we're asking the government majority, who is satisfied, to look on it from other points of view and to see that it doesn't work a hundred percent well in everybody's eyes. You still have to vote according to what you think is the right thing to do, and I'm sure you'll do just that.

I would simply observe that the problem is not with the communication of the policy; it's with the policy itself in my opinion. Therefore, we're suggesting that we go to a situation which provides maximum convenience for the Assembly staff, for the news media, and for others who feel that they can live nicely with the way things were before this interim policy was brought in in the spring. That's simply the point of view I'm putting across.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

All those in favour of the motion, please signify by raising their arms. Opposed? The motion is defeated.

MR. McINNIS: Can we have a recorded vote on that one?

MRS. MIROSH: Oh, give we a break.

MR. McINNIS: Do you want a break?

[For the motion: Mr. McInnis, Mr. Wickman]

[Against the motion: Mrs. Black, Mr. Bogle, Mr. S. Day, Dr. Elliott, Mr. Hyland, Mr. Kowalski, Mrs. Mirosch]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Additional motions with regard to this matter?

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I really hate to leave the situation the way it is, because there is a problem out there. Obviously we fail to recognize that there's a problem out there. I don't know how much clearer it has to be made to see what's happening when the House is in session. You simply can't get through those corridors. It's not working.

If the motion is acceptable, I would move that this matter be referred back to your office in an attempt to again meet with the various actors to come forward with some more workable solution than what's occurring at the present time. At least, Mr. Chairman, speaking to that, it doesn't leave everything just dangling, knowing that in the next session we're going to have

to go through the same inconvenience we're having at the present time.

Members are sitting here saying that there's no inconvenience. I don't know how they're avoiding that inconvenience. I don't understand it. Those hallways are blocked. I'll see the Provincial Treasurer there; I'll see the Minister of the Environment being chased by 40 cameras. You yourself, Mr. Chairman, have seen me and other people sitting there waiting till there's a break to get through. You've seen that happen, and I'm sure it's happened to you as well, that you just couldn't get through. To deny that there's a problem there – I don't understand it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That then takes us also to a matter of jurisdiction within the building.

I take it that I have a motion from Edmonton-Whitemud to refer the matter to the office of the Speaker. Further discussion? Call for the question?

MR. McINNIS: I just wanted to ask a question. Do you mean to determine what the policy will be, or just for the committee to delegate the authority?

MR. WICKMAN: No. Because the previous motion was defeated, rather than just leave the situation the way it is, the intent of the motion is to allow the Speaker's office to take another look to see if there is some other solution there that we've missed here today that will accommodate the three caucuses, the public, and members of the media. I would suggest that the process used be one of consultation with the media and with the three caucuses to come forward with some new proposal, if there is another proposal out there that we've missed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Forgive me my chuckle, hon. member. I'm afraid I don't have too many God-like qualities.

MR. McINNIS: Percy, your idea is that the Speaker would report back at a subsequent meeting?

MR. WICKMAN: Yes, that's right.

MR. S. DAY: Clarification, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Red Deer-North.

MR. S. DAY: Just for me to be instructed. My understanding was that there was a motion that we reconsider this today, and it's been reconsidered. A motion was brought forward by Edmonton-Jasper Place, which was voted down. My understanding – and here's where I may need some correction – is that now things will stay the way they are. I'm wondering why we need to have the motion, but I'm subject to clarification on that.

MR. WICKMAN: Well, to respond to that, Mr. Chairman, you asked if there were any other motions to be brought forward, and I assumed that was an invitation for motions that may lead to a solution.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. members, I refer you to the minute in your binder under this section. The motion at 90.76 is:

Moved by [Taber-Warner] that for the duration of the upcoming spring session, the Confederation Room be designated as the Government Members' lobby, the offices on the west side . . . be designated as the Opposition Members' lobby, and that the

existing Members' lobby continue to be an area where caucus Members from all three parties can meet.
So it's in that first phrase, "for the duration of the upcoming spring session," and I think therefore there needs to be some direction given before we come back in the fall.
Grande Prairie.

DR. ELLIOTT: Mr. Chairman, I would like to put forth a motion that we continue to . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm afraid we've got one at the moment. Sorry.

DR. ELLIOTT: I'm sorry. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Further discussion? Call for the question on the motion to refer to the Speaker's office? A note came to me, to the office, requiring the wisdom of Solomon. My reply was, "He's dead, you know."

All those in favour of the motion from Edmonton-Whitemud, please signify. Opposed? Thank you. The motion's defeated. Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make the following motion:

That the Confederation Room be designated as government members' lobby, the offices to the west side of the Chamber be designated as opposition members' lobby, and the existing members' lobby continue to be an area where caucus members from all three parties can meet and where coffee and juice continue to be available.

Mr. Chairman, in reality what it's done is take part of the first sentence out of the previous motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For clarification, then, the Clerk's office will still remain under the Legislative Assembly?

MR. HYLAND: Right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Discussion? Call for the question?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour of the motion, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.
Taber-Warner.

MR. BOGLE: We need a short coffee break.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. I think the group has earned a coffee break. See you in 10 minutes.

[The committee recessed from 10:29 a.m. to 10:47 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I wonder if we might just move over for a moment to item 5(b), Legislative Assembly Budget Estimates. Clerk, please.

DR. McNEIL: Just to indicate that we will be starting to develop the '91-92 - I can hardly think that far ahead - budget estimates in August, September, with a view to a no-growth budget, to advise members that we will be proceeding on that kind of a time schedule.

One other thing I wanted to briefly mention is not directly related to the budget, but we've on occasion had some difficulties within each caucus of having certain members sign contracts with suppliers and so on. We've had to go back to the people the members have contracted with and, in effect, renegotiate the contracts because they haven't been consistent with the normal provisions that we like to have in certain contracts. So just, I guess, a reminder to the chiefs of staff more than anybody else to try to discourage members from going off on their own and signing contracts for various items. When they do sign them, sometimes they're not protected and they're not protecting the Assembly appropriately.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

DR. ELLIOTT: A question, Mr. Chairman, for clarification. Are you referring to members signing contracts for something relative to the constituency office or Christmas cards or student help? Or what are you talking about?

DR. McNEIL: Well, it could be for a telephone system or for a fax or something like that. All of the contracts we enter into are between the Legislative Assembly and the contractor. Let's say that a telephone vendor has a standard contract form that they would just ask the member to sign - "Here's the deal" - and they'll sign it. It might be for five years, when we don't enter into any contracts over 36 months, or things like that. It's just something that arises on an occasional basis which causes us then to have to go back and draw up another contract with this vendor so that it meets the appropriate criteria for the Legislative Assembly. It only happens on an occasional basis and only with a few members, but just to point that out.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Members will be relieved to know that at this stage we're not about to set up a time line for when we'll sit down as a committee to go through the budget line by line. We'll wait till at least the end of July.

Okay. Before we get into item 5(a), I want to just have you brought up to date on some information that Robert has with regard to space provision for media, because I think that does follow on, to have some of this information brought to the committee at this time. As late as two days ago we had another inquiry from the National Assembly of Quebec as to various questions that they have regarding space provision and so forth. Robert, do you want to just give a quick update, please?

MR. R. DAY: Mr. Chairman, this spring we surveyed all of the other jurisdictions across Canada and the territories. We exchanged information, and as you commented, we received a request from Quebec with respect to press gallery regulations and amenities provided. I would just say briefly that Alberta ranks, with British Columbia and the House of Commons, in the top three in Canada with respect to what is provided, that being offices where rent is not charged, reserved seating in the galleries, access both from a radio and television standpoint: the Videotron access which is piped down into the offices, as is the access to radio jacks. At the other end of the scale, Mr. Chairman, is no reserved seating in galleries, no offices, period, and in some cases where there are offices, they're charged rent for them. So Alberta, British Columbia, and the House of Commons, from an amenity standpoint with respect to press and access, are the top three in Canada.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And in one case where they piped the sound to where the media had their offices, they then charged the bill back to the media, which I was surprised at. It might be creative budget financing; I don't know.

Okay. With regard to item 5(a), three years ago when we were dealing with the renovations to the Chamber, one of the matters that I raised with the architect and also with the contractors, including Videotron, then QCTV, was the issue of access for the handicapped. We were able to deal with it in terms of the galleries, where we have from a wheelchair point of view one of the most accessible galleries in Canada and the territories. Now, in Northwest Territories it isn't much of a problem because they're presently renting space in a hotel. They're going to be building the new Assembly in this next couple of years, so I assume that they will be taking care of this.

A number of the facilities across the country are very steep, and to get to them is enough of a challenge, let alone to get into them. In particular I think of Ontario and even Saskatchewan. So we were able to do some of that upgrading in terms of the balcony areas in the Chamber, the galleries, so that now you can get in three, maybe four on each side if it's really tight.

MR. R. DAY: Three either side.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Three either side. We also made the changes to the Speaker's gallery so that it could facilitate putting in two chairs.

Along the same line, because I watch question period from the federal House of Commons every day, I had been interested in whether or not we could get the sign language component put into question period. At that time the advice came back that because of equipment – it would involve an extra camera and a number of other things like this – it was just going to be too much money. Then when all of us were in the House for the debate on Bill Payne's matter before the House – and I know we were all moved – it was a good reminder for me: well, let's try again.

The long and the short of it is that in November for question period we are going to go ahead and have American Sign Language done. Videotron have very generously agreed to supply an extra camera free, which will be a fixed position. It will be located in a washroom which we have up behind our area. When we talk about space problems, this is one of them. There we'll be able to have the person doing the signing seated on an appropriate stool with the backdrop of a wooden door. But a fixed camera and then a monitor down on a desk in there; this is a large size washroom. We're going to take this fall sitting as an experiment in doing this.

The same day that Bill presented his motion, he was off to speak at Alberta College, so he's been following up with people there as to how much we would have to pay someone to do the signing. The chances are it's going to run us about \$25 an hour, and we think, in consultation with the Clerk, that we have enough money to be able to at least cover this trial project.

So, hopefully, all things being in order, come the fall, all of you are going to have to have far shorter supplementaries and far shorter questions so that the person having to do the sign language will be able to keep up with the flow. Okay?

Item 5(c), Intern Program. Is Mr. Ritter around? He's not around?

MR. R. DAY: He's at the doctor's.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He's at the doctor's. Okay. Is there some possibility he'll be back later?

MR. R. DAY: Yes. Before noon apparently.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. We'll hold 5(c) for the moment and go to 5(d), Constituency Offices/Community Offices.

In the course of his duties the Sergeant-at-Arms moves through the constituency offices scattered throughout the province. He goes there to talk about – well, tell them what you talk about.

MR. LACOMBE: Basically it's security, the welfare of the individuals who man constituency offices, and I do some inventory for the Clerk. This is checking the buildings physically for dead bolts and that sort of thing. We do have a lot of irate persons who visit some of these places, and I get the receptionist to deal with the thing by summoning the police, the people next door, that sort of thing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In the course of this he came across signage in two offices which needs to be addressed, clarified. The two offices are Edmonton-Jasper Place and Edmonton-Highlands, where signage in the window, I gather, says "community office" instead of "constituency office." It may well be semantics, but none of our Members' Services orders talks about community offices.

Mr. Clegg, Parliamentary Counsel, would you care to comment, please?

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ritter has written a note on this commenting, as you have said, that the term "constituency office" is used in the Members' Services orders, and they have normally been referred to as constituency offices. The matter really seems to turn on consistency and clarity of purpose. It is essentially a public program which is funded out of public funds for constituency offices, funded on the basis that it's for the members to serve their constituents in their constituency. There's no doubt, of course, that there's a very, very wide range of services carried out, including community services, social services, all kinds of other services. Members know far better than I the kinds of things they do for constituents in those offices. It may be that some members feel that the word "community" is a more user-friendly term, but on the other hand the word "community" sometimes is given a meaning as relating to a particular area, and many constituencies consist of several communities.

One small problem that I see is that if in some constituencies it happens to be the case in a particular community within the constituency that constituents might feel that it related to that community only, they might have in their minds a feeling that "community" narrowly related to just a few streets. I am sure all members will want to make certain that their constituents realize that it does apply to the whole constituency, that that office, wherever it is located, serves all constituents. I'm not aware of the reasons why a different name was chosen, but it would seem that there is a policy and a communications advantage to sticking to the term which is actually used in the Members' Services order.

MR. McINNIS: Well, I feel that likely the term "constituency" might be ambiguous. It also might not have a lot of meaning to some people. I call my office a community office to indicate that it's a resource that's available to people in the community, in the broader sense of that term. My feeling is that it has been

successful in making some people feel they're more welcome to come in there than they would otherwise be, because some people, frankly, don't know what a constituency office is, especially if you use official symbols like the coat of arms of the province, which some do because there is a sign you can obtain that does that. It looks a lot more official than it is.

Now, we all have different styles, perhaps, in how we operate our offices, what types of services take place, what types of communications people have with their members. I would suggest those are as individual as members are. I don't see that it causes anybody an inconvenience that my little office is called a community office. I find it difficult to believe that the Members' Services Committee would want to prevent me from communicating that sense to my constituents, but I like to co-operate, and I'll go with the rules. It just seemed to me that this is something that's done in a lot of other places, and it doesn't cause problems for my constituents. If it causes problems for other people, we'll have to deal with that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, hon. member, the matter's being raised so that one is legally correct. It's not being raised by the committee; it's being raised by the Sergeant-at-Arms and myself, having referred it to Parliamentary Counsel. We don't want to see you in jeopardy of losing funds for your office. It may well be that you can use both, but I would assume, then, that you have to comply with Members' Services orders and also how that affects the Legislative Assembly Act. The legal interpretation seems to be that you have to have "constituency office" there somewhere. It's being raised to make sure you're not being compromised with respect to your funding.

MR. McINNIS: There are some people who don't put anything. They simply put, you know, "Bettie Hewes, MLA, here."

MRS. MIROSH: That's legal.

MR. McINNIS: Well, I've seen no Members' Services order that says it's illegal to put "community office" on the sign on my premises.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's the second fine turning of rules and regulations that you've brought to the committee today. It raises a concern: now will we have to look at all these things and strain at gnats to make certain that things are absolutely spelled out in the legal sense? I don't know. Well, Mr. Clegg, you're the Parliamentary Counsel.

MR. M. CLEGG: I'm not sure whether it's necessary for a legal analysis here. I think if an office is actually giving the services which a constituency office is designed to give, that is certainly one thing. I don't think anybody feels it's specifically misleading to call it a community office, but I think it's better to be called by the name by which it is described in the order. I quite appreciate that some constituents may feel it's more accessible or acceptable to them if it has a different wording on the front, but it might be possible to have . . . It would seem ideal for all members to have their name on and the sign of the Assembly and the words "constituency office." I don't see any problem with having "community and social services" as wording underneath that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, not "social services."

MR. M. CLEGG: Okay, sorry; using a different phrase which implies that community services are offered and that other services are offered.

MR. S. DAY: Well, Mr. Chairman, we don't want to get down to straining at gnats here, but I think consistency is important, especially when we're talking about a public office funded from the Leg. Assembly. If we maintain the letter of the law and also the intent here, it'll avoid creative semantics. I could put in Red Deer, "constituency office, Red Deer-North, central Alberta," and it gives a view to constituents of my role being slightly larger than it was maybe intended to be by the Leg. Assembly. If I see, especially in a city like Edmonton or Calgary, "community office," I might have the impression that this person is more than just a representative of this Edmonton-Jasper Place but in fact maybe the entire community of Edmonton, just like I could give the impression that I represent the community of Red Deer or all of central Alberta. I think it just avoids the temptation of creative semantics to try and assume a larger than life role. I don't think that was what the member was intending, but unless we follow the guidelines carefully, we're going to have constantly, at every meeting, a variation of this theme. I think we need to stick to it pretty scrupulously.

MR. BOGLE: Well, Mr. Chairman, the order is quite clear. We are speaking of a constituency office. If a member wishes to vary the order, then a motion should come back to this table. The member should not go ahead and make reference to the office as a community office or anything else. I just feel very strongly, in backing up what the Member for Red Deer-North has said, that we not get bogged down in that kind of detail. We're speaking of public funds and how they're used. If a member wishes to pay for an office out of his own party coffers, he would call the office whatever he likes, but we are speaking of constituency offices, not community offices.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I think we might be getting just a bit picky here. We can look at what's happening at other levels of jurisdiction. For example, the Member of Parliament in the area I reside in – and I commend them for their creativity – calls his the Action Centre. People call that, and it gives the impression that here's a representative that's prepared to give action. Now, I'm not going to pass judgment whether he gives action or not, but if it's suitable to that particular community – for example, in Edmonton-Whitemud, "Whitemud action centre" would imply that it's a place where people come and get things done. I don't see anything wrong with that, and I think now we're getting just a little picky-picky. "Community office" really doesn't say anything other than what "constituency office" would say.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's in the hands of the committee.

MR. McINNIS: I suspect, you know, speaking of tempests in teapots, we've got one right in front of us, right here, right now.

We have to go by what's written in orders and regulations. How else do you know if you're doing the right thing or the wrong thing? For lack of another instruction, that's what we go by. It just so happens that when I campaigned for election to this office, I told people I was going to open a community office. To me that means something. I don't mind debating with members of the committee what it means to me and what it now means to the constituents, but we have not one, not two, but three signs that say "community office." Now, if this committee wants to invent a rule that it can't be called a community office,

that's going to involve a certain expenditure of taxpayers' money to change signs, and that would involve a new regulation.

I'm sorry, hon. member, but there is absolutely nothing in that order that indicates that you have to have a sign that says X or doesn't say Y, except that we have very clear guidelines in terms of partisanship and that type of thing which have been recently referred again to the chiefs of staff. The chiefs of staff have indicated their view that those regulations are adequate to do the job and that they're adequate to do the job because they do that job.

Now, there is, I submit, no legitimate complaint from a member of the public in terms of the use of "community office" or possibly "action centre" or no designation whatsoever, because you can find a number of offices that don't have the designation "constituency office." So if we're going to design regulations, I think it should be done in the proper way rather than by attempting to make a new and interesting interpretation of an old regulation to deal with a problem that I think, frankly, is not a problem, at least not in the perception of my constituents. I put that sign up because I told them I was going to before I was elected, and if you want me to take it down, that's going to take some action on the part of this committee.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, I've been a member of this committee since the day we invented the concept of constituency offices, offices allocated for Members of the Legislative Assembly. If Mr. McInnis campaigns on wanting to create a community office, he can do that, and that is his right to do that, but surely it's not expected that the taxpayer of Alberta would pay for his community office. It goes without saying that the individual he defeated had a constituency office. Now, if we're going to get down to semantics, I really find this interesting: his predecessor had a constituency office, the gentleman campaigns on creating a community office, and now it's the same thing, just with another name.

This is not a major item that should really, really cause a lot of time here, but we have gone with the principle of consistency from day one when we invented and created the concept of constituency offices paid for by the taxpayers of Alberta. In fact, in years gone by we even had modest little signs with the coat of arms of the province of Alberta. These little signs were made available to all constituency offices throughout the province of Alberta. They provide for a continuity of idea for people in the 83 constituencies in the province to recognize what a constituency office is. Heck, you know, if somebody wants to put "action centre" in there - I mean, that's pretty darn subjective. I've got my own slogans that have been plagiarized by opposition members throughout this province, but I'm not holding key to saying that that has to be part of my constituency office sign.

But we have to have one consistent message. This is paid for by the taxpayer of Alberta. We have a complete understanding, as I'd know. I've been at every meeting of this committee in the last 10 years from the day we invented the concept of constituency offices, and really, John, it would be the wise thing to do. I'm not asking you to conform, because you have your own right to individuality, but at least we don't have to spend three or four hours debating the words on a sign. I hope we don't, anyway.

MRS. MIROSH: Mr. Chairman, I think that to use the words "community office" creates confusion. Certainly it would in the city of Calgary because there are a number of community offices in my constituency that are there for the local community. You shake your head, hon. member, but . . .

MR. McINNIS: Well, that's not what it says, though.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry. We'll come back.

MRS. MIROSH: It does say that. I think, again, just to add to the term "consistency," if we've determined this, "constituency office" is certainly well known throughout the province as the MLA's constituency office versus a community office that is known as a local community's office. I have a number of them in my constituency that refer to their office as a community office. I would hate to see this kind of confusion of the public.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Calgary-Foothills.

MRS. BLACK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for clarification, what is the exact wording on the signage? I'm just asking for the exact wording on your signage.

MR. McINNIS: It says "Edmonton-Jasper Place Community Office," and it says my name.

MRS. BLACK: May I be so bold as to ask why you chose "community office," other than you campaigned for it, as opposed to the term "constituency office," for Edmonton-Jasper Place?

MR. McINNIS: I believe I've already explained that, but I'll be happy to explain it again.

MRS. BLACK: Is there a difference in connotation between a community office and a constituency office?

MR. McINNIS: Am I recognized now, or . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: In response to that question, briefly.

MR. McINNIS: I just want to know the process.

I believe I explained why the term "community office" is used. It's because my constituents find it a more accessible term than the term "constituency office," because more of them understand the connotation that it's a community resource than understand what a constituency office is. "Constituency office" to me is ambiguous in a number of ways, but it's not a term that's as commonly understood, in my opinion and I think in the opinion of my constituency, as the term "community office." It means "accessible to the community."

MRS. BLACK: Are there different roles that are in your community office as opposed to a constituency office?

MR. McINNIS: Is this question period?

MR. CHAIRMAN: It appears to be for a moment, if that's the way she chooses to do her thing.

MR. McINNIS: In respect to the supplementary question of the hon. member, I'd be pleased . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: You'll notice it was brief, however.

MR. McINNIS: Yes, it was.

I'm completely a hundred percent satisfied that everything that goes on in my constituency office is legitimately provided for under the Members' Services order, that I'm performing the

understood function of a Member of the Legislative Assembly in my community office. I have an office in the Legislature; I have an office in the community. I'm accessible at both places.

MRS. BLACK: What do you call the one in the Legislature?

MR. McINNIS: I call it my Legislature office.

MRS. BLACK: I see. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Cypress-Redcliff, Red Deer-North.

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A couple of comments. Firstly, I also campaigned in 1975 to open a constituency office, and I opened it and I paid for it for six years. I think you did the same thing. That was part of my campaign promise, and I did it, and I paid for it out of my own pocket. At that time there were no allotments for constituency offices. I think it was 1979 when the allotment came in for a constituency office. People in my constituency may not know what "constituency office" means, but they sure know what that office can do. It can get ahold of me or get ahold of the people that work in there and get their problem solved. I think the key is to service the people.

We have regulations that say "constituency office." We can play semantics with it, and if one wants to campaign and say, "I'm not going to call it a constituency office because the guy before me did; I won't call it that; I want to call it a community office," as others have said, that's totally up to him. I think unless you call it a constituency office, you pay for it yourself.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Red Deer-North, and then Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. S. DAY: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to propose a motion, if I may. Not to be picky – there's nothing wrong with the word "community" – but if we don't maintain, as we have in the past, a consistency with this, we're going to go from "action centre" to "people's place" to "the real Canadian super office" to "the only MLA who really cares about your community office." There's just no end, because we are creative people and we're out to make that known and to attract people.

I'd like to propose a motion along the lines that any office used by an MLA for the purpose of going about their official duties shall display advertising which would include only the name of the MLA and the name of the constituency which that MLA represents and, I would add, possibly the address on the correspondence . . .

MR. M. CLEGG: It would exclude the words "constituency office" then?

MR. S. DAY: . . . or the words "constituency office," and that it would be limited to those designations.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. We now have a motion. Would you like to write it out and have Parliamentary Counsel see it, since you were both advising on it?

MR. McINNIS: Can I make a suggestion that perhaps we could arrange after lunch to have this back, because I believe that what's being proposed is an amendment to the Members' Services order, and I think it should be worded in that way. It should in some way relate to the integrity of the Members'

Services order because the order is what we have to rely on in terms of making the decisions that we make with the taxpayers' money. If the member wishes to do that rather than sort of make it up as we go along and try to patch it together after the fact, it should come to the committee as an amendment to the Members' Services order.

I also think that the members should perhaps, if there would be agreement to hold that over the lunch hour, consider the cost of implementing this order and where those funds are going to come from.

MRS. MIROSH: Your constituency is covered though.

MR. McINNIS: Oh; you're not too concerned about that.

MR. BOGLE: No. She's followed the order. Why be concerned?

MRS. MIROSH: We're following the order.

MR. McINNIS: Well, the order doesn't say that, with respect, hon. member. [interjections]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.

The Chair takes it as a motion to table till after lunch. Those in favour of the motion to table, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

Item 5(e). Clerk. Mobile phone to Deputy Chairman of Committees.

DR. McNEIL: Yes. The problem arose on a number of occasions this past session: the difficulty of the Speaker getting in contact with the Deputy Chairman. It was felt that we should make a small revision to the Members' Services order that would provide for payment for a mobile phone for the Deputy Chairman of Committees for his automobile, to facilitate that contact. So the order under item 5(e) effects that change. It adds the Deputy Chairman of Committees as one of those individuals under the Members' Services order besides the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, and the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition – to provide a mobile phone – and I would so recommend.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. A committee member who would be prepared to move that?

MR. HYLAND: I'll move the proposed – what do you call it? – draft Order 4/90.

MR. BOGLE: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's a call for the question. All those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried unanimously. Thank you.

Item 5(f), Communication Allowance.

MR. BOGLE: I asked that this matter be put on the agenda today, Mr. Chairman, so that we could discuss the matter in a general sense. It is then my intent to come back at our next regular meeting with a motion. We have spent some considerable time in past meetings discussing the question of the communication allowance and the appropriate ways in which that allowance should be used. We've refined our order on one or more occasions to ensure that the ad or the article which is

placed does not contain a political party logo or that it does not promote political party activities or that it does not solicit party funds or is in any way used for the sale of party memberships.

What I'm looking for – and I'd welcome any input from other members of the committee – is a way to phrase this in a positive sense. The intent of the initial order was to allow a member to communicate more effectively with his or her constituents, and the intent, then, is to be doing that in a positive way. In no way should the communication be used in a negative sense, either aimed at others or other political parties. So it's my intent, as I said, to work with Parliamentary Counsel between now and the next meeting on a draft motion, and any members who have ideas or suggestions, I'd certainly welcome them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Edmonton-Whitemud, then Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I have a concern where this could lead to when we have to fix guidelines that could then be subject to question. We just went through an exercise as to whether "community office" is appropriate or whether we have to follow the line and call something "constituency office." Now, can you imagine the same scenario if we had a fixed policy or guidelines applying to communications out of the constituency offices? It would always be subject to being questioned. My understanding is that for a number of years we've operated under very loose guidelines, each member using their own discretion. My understanding is that there hasn't been any major outcry, there haven't been any specific incidents that have come forward where members have been accused of using communications dollars inappropriately. Furthermore, it's my understanding that when the three chiefs of staff met, they agreed there was no need for firm guidelines, that the existing system was working and there wasn't any need to go forward. Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, I would say that we're starting to walk towards soft ground that could simply cause us further problems.

MR. McINNIS: I too want to reflect on the history of this matter, because it goes back quite a ways. I mean, on a number of occasions issues have come up. There is some recognition that for the most part we should be treated as honourable members, and the relationship that we have is to our constituents in terms of what's appropriate and not appropriate. What we wanted to do, and what the current Members' Services order I think does, is provide a somewhat objective test as to when a member is crossing a line into trying to take partisan advantage of the funds that are available in terms of political party activity and election-related activity. That draft was a result of countless meetings, and I think it's been reviewed again by the chiefs of staff and found to be by and large on the mark as far as defining that prohibited area. We do recognize, I think, that sometimes the boundaries get a little bit fuzzy, and that's where the co-operation of the caucuses with the Speaker's office and the Clerk's office has been operating to try to keep the thing on an even keel. I think consensus was that it's worked to that extent. Now, if you can find better words, more power to you; we can have a look at it. But given that it's a tough area and the amount of work that's gone into it, I think it's probably working reasonably well.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Clerk, would you like to comment on what's happened in time past and where we're at?

DR. McNEIL: Although the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud indicates there hasn't been any hue and cry, usually these situations, when they arise, tend to arise between the administration office and the individual member. There have been a number of occasions when we have discussed with individual members of all parties concerned the content of particular mailings that have gone out and have reached some agreement with them as to a portion they would have to pay out of their own funds or whatever. On occasion there are examples of situations where we've reviewed the content of these letters themselves, but it didn't adhere to the letter or the spirit of the particular wording in the Members' Services order. These things, I suspect, will continue to arise. You know, there are examples that come up regularly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, in the last year there have been examples from each of the three caucuses which have had to be dealt with. As a matter of fact, two have been brought to my attention. There's one each out of both the opposition parties at the moment. If you want to deal with them in the coffee break or lunch break, that's fine, because we do tend to deal with them in that fashion, because it's a difficult area, all right. I do believe we've had other members from each of the three caucuses put up their own personal funds to pay part or all of the mailings they happen to do which were carried out in what was deemed to be an inappropriate fashion.

Okay. Taber-Warner, you raised the issue. This was to come back for the next meeting?

MR. BOGLE: My intent today was to advise members, to give them an opportunity to have input into the process prior to the actual drafting of the revised motion or condition. That was my objective, and it's been achieved. Thank you.

MR. McINNIS: I'm sorry, but I just don't understand. What is the process?

MR. BOGLE: I've given notice of what I intend to do. If members would like to have input into that process prior to the tabling of the motion, members have the right to do that or to wait until something is actually on the table and then debate it. I'm merely giving the opportunity for members to have input prior to bringing forward a motion.

MR. McINNIS: In that case, I did misunderstand what was being said. I feel that the members of our caucus had input into the drafting through the vehicle of the chiefs of staff, who in fact drafted that order and reviewed it just recently. So that was the process, and we feel we've had our input. I just don't feel we need to have another process, because we've had it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you.

We expect to have the lunch break at 12 o'clock and be back here at 1 o'clock, if that's agreeable. We do have an item that should take a fair amount of time there: the matter of the security business.

All right; we're dealing with item 5(c), Intern Program. Mr. Ritter, if you want to give just a brief rundown of what transpired this past year, then we'll go into the business of the selection process.

MR. RITTER: Okay. About last year's interns, you mean?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah, just quick.

MR. RITTER: All right. As most members are aware, we had one intern placed with a caucus; the government caucus had two interns. This was from a final list last year of eight after the Speaker's office had shortlisted 12 applicants. In fact, last year the Speaker's office, in preparing the eight candidates for selection, was told that we were to get about 15, then we were to interview them, get them down to eight, and then a second run of interviews was to go to the respective chiefs of staff at that time. Last year we had a number of the applicants cancel out of the Speaker's office shortlist, and in fact we were left with eight candidates. So rather than bring them up to Edmonton twice for two rounds of interviews and pay the accompanying travel and hotel costs, the eight final applicants were submitted directly to the chiefs of staff of the respective caucuses, and the batch of interns we had last year were the ones that were chosen by the chiefs of staff directly from those eight.

This year, because of the refusal on the part of the universities to participate in the program any longer, we decided to recruit basically by two methods: direct advertising in the campus newspapers in a big ad and the co-operation of the federal office of career and placement services, which is found on each campus. We submitted our material to them, and the Speaker's office was being contacted directly by the applicants as well as with the co-operation of the CAPS office.

This year, as a result of that new method of getting out to students, we had more applicants than we've ever had in recent history, given the fact that there are now only four positions available where there used to be eight. So we were virtually overwhelmed with very high quality applications. After discussions with the various chiefs of staffs - I myself spoke with Michael Henry and Kim Pollock, and Robert has spoken with Sylvia Ainslie. We told them the situation, that it was very difficult as far as bringing up that many applicants to interview. We would have liked to have interviewed every one of them because the calibre of applicants was so high. In fact, we got from the opposition chiefs of staff the indication that they felt they should not really be involved in the selection process as far as getting a shortlist, and then at the final stage, just like last year, they would participate together in choosing the interns that were most suitable for their caucus.

Again, with the feedback from Robert, we decided to get a shortlist of six individuals. We had interviewed - what? - about 16 who were all brought up to Edmonton. They're all very, very high calibre people. I think the standard of applicants this year would compare favourably with any interns we've ever had in the past. We came up with six final applicants. Two of those were in fact snapped up by other opportunities, different corporations, that type of thing, so we were left with four, all of them being women. That's pretty well where we stand. We've not moved on anything since that time, but we have four finalists.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Robert, anything else to add?

MR. R. DAY: Mr. Chairman, just that we have tentatively scheduled September 4, after the summer has concluded, for the chiefs of staff to interview the six. As Mr. Ritter said, unfortunately two have chosen careers with major corporations in Calgary, but the four were still notified that the interviews would take place on September 4 with the chiefs of staff.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Questions? Comments?
Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I missed how six was the number arrived at and where those that almost made the cutoff are now, if they're available to come, so that they could be interviewed on a shortlist. Are some of them available?

Looking back in last year's minutes, the motion by the Member for Edmonton-Highlands specifically said "after the eight finalists are determined by the committee." How did we arrive at the six? Where are the others? How are we saying that we're living within that motion that was carried unanimously?

MR. R. DAY: Mr. Chairman, if I may, the motion has been brought to my attention. I'm not pleading ignorance other than to be honest that I was not aware of it. When Mr. Ritter had spoken to the other two chiefs of staff and they had concurred that six on the shortlist would be convenient, that's when I approached the government caucus and the chief of staff. I was not aware of the order and the requirement for eight.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So were you aware of it?

MR. RITTER: Sorry.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Were you aware of it?

MR. RITTER: The eight? We had instructions. I wasn't aware it was a Members' Services . . . Was it a motion? I wasn't aware of that. We prepared eight last year, and we were given instructions to prepare the eight last year.

MR. HYLAND: What about the second part of my question, then, that related to, say, the top two or three more or whatever from your cutoff list. Are they still available?

MR. RITTER: Well, we in fact had a number of alternates, and I know for sure that as of last week one was still available. The other two we haven't been able to get in touch with since the interview.

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Chairman, I have two sets of questions, one to yourself and one to Mr. Ritter. What is the time frame for hiring these people? When do they physically come on board?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The beginning of September. They go from September until the end of June.

MRS. BLACK: I see.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So perhaps an interview thing could happen earlier.

MRS. BLACK: Well, I guess my question then is: would it be appropriate . . . Because we have an order that says Edmonton-Highlands moved eight finalists would be presented to chiefs of staff, possibly we should look at readvertising and bringing in eight finalists for the chiefs of staff to interview before September. Is that appropriate?

MR. CHAIRMAN: To advertise again or to go back to the rest from the 16?

MRS. BLACK: Well, I would go back and readvertise, either/or. Maybe go back to the 16 and see how many are available because do we not have only four spots?

MR. RITTER: We have only four spots.

MRS. BLACK: So if we're down to four, then those are the four. There's really not a choice for the chiefs of staff to make. I think we have to at least give the chiefs of staff the opportunity to make a choice as to who they're going to hire.

MR. RITTER: We originally had the shortlist at six and, as I say, two had . . . Which is actually less dramatic than last year. We had 12 to present to the chiefs of staff, and four had dropped out of the program at that time.

MRS. BLACK: Well, possibly we could then look at recommunicating with the 16 and all those that are available, and those names could be turned over to the chiefs of staff for them to make selections.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Well, one thing has certainly happened here. We're going to do a Members' Services Committee minute search for all references to the interns from 1986 so that there's a duplicate file for the two people that are looking after the program, Mr. Ritter and Mr. Day. Because of that part, that's where it's obviously fallen through the cracks. To then go back and canvass how many are still available of the original 16 probably is the way to get through this present thing, because they're in clear violation of what the Members' Services Committee directed them to do.

MR. McINNIS: That's my feeling as well. I also don't know where the figure of six came from. Today is the first I heard of it anyway. I think we should try to stick with the schedule. It's going to get difficult because this is basically a September start for most of them. What is it, September 30?

MR. RITTER: No, the beginning of September.

MR. McINNIS: The beginning of September. So it's not much wonder that people are making decisions. Right now it's coming along pretty well. I think the only feasible option is to go back and try and pull the top eight available from the competition and present them on September 4 and proceed as planned.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to urge speeding it up if it's possible, because I can well understand how people would drop off if they're looking for a job and they won't know until the day before they may start if they're going to have a job for that year. I can well understand how we could come up with the whole 16 and end up with four or less by the time we're through. I think if it's at all possible, that should be moved up just as soon as we can humanly do it and get everybody together. Otherwise the whole thing could be lost through default.

MRS. MIROSH: Well, Mr. Chairman, am I led to believe that the four remaining have already been offered the job? Has a firm offer been made to them?

MR. R. DAY: They were told that they have to be interviewed by the chiefs of staff before a contract is signed. So there's been no contract offer, and we do have some alternates because of

the potential that you are going to lose regardless maybe one or two people.

MR. BOGLE: Please refresh my memory on the process in terms of which chief of staff has first choice and how we determine where those four interns go. I think there is a process. I just don't recall what it is. Can anyone help?

MRS. AINSLIE: Yeah. Our chief of staff gets first choice.

MR. BOGLE: Well, can we ask Sylvia if she recalls?

MRS. AINSLIE: Well, I wasn't involved last year. It happened before I started. But Laurie Collins was doing it on an interim basis and she was given the first choice of two out of the eight finalists.

MR. BOGLE: I presume it was then the New Democrats and then the Liberals.

MRS. AINSLIE: That's right.

MR. BOGLE: So it was cut strictly by size.

MRS. AINSLIE: Yeah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Moved by Edmonton-Highlands:

That after the eight finalists are determined by the committee as it is currently structured, the chiefs of staff interview the eight finalists and have a say as to which individuals go to any given caucus, and with the whips' concurrence.

It just says who the final four are but doesn't say how they chose that final four, so we'll have to go back and speak to people that used to be in those august offices of chiefs of staff to find out the process.

MRS. AINSLIE: It's in the *Hansard*.

DR. McNEIL: My recollection, Mr. Chairman, is that that was something that was going to be agreed upon among the chiefs of staff, as to how they would do that. It wasn't something that was resolved here, but it was an agreement.

MR. BOGLE: My question really related to how it was done in the past.

MR. McINNIS: A couple of things on the table at the moment. I don't think we should leave Cypress-Redcliff's point out. If we can possibly speed it up, it would be an advantage.

MR. BOGLE: I agree.

MR. McINNIS: On the order of selection, or the order of the picks in the draft, as it were, I think the only fair way to do that is to draw the order out of a hat. That's relatively simple. Otherwise . . . Oh, I see the government members are shaking their heads. You guys want everything your way, right?

MRS. MIROSH: Well, sure.

MR. McINNIS: Why not? You've got the majority, eh?

MRS. MIROSH: We are the government, actually.

MR. McINNIS: Well, if it's going to be that way, it's going to be that way. But I don't think it's going to hurt you guys a great deal to have a random process for deciding the order in which the selection is made. Not that I think it's a serious enough problem, but you know, you're already getting half the crop. You get two choices no matter what, so your odds of getting a high pick are pretty good. You'd have two slips in the draw as opposed to one each for the other caucuses, so I don't think you're going to end up too badly. Otherwise it's a little bit difficult to say to the chiefs of staff that they have to dream something up – you know, they have to go back to their caucuses and say, "Well, we agree to take the third choice first." I mean, who wants to do that? Do you?

MR. CHAIRMAN: There would also be some logic in another vein too. The government gets one and four. The Official Opposition gets two. But I don't care how you guys . . .

MR. McINNIS: Well, that goes along with the way they do it in professional sports, where the worst team gets the first pick in the next round.

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Chairman, on that point. I believe we determined that draw process last year. I was on the committee last year, and I believe we discussed it. Could we check the minutes from last year's meetings when this came up?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, did you keep minutes of those meetings?

MRS. AINSLIE: It's in *Hansard*.

MRS. BLACK: Yeah, it's in *Hansard*. I believe it's there. I could be wrong.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. We'll have that checked over lunch.

MR. S. DAY: Mr. Chairman, I'm really concerned about Edmonton-Jasper Place's suggestions in terms of order of draft pick, because you might get the Liberals trying to come last so they can get first choice of intern draft pick.

MR. WICKMAN: I'm glad the member recognizes that we'd have to try to come last.

MR. HYLAND: Do we need a motion to change that date, or can we just redo it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. Let's take this one as consensus. The process we've agreed on: we will now try to find eight people out of that final 16. If we can only get seven or six out of that final 16, then that's who we'll go with. But we'll start the process this afternoon to get them in here as fast as we can. If people are not available, chiefs of staff or whatever, they're going to have to send a designate in to be able to deal with this stuff in this month of August. Okay? So we'll get that part started.

Now, as to how you choose your four, we'll have Louise do some more checking if there's anything she has in her minutes on that over the hour.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: That's the history of the intern program.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Let's have a chance to sort of review it before we . . . Okay? We'll bring this back as the first item after lunch.

The other item we have for after lunch is the matter of the motion on the constituency office naming. I think item 5(g) is a bit too large to begin at this moment.

Some items under 6 we can deal with. We have a stat thing here available. When we had the Governor General's visit, thank goodness everybody was flexible enough with the late arrival of an aircraft and the fact that we were sitting when there was every indication the House would have adjourned before the arrival of the Governor General. It adjourned a few days later. Nevertheless, we sent out that invitation to all former members to join with current members and their spouses to be in the rotunda area. There was a limited amount of time available, but it seemed to go quite well. His Excellency the Governor General did go around the complete fountain and did seem to meet nearly everyone there assembled. We had a reception in the Legislature Library, and we had a fair number of former members show up.

One of the complaints they have voiced from time to time – and it comes from all political parties of former members – is that they don't get invited back or they aren't kept informed. Since we did the renovation of the Chamber, on that occasion we made certain that we did have former members back. [interjections] Excuse me, gentlemen. If you'd like to go outside and talk, please feel free to do so.

We had 125 former members and guests at that reception. Those who came the farthest: we had some from Kelowna, some from Saanich town, B.C., some from Peachland. Then the oldest who attended: we had Alfie Hooke and Lucien Maynard. Once again, it's one of those areas where we've had former members able to come back for not only that occasion but other occasions that bring them into Edmonton. I really wish you could sit down with them. They're just so happy to be invited back to this place. Last week, for example, I had, unannounced as far as we know, the last living member of the UFA government. He was in town from the west coast. I had him in for a cup of coffee, and in that 20 minutes I learned an awful lot about what really had gone on before in this province. From a human, emotional point of view, it's really very, very significant for them in particular, and it's got a lot of benefit for me when I have a chance to be able to meet with them.

Okay, 6(b), Legislative Assembly Information Tools, is not too formidable. What we're talking about here are the videos and the Legislative Assembly book. We have lots of Legislative Assembly books left. If you'd be good enough to keep encouraging the movement through your communications allowance to your members, there should be one in every nursing home, hospital, school, community office, including your constituency office and the other community offices, in the whole province. You can move them through your communications allowance. It also gives you a chance to walk by the facility and say: "Hi. I'm your Member of the Legislative Assembly. Here you are."

Now, the thing also holds true with regard to those videos, two of which have been completed and the last one, including the Legislative Assembly ghost. The last one Doug has been working on. It will be completed mid-August, no later than the end of August. These are available to you on a very reasonable basis, like about – what is it? – \$10 or \$11? There again, that's a good information tool to go to your Girl Guide groups, your school groups, and all the rest of it. Part of the responsibility of being a Member of the Legislative Assembly is to get more

people knowledgeable about what the Assembly is and what you do and what's expected. Those are excellent tools, and again, to have those moved into your schools and other facilities is an excellent opportunity for you. At the moment 48 videos have gone out, and they've only been available in about the last two months in the case of *Hansard* and roughly about the same thing, I guess, for the House business.

At the same time, we've also put out through the Legislative Assembly those information pamphlets and folders. Those are extremely economical for us to produce with the laser printers and so forth that we've been able to get in place over the years. In this case we've had about 1,700 folders and fact sheets go out.

These are things that I know you know exist. It's just that other encouragement to try to get a few more of them moving into the market. They're good tools, especially with the younger people. Okay?

DR. ELLIOTT: I've got a point, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Indeed, Grande Prairie.

DR. ELLIOTT: I want to make reference to one of the things you've done recently, and that's the seating plan of the Assembly with the photograph text. Now, that's become an important item to visiting school kids, and it seems to have increased in importance and interest considerably since you put the photographs in there. We say thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

The variation and consistency of colouring in our reproduction goes back to the quality of photo we have of you. David or Robert, do you recollect what we need to do there to upgrade it for the next time around?

MR. R. DAY: Well, Mr. Chairman, we have difficulty with photographs that are shot against a light background when we're printing it, and that's why the inconsistency on it. We've identified all members where we would like new photographs with the request that it be shot against a dark background, which significantly helps with respect to the reproduction. *Hansard* is doing that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. So if you don't like the quality of your photograph, we'll get you another photo. As to the fact that most of us have aged significantly since we've come here, that's another issue entirely.

[The committee recessed from 11:55 a.m. to 1:05 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, ladies and gentlemen, it's just about 5 after 1. Let's go. We've got a quorum.

The first item for carryover to be dealt with is the matter of the interns. I understand Sylvia Ainslie has tried to get ahold of Charlene Blaney. She's not available at the lunch hour, and the former chiefs of staff of both the ND and the Liberal caucuses are no longer around.

MR. McINNIS: I had that job for a period of time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I was thinking about the immediate past. Are you the immediate past chief of staff?

MR. McINNIS: Yes, I am.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. The selection process: can you shed light of day on this?

MR. BOGLE: We're talking about last year.

MR. McINNIS: Yeah. No, I wasn't involved in that. I know what happened though. The sequence was PC, NDP, Liberal, PC.

MR. BOGLE: Is that right?

MR. CHAIRMAN: They don't know.

MR. BOGLE: What was the process?

MRS. AINSLIE: Last year the chiefs of staff met, and the other two indicated to me that they would prefer the draw. I told them no, our caucus wouldn't agree with that, so we couldn't come to an agreement. Then it came back to Members' Services; it was on the agenda. I can't remember the discussion that went on here, but what happened at one of the meetings, finally, at the end of the meeting – it's probably not in the minutes – I had the choice of the first two, and Pam and Percy got together and decided. I can't remember how that evolved. I'm sorry.

MR. McINNIS: So you had one and two.

MRS. AINSLIE: I'll have to look at the minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Well, I think what we'll have to do here is – we've indicated earlier about setting a process in motion this afternoon to try to find some more candidates for the interviews to take place as quickly as possible. In the meantime, Sylvia will do some checking as to what the process was last year, and John can try to track down Pam Barrett and see if she remembers what the process was last year. Then when you do the interviews, after you get it narrowed down to the four, if you haven't as chiefs of staff in consultation with your caucus come up with an amicable means of how you're selecting your candidates, if you're still hung up there, then you can come to my office, and I'll just determine by whatever way I have to come up with up in order to determine. But I'll work on the theory that you'll be able to develop wonderful consensus. Okay?

MR. HYLAND: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. The search has already gone on with respect to various minutes as they apply to the intern program, so that will be dealt with. Thank you for being around, and if we want to start dealing with the next group of people.

We have a motion about signage, but I guess we'd better wait until we have a representative from the Liberal caucus here. That gives us the same challenge with respect to the item on security.

Well, there's one thing we can certainly do very easily: 6(c). Robert.

MR. R. DAY: Mr. Chairman, I understand that a golf tournament by the name of the Speaker's Cup is held annually, this year being the fifth time the event is held. It is this year scheduled for Wednesday, September 5, out at the Fort-In View

in Fort Saskatchewan. There are notices up in this building and in the Annex. Each member has received not only notice but multiple applications, because the intent of this tournament is to make it open certainly not only to members of the Assembly but their staff – under the format with the exclamation mark, everyone being welcome.

The one change this year in the format is that it will be a Texas scramble, so we'll be playing 18 holes in teams of four. It moves very quickly. That's one of the advantages, and it's a great equalizer for those of us that don't play the game as well as some others. The other advantage, of course, is that a Texas scramble is a lot of fun.

Appreciating that some will only be able to join us for dinner, there are two fees that are very reasonable: golf and dinner, which is a steak barbecue, is \$35, and if you're just coming out for dinner, then it's \$15. There'll be prizes awarded not only for the golfing but door prizes as well. So we're looking forward to a fun day, and if anyone has a pipeline vis-à-vis the weather, we would appreciate intervention in that area as well.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This year we're also sending out the notice to all former members. Let's see how many of them would like to come back.

MR. R. DAY: If I may, Mr. Chairman. If you're short of applications or you know somebody, just ask them to please feel free to call our office. We'd be pleased to sign them up.

MRS. BLACK: Are there carts available?

MR. R. DAY: Yes, there are, but on a reservation basis. So if a cart is required, you should indicate it on your entry form.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that for going around the course or for being able to get from the 19th hole back to the car? Which somebody else will be driving.

MRS. BLACK: I was thinking of our older previous members who may require a cart.

MR. R. DAY: Why were you looking at the Speaker when you said that?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Because I am so much older than all the rest of you. That's what happens if you stay here this long.

MR. BOGLE: You were a teacher many, many years ago.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah. It's all right, my son.

All righty, I guess we should then go on. Edmonton-Jasper Place, Notice of Motion: 6(d).

MR. McINNIS: I have some additional information; maybe I could hand it around. I hope there are enough copies. I'll leave a copy of the notice as distributed at the start of the meeting. The one I'm distributing is a news release issued from the House of Commons under the name of the director of communications. We don't have quite such an animal here in the Legislative Assembly, but it details in a general way or summarizes the 57 recommendations of a report called Greening the Hill.

Now, I have a copy of the report, which I understand was an initiative of the Speaker's office together with the House committee on the environment. The goals were:

- Eliminating environmentally harmful policies, practices and materials and replacing them with environmentally appropriate alternatives;
- Making everyone working on Parliament Hill more aware of the environment and ways to protect it; and,
- Eliminating the use of hazardous substances where reasonable, and taking every precaution with those substances necessary to House operations.

Essentially, they had a committee that looked at those three areas, and they came up with the total of 57 recommendations for the Assembly and the precincts. They're not necessarily the property of any one individual. Some of them were for the grounds keepers, some were clearly for the keeper of supply office material recycling products, some were for the food service people in terms of disposables, some were for the public works people on heating and lighting and that kind of thing. There were also recommendations dealing with automobiles, building maintenance, buying greener products: a fairly wide-ranging group.

Now, I think most of these recommendations might be taken literally, but some may not, because the systems differ in terms of how things are provided. For the last year the Assembly office has made recycled paper available to members of the Assembly, and I think a great many of them are now taking advantage of it. So a lot of us are doing what we can on a piecemeal basis, but I thought it might be appropriate for this committee to look at the 57 recommendations and try to assess what would be useful for us to implement. I didn't think it was really practical for the whole committee to go through all 57; I thought we might be here for several days. So it occurred to me that maybe we should look at a three-person subcommittee, or four or five or whatever, to look at this and some other material to give us some recommendations in terms of how we can proceed in this broad area here.

So that's essentially a proposal, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Grande Prairie.

DR. ELLIOTT: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I'm really intrigued with this whole topic. I think it's obviously very important, and I think we're all involved in it one way or another. I know that portions of the program, as we understand it from the discussion, have been initiated at various levels through different departments now, and I know in our own caucus rooms we've seen some of these things initiated. I'm wondering if at this stage of the game, from the standpoint of this committee, we ask the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services to have his department review it from an entire government point of view at this particular stage.

I'd like to make that a motion for discussion: that we have that department take a look at it for the entire government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. A motion from Grande Prairie: referral of this document, Greening the Hill, to the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services.

To the motion. Red Deer-North is one. That's right; we have the other one as a notice of motion.

MR. McINNIS: I thought that's what the agenda is. By a motion you'd refer this motion to public works?

DR. ELLIOTT: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay then; we'll take that as being a motion of referral of this previous motion as moved by Edmonton-Jasper Place.

Discussion on the matter to refer.

MR. S. DAY: Mr. Chairman, my comments were on just the larger question being brought here rather than on the motion itself.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Let's broaden it at this stage to include whatever you've got.

MR. S. DAY: I'm all for this memo. However, I think there's a number of things going on in the building already, so any analysis of comparison that's being done – if we could see what we're already doing so we're not coming up with something redundant. I just wonder if the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place is aware.

I've wondered about the coffee cup one. Even as we've switched to porcelain cups here in the building and in our own meetings, there's a product that's advertised . . . I think Safeway advertises now that their meat comes in those styrofoam trays which no longer contain fluorocarbons. Has there been an analysis done on the net effect on the environment of either disposing of those cups, which virtually crumple to almost nothing, as opposed to washing, for instance, 40,000 cups a month: the energy required to heat the water to do that, the soap that goes into it, the washing of the towels that dry the cups? You know, before we say let's do that wholesale in the building, has there been a comparison done on the impact on the environment in the light of using the styrofoam cups that apparently don't contain these fluorocarbons? I just don't want us to rush in and say let's do something, when we don't know really which has the least impact on the environment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

Edmonton-Jasper Place, you're next on the list.

MR. McINNIS: I'm actually not asking anybody to rush into anything. What I'm asking is that this committee establish a subcommittee to look at what the precincts and the Legislative Assembly can do in the way of making our own operation more environmentally friendly in a general sense. I appreciate that the minister of public works is doing much the same on behalf of the government and that already there have been some guidelines issued in respect of purchasing recycled paper by government departments and, in fact, quite a list of things which I think some other members dealt with during the Assembly. This isn't an initiative as far as what the government should do. It's rather what the Legislative Assembly – the members of the Assembly, the staff, and the precincts – should do. So it's not really directed at the government in a broad sense.

On the question of disposable material, I generally feel that if this process were to go ahead, I would suggest that wherever possible we try to move away from disposable items for a variety of reasons. CFC is only one of them; chlorofluorocarbons you can remove from any product, but you still have a disposal problem in terms of degradable waste and what you do with that material. Generally, the people who have studied this matter rank the priorities in the order that's explained in the news release: reduce, reuse, recycle, and rethink. Well, rethink is not always used in that context. Reducing means eliminating waste wherever possible, reducing the volume of waste created, which is far superior to recycling, for example, where you create waste

and then you expend the effort and the money and so forth to make it into something you can use again, and reusing products as well. These are reusable products. I think if you did the kind of analysis that you asked about, you'd find that over a period of time in fact there would be a gain in material and energy, that they could reuse the material and wouldn't waste it.

However, I don't say, you know, that my view's necessarily the one that you want to go with. I think the Assembly should take it upon itself to look at what can be done to try to make this an environmentally friendly operation as much as possible for a variety of reasons, not least of which is that people look to this Assembly and the members in it for leadership in our society and I think we're in a position to offer it to some extent. That's why I would like to see Members' Services have a look at it in addition to and perhaps with the participation of Public Works to find out what the government is doing. But we are administratively separate; we're not a branch of the public works department. The Assembly operates under the direction of the Speaker's office with the advice of this committee within the role it has. I think the Members' Services Committee does have a role here, and I think this is the way we would establish what that role is.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just on the item of recycling. Perhaps if you could speak to each of your caucuses so that those people who have borrowed from the Chamber itself glasses that have the scroll of the province on them would be good enough to bring them back from their constituency offices and their caucus offices to this building, we'd appreciate it. Thank you.

Calgary-Foothills, and Taber-Warner. No? All right. Thank you. Taber-Warner.

MR. BOGLE: I'm speaking in favour of the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's a nice way of saying some members are taking some things on permanent loan.

Taber-Warner.

MR. BOGLE: I think there are some exciting thrusts contained in the House of Commons Environmental Task Force report which was released. I know that our government has taken some innovative steps, primarily through the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services, in responding to the whole question of recycling and making better use of the environment in which we live.

I think it's important to note one major difference between Parliament Hill and the Alberta Legislature. Parliament Hill is under the exclusive purview and jurisdiction of the Speaker, and this is a shared relationship in this building, with the government in a much greater role. I think the motion is certainly in order. We're also fortunate in that the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services is a member of this committee, and he can certainly take back to the department the enthusiasm the committee has that we move in a way that is environmentally friendly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On the motion to refer, Public Works, Supply and Services.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, I have no difficulty at all with the motion, because I think it's something that we have to continue to do. This process began a number of years ago. I find it of interest, though, in Ottawa that at the bottom of the first page they say there's a recycling initiative to cut down

waste. A program is being introduced this summer that will allow for the recycling of the 13,000 pop cans that are being thrown away every month. I hope we would never forget that in Alberta we've had such a mandatory program in our province since the early 1970s. Ontario does not have a beverage container Act. Until a few years ago Alberta was the only jurisdiction anywhere in the world that had it, and we had it 16 years before anybody else had it. I look at a lot of these things that come out, you know, from other places, and if they had only been as quick as we have been in Alberta for a great period of time, they wouldn't have to do this.

I find the recycling of newspapers of interest. We've been doing that in this building and this province for three years at least. With an organization in Edmonton called Paper Chase, we created - in fact, just in the last month I signed a contract with them that will allow them to pick up all the recyclable paper in all of our public buildings for at least the next two years, and provided a cash honorarium of nearly \$200,000 for them to do that. So let's just continue to do it and be wide open to get any input from any hon. member in the Assembly on how we can improve it, because we are all committed to it. We're all environmentalists.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Well, technically you've spoken on the motion to refer - that's where we're at - but I'm sure we'll give you a few more minutes, Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: I think it's a good thing that we have a beverage container recycling system, that we have a Paper Chase system; you know, somebody should be patted on the back for that action. But while we're patting ourselves on the back, I think we should also look at the fact that the Assembly is not a branch of the public works department. What public works is doing is interesting and may provide some inspiration to all, I'm sure, by the time the policies are all thought out and developed. That may be something we want to look at, but I think that sooner or later this committee should take seriously its responsibility for the precincts and have a look at it. That's all I'm saying.

So I'm speaking against the motion to refer, because I think what public works does is interesting, but I don't believe they should be establishing policy for the Legislative Assembly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On that point, Clerk, would you like to mention some of the things that we've been looking at in the department anyway?

DR. McNEIL: Well, we've adopted to the maximum extent possible a policy of using recycled paper for letterhead, envelopes, copy paper, notepads, and business cards. We've talked to our printers in terms of the possibility of using recycled paper for printing House documents. They tested it out and for our last contract concluded that they weren't able to run it. When we renegotiate with them this year, it will be part of the specifications, if it's possible technically to do so, to use recycled paper to print those documents: *Hansard*, Votes and Proceedings, and Orders of the Day. We're also recycling printer cartridges for the laser printers that we now use throughout the Assembly, as well as recycling newspapers and other fine papers through the Paper Chase system, which we've had in place for the last couple of years.

So there are a number of ongoing initiatives with respect to recycling that we've already undertaken.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And we can undertake to get copies of this report and to again have it reviewed within the Legislative Assembly coming under the Clerk?

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

The question with respect to the . . .

MR. McINNIS: The motion was to refer it to public works . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Public Works, Supply and Services.

MR. McINNIS: . . . not to the Clerk.

MR. BOGLE: That's right. To the minister of public works.

MR. McINNIS: And he'll report back, presumably.

MR. KOWALSKI: Under the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services Act it's the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services that does provide the services and the supplies. So paper, all the furniture - I mean, we recycle furniture and all the rest of that stuff: the whole gamut, the whole thing. There's not a whole entity, as I understand it, within the Legislative Assembly that purchases and procures unto itself. It's usually done in consultation with Public Works, Supply and Services. It was we who not too long ago put down the dictate that we're doing to use these laser cartridges. I tabled a document in the Legislative Assembly some months ago saying that refilling toner cartridges for laser printers rather than replacing them was to be encouraged and considered mandatory, at least in the specifics that I have.

So we've got to work together. It's all part of the same system. The Legislative Assembly does not take direction from Public Works.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The motion refers it to that department, but at the same time, I'm sure that if you review the words I said a few minutes ago, we will also get a copy of it, and I've ask that the Clerk review it within the department of the Legislative Assembly and give an ongoing report back. The committee can deal with it from there, when the report does come back from Public Works.

Those in favour of the motion to refer it? Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

MR. S. DAY: Mr. Chairman, just a question on this, if I could, to the minister of public works. What is the process as we continue on with these initiatives? Somebody has an idea; maybe it's to do with light bulbs. Maybe we're all doing that; I don't know. What's the process? Does somebody contact you and say: would you consider purchasing such a type of light bulb, for instance? Is that how that works?

MR. KOWALSKI: Sure. Let's have a renaissance of ideas. Surely, arising out of this particular discussion, a memo could be sent to all caucuses saying that this is being referred to the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services, and if you have any ideas, send them along. We'll have them all evaluated, and implemented where we can.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All righty. We'll follow through on that one too.

Okay. Item 5(g) in regards to the security of the building. In your folders you'll find some information there, some correspondence from the Solicitor General and also some correspondence from myself on behalf of Legislative Assembly to the Solicitor General. The initial area of discussion is with respect to identity cards, but I suspect that the discussion may go a bit further than just simply identity cards.

So, Clerk, would you like to lead into that, please?

DR. McNEIL: I guess there are two major documents. The proposal with respect to the Government Centre ID cards from the Solicitor General to the Speaker, which proposes an ID card according to different groupings of individuals and with different levels of access to different portions of the Legislature complex; those ID cards to be carried at all times and to be monitored by card readers when individuals want access to a particular area.

In response to that memo from the Solicitor General to the Speaker, we analyzed the proposal, and the Speaker responded on June 8 indicating some concerns with respect to that proposal as presented to the Speaker. I guess the most important concern was that in the proposal there was no distinction made between Legislative Assembly staff and government of Alberta staff, and in terms of the distinction between the two and some of the issues that have arisen in the past with respect to identification cards, it was important to note that distinction. So what, in effect, that memo did was propose really an integrated approach to security with the Legislative Assembly, under the authority of the Speaker, issuing identity cards to Members of the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Assembly Office staff with a particular identification, that being the Mace, and the government having their own system of identification using the coat of arms and various colour codings in a parallel kind of system.

The essence of the memo from the Speaker to the Solicitor General was that it's important to preserve the distinction between the executive branch and the legislative branch of government. So what you see in the second memo is the proposed Legislative Assembly identification cards and the access levels for Legislative Assembly members and staff in parallel to what was proposed for government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's some careful reading in there in terms of the exchange of memos, and as the Clerk just pointed out, the basic issue that has to be addressed is identity cards. The next one is access to which portions of which buildings at what times, but in terms of the card itself, to show that there is indeed a radical distinction between Legislative Assembly and government.

My understanding also is that the card readers will be in place for September, so they would be ready to be operational whenever this committee agrees or disagrees as to the general format of the matter of the identity card. To some slight degree the identity card has been tried in time past for very brief, fleeting moments, but they weren't used as access cards. In the course of this last sitting we then introduced colour-coded cards for each caucus, for members of their staff, so that they could be identified to our security much more easily in terms of the lobbies of the Assembly. After the initial start-up I believe everything went well on that. Oscar?

MR. LACOMBE: Yes, it did.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So at least the concept of having to have a card around to be able to be easily identified for access to certain parts of this building has been tried.

That's where I think we are with regard to the initial matter of security. There are some broader issues to be addressed, but for the moment perhaps we can deal with how you react to the matter of having identification cards and also the matter of the access.

Red Deer-North.

MR. S. DAY: Just a logistical question. There's a reference to the fact that people in the Leg. Assembly may have different needs than someone in the Annex. There are MLAs who are in the Annex and also need to access this building, of course, and getting into the parking area through the parking access by the Annex has been a problem in the past. That doesn't mean they're going to need two cards?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. The coding can be built into the access strip on the card.

Edmonton-Whitemud.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Chairman, the implementation of security cards can always pose a problem to a degree in restricting access to members of the public. The Workers' Compensation building – the first experience I had over there after they put their system in place I found to be quite intimidating, and a member of the public, I assume, would have found it to be more intimidating. Workers' Compensation officials explained to me what the difficulty was, explained to me the rationale. But they had concerns on behalf of the staff that there was a need for those types of security measures.

I assume that this whole program is being implemented because somebody's under the impression or of the opinion that there is a need to tighten up security. We haven't been told of that need; at least I haven't been told of that need. Is there a problem, and if there is a problem, can we be informed of the problem?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, a couple of years back, about 18 months back, we had that shooting incident.

MR. WICKMAN: I'm aware of that one.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As is the usual case, I suppose, when you have an incident like that – and thank goodness no one was killed – then people start to look at what the problems are with regard to overall security for the building. There have been threats from time to time not only on the Premier or some members of cabinet; there have been threats against the Leader of the Official Opposition, threats against your own leader. There have been security situations involved there. Also, with regard to high-profile appearances at the building, such as the Governor General as an example, then indeed other precautions have to be put in place.

In the wake of the shooting incident that took place, there was a meeting of security convened under the chairmanship of the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services together with the Solicitor General, representatives from the Premier's office, and myself. Out of that was commissioned a study of the security requirements of this whole building, and that was done by an outside security person, taking into account the concerns for this building, the Annex – all occupants of both – the grounds, the

parkades. That security report has been embargoed as of this date.

As a consequence of a number of issues which were raised, the authority responsibility was changed somewhat. The Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services as of, I suppose it was – what? – November of last year then handed over the responsibility for the grounds and the parkade to the Solicitor General, so the majority of the security for the site is presently under the direction of the Solicitor General. There's also security for the Premier. Then the matter of security for the Chamber and its immediate environs is indeed the responsibility of the Speaker and is carried out by the Sergeant-at-Arms and his staff. There are holes. There are considerable holes.

Sergeant-at-Arms, do you want to make some comments about security?

MR. LACOMBE: Well, one is . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before we go on, does the committee want this to be done in camera, or does the committee just want to go ahead and discuss all of this? It makes no difference to me.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, of all the subject matters that can be addressed, the subject matter of security is a very difficult one. On the one hand, surely I don't ever want to have anything done in camera. I just don't believe in that principle, as much as possible. But we also have to be guarded in terms of what we say, because the very essence of discussion of security maintains that there's a reason for protecting something, but if you have too open a discussion on it, then you give away all your protection mechanisms, and that's part of the dilemma.

The difficulty in this building is not a new one, and there have been people killed in this building. It wasn't too many years ago that a person on the third floor in this building was killed.

MR. LACOMBE: October 22, 1977.

MR. KOWALSKI: Okay. I happened to be in an office just one or two away from there when the person was killed.

I guess that with all the security measures you would want to take in a public building like this, you always have to be governed by the concept of accessibility for the public and everyone else, and you always have to be governed by the overreactions so that you don't fall into a bunker mentality kind of thing. Over the years there's been a lot of time and a lot of energy put into this, and we've always backed off – when I say we, I mean collectively all of us – governed by the fear that the least amount of visible security in place would be best. The more user friendly the building could be, that would be best and would be in the best interests of everybody in a democracy. Yet we still have to have an element of security here for all the reasons given, including the fact that people have died in this building.

Of course, we have to then look to see what is a comparative situation in other parliaments across the country, in the United States, and in other parliaments around the world. Quite frankly, here in Alberta we're so wide open that it's unreal. We feel good about that. We have to feel good about that.

We had a report done, as has been alluded to, and it has been an embargoed report because it basically has given us about 400 things that we could do. We all concluded, at least those people who were on that committee, that that would really lead to the bunker mentality that none of us ever wants to see in place. You know, it's everything from packing guns to – who knows?

– television cameras here, there, and everywhere, and you can't even go to the bathroom without getting an access card into a washroom and all that sort of stuff. That really is the kind of extreme that you have to balance it with.

This concept here about the identification cards is just one of many, many suggestions to basically say that it's easier for the security people in the building to at least note that somebody is in a particular place, that they can be in a particular place. We're not trying to go overboard here to try and preclude people from having access, but the security fact is that unfortunately not a week goes by without a death threat to somebody in this building. That happens. They're not made public for a variety of reasons, yet some of us – we still have to recognize that we do have a responsibility for security that we have to take care of, and we have to be governed to a great degree by the security people that we have on force here in the building for us. The Sergeant-at-Arms has got lots of experience in this area; the other security people have.

I'm really in a dilemma here, Mr. Chairman. How much do we put here on the table in public, and how much do we recognize that we've got to do? I don't know. If you go into an in camera meeting, then you have all kinds of different perceptions coming out.

MR. WICKMAN: Well, I just have a second question that may relieve my concern. My reading of the documentation is such that the card identification measure would only apply during off hours; in other words, during hours . . . Twenty-four hours a day?

MRS. BLACK: Well, sure. Why would you have it, Percy, otherwise?

MR. WICKMAN: Twenty-four hours a day, so members of the public would have to get a card, too, when they want to visit?

MR. CHAIRMAN: [interjection] Sorry. You raised the question. Okay. I have Edmonton-Jasper Place, Red Deer-North, Calgary-Foothills.

MR. McINNIS: While I'm not in a position to answer the question, I would like to make a couple of points. One is that I appreciate very much the position that the Speaker took in relation to the independence of the Assembly. I think as convenient as it may be to turn matters like this over to the government, we do have to look after our own affairs, and I appreciate that.

Security is an important consideration, and I think we have to rely on the Sergeant-at-Arms at this moment to advise us whether the briefing we're about to be given should be in camera or not. If there's information that might jeopardize our security, I guess we should go in camera to hear the briefing. But I certainly don't favour having the policy discussion in camera, because the matter of access to this building is an important question of public policy. I too was here in the building on the day in which the individual was killed. It certainly didn't help me to feel any better about the security of this institution, but there was additional security brought in at that time. All of the entrances were sealed, aside from the front entrance from the outside and the delivery entrance at the rear, and security was brought to the front. Now with the new incident I think everyone should be reminded that the individual did not get inside the building and that in fact nobody was killed, which says to me that security managed to function at

some level – I think at a pretty good level in terms of what they would do with that situation.

But then we go on to the next step. What areas of these precincts are accessible to the public and under what conditions? I'm not sure if he's saying that, but I certainly feel that discussion we have to have in a public way, because it's a pretty important question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, let's at this point pause and let's have a show of hands of those that wish to go in camera just long enough to listen to what the Sergeant-at-Arms has to say, and then we'll come back into the regular committee stage to be able to deal with the matters of policy. Those in favour of going in camera briefly to hear the Sergeant-at-Arms? Thank you. Opposed? It's carried. Thank you.

[The committee met in camera from 1:48 p.m. to 2:55 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: My understanding of what we have left to do here is, first, deal with this item of ID cards, then we have a discussion of the constituency WATS line or something, and then we come back to a motion by Red Deer-North about constituency offices. Okay?

What is your pleasure with respect to the correspondence from the Solicitor General with regard to the ID cards? Is there some thought that maybe we'll hold this matter over for a bit or what?

Calgary-Foothills.

MRS. BLACK: I so move, to hold it over.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Table it till the next meeting?

MRS. BLACK: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A motion to table. Those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

You have the matter in your binders so you can have discussion on it, obviously.

Okay. If we could go on to item 6(d), constituency WATS line. Mr. Wickman.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Chairman, that's an item that I brought forward in the earlier information, and the early documentation is there. It includes correspondence from the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark and a reply from the Clerk. In the response it is acknowledged – at least my interpretation is such – that it is worth while considering that there are possibilities of reducing costs when it comes to long-distance calls out of constituency offices. However, there are some technical problems that may be involved. It was my feeling that possibly this committee could refer it to the administration, to the Clerk, asking for some various options to come forward as to how we could overcome these technical problems if it is the desire of this particular committee to pursue that concept.

DR. McNEIL: My interpretation of the situation is that the WATS system as such is pretty well taxed to capacity. There was a concern about capacity problems in adding all the constituency offices to the WATS line, as well as the additional expense. The Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services may be able to comment on that issue. In terms of our dealings with senior officials in the department, the concern was that because of the

capacity situation with respect to WATS lines at the present time, adding constituency offices may create additional problems.

MR. WICKMAN: The question I would have, Mr. Chairman, is: is there the capability of expanding that WATS capacity?

DR. McNEIL: Mr. Chairman, I can't comment on that because that's really not within my area of understanding.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, I don't have the answers to those questions. If you want me to take them under review, we can certainly find the answers.

MR. WICKMAN: That was my indication, that it should be referred to the administration to review it and come back with some possible options and recommendations.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. The minister has indicated willingness to review the matter with the Clerk's office.

MR. HYLAND: Speaking of increased costs for telephones, do we have any idea how much more money changing these phones in here and not being able to dial direct during a long session like we had has cost us for credit card calls, which are just about twice as much?

MR. CHAIRMAN: And how much has it saved us in other calls? We haven't had time to run an analysis of that.

MR. HYLAND: Well, who would be making the calls on those phones when we weren't here?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Lots of people wander around through here. There's no security.

MR. HYLAND: Then if that's the case, why don't they just take the telephones out?

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can't take the ones out of the booths. Do they unplug?

MR. HYLAND: Or lock the doors if you can't unplug them or take them out.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, that was an appropriate question that was raised, so we'll try to get you some information on that for the next meeting. We had some pretty astronomical calls going out of here before, during session.

All right. We have 6(d) then: the minister's going to review that. In addition, the question that was raised by Cypress-Redcliff: they will check to see what was the difference in costs operating the phones around the Chamber during this past sitting. The earlier matter of security: that was tabled till the next meeting, the matter of the ID cards.

The last item I have here is item 5(d). There was a draft motion that I understand was circulated. Red Deer-North, aided by the Parliamentary Counsel.

MR. WICKMAN: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman. You said the last item was 5(c), finalize the drafting order and such? I thought that was also tabled till this afternoon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Item 5(c) was the intern program?

MR. WICKMAN: Yes, and I understood that some additional information was going to come back this afternoon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. I announced when we came back to the meeting that starting this afternoon, they were trying to round up some more of the candidates so we could supplement the number up to seven. We tried for eight, so six, seven, or eight. Have potential interns come in here sometime in this next 10 days to two weeks. They would be interviewed by caucus chiefs of staff or their designate. Then also, because we couldn't determine what the process was, we left it up to the chiefs of staff to determine how to select the interns, and if they don't come to an agreement, then it would be determined by the Speaker.

MR. WICKMAN: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Item 5(d), constituency offices. Red Deer-North.

MR. S. DAY: Mr. Chairman, as requested, a motion which I think would address the problems identified earlier in our discussion today, and I put it forward as a suggested motion. There might be some things that we're overlooking here that could or couldn't be added, but I think this would provide the limits. Just as an example, under (f) we could say "in the case of a sign, the coat of arms of the Legislative Assembly or similar identifying marks of the province of Alberta," or something along those lines. But basically I think this would meet the problems as addressed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further discussion, Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: I think this is completely and absolutely outrageous. I mean, it's open to some member of this committee somewhere along the line to determine that anything that any member does is objectionable to them and then come along with a policy like this that indicates it has to be changed after the fact. There was no problem identified. The only problem that I see is that some people don't like the fact that at least two of us, and possibly more, designate our offices as community offices because it says something about the way we as MLAs relate to people in the community. We feel comfortable with the language; our constituents feel comfortable about it.

Now somebody comes along and says that we have to call it a constituency office because it's referred to in the order as a constituency office. That's a foolish argument, because it confuses what a thing is provided for and what it is named publicly. A lot of members of this Assembly are provided cars by the taxpayers for a certain purpose, but it doesn't say on the side of the car what that purpose is, nor is it necessary to say on the side of the constituency office that this is a constituency office. It's like having to, you know, label the equipment inside: this is a typewriter; this is a desk; this is a bookshelf. It's ludicrous.

So what we have is somebody trying to make an allegation that because something is called a constituency office in a Members' Services order, that has to be labeled in signage as a constituency office. Of course it doesn't. A lot of members don't, nor would they under this proposal, because it says in this particular motion that the signs "shall include only all or any of the following." So even if this rather vexatious motion were to pass in its present form, no one would be required to label their office "constituency office," and in fact that's not the intent, as

I understand it. I don't think you really want to order everybody to go out and to acquire a sign that does just that.

Therefore, the complaint must be about the fact that two of us use the term "community office," not based on any complaint received from any of our constituents or any member of the community. I don't believe anyone is confused or hurt or inconvenienced in any way by the fact that at least two of us, and possibly more, use the designation "community office" in our office. I mean, it really isn't that monumental a thing that it requires the heavy hand of government to bring in a motion like this on a day like this and expect to use their majority to have it passed. I'm sure I could make a list of a dozen or maybe two dozen other members of legislative assemblies and Parliament who use the term "community office" on their offices without any apparent fear or concern on the part of the governments that they relate to or their colleagues in other legislative assemblies. I mean, it's just ludicrous.

Over the lunch hour I spoke with my colleague the Member for Edmonton-Highlands. It was mentioned when this item came before the committee that Pam Barrett had also used the designation "community office." She is, I suppose, in the same boat that I am in that we have expended some taxpayers' funds on business cards, on signs, on MLA reports, and on other documents which use the term "community office," again with no discernable harm to any member of the public and no complaint that any of us have been made aware of to this point in time. She's in the position of having followed the Members' Services order, which doesn't say anything about what type of sign shall be put in front of the office. It does say certain things that may not be on the sign or certain types of partisan display which may not be made, and I'm certain that she has not done anything like that, nor have I. So we're not being accused of breaching what is in fact there but rather somebody's idea of what should be on there. I don't think the members of this committee really think that every one of our offices in the community needs to look exactly the same. They're not government offices. They're in fact offices sponsored by the Legislative Assembly, of the member of that Assembly, and I think each of them will in some way make a statement about how that member relates to the community and to the constituency. Now, we may not like the way individual members relate to communities and constituencies, but that doesn't mean that every time we see something we don't like, we have to rush out and create a new rule.

Now, there is a further difficulty caused if a motion such as this were to pass, and that is that presumably signs would have to be taken down and destroyed or repainted, cards would have to be reprinted, and that sort of thing. Now, I did ask the member to consider that over the noon hour. I don't know if he's had a chance to do that; he didn't indicate so in his opening remarks on the motion. But I think it would be ludicrous if we had to lay off our staff in order to pay the costs of installing new signs to meet this relatively frivolous objection on the part of certain members of the committee. I don't really think you have a case to say that we ought to have known that you would come along with a motion like this at this point in time, because how could we? How can we know that tomorrow you won't decide that our offices can't be located where they are and they have to be moved somewhere else, or that some other expenditure that we've made cannot be made and therefore has to be redone? I mean, you could eat up our office budget many times over in the course of a year. You could make certain that we're never able to do anything simply by changing the rules as we go along.

We have a motion here to address a problem that is not a problem and a motion that if it were passed would create a

problem where we don't have one now. Therefore, I'm pleading with the members of the committee to think this through before you do it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Additional speakers?
Red Deer-North, summation then.

MR. S. DAY: Well, in summation, Mr. Chairman, I wasn't aware of this problem until it was brought up here. I am not hung up on the fact that if the committee doesn't see this as a solution and the committee here votes against it – this isn't some kind of a party dictum. This is a free conscience vote. If people don't feel it's going to address the problem, no big deal; let's not have it addressed.

I don't think it helps any when the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place takes the discussion to the ridiculous, saying we've got to go around labeling everything. That's insanity, and to suggest it is to totally depart from logic. Nothing has to be labeled in an office, and in fact you don't have to have any kind of a sign on your office indicating anything, but if we are going to advertise and if we are using taxpayers' dollars to operate an office and, therefore, to advertise the fact that we're there, we need to exercise a certain discretion. It's not like being in a totally free enterprise, private-sector area where we can come up with all kinds of catchy little slogans and refer to ourselves in little jingles and things like that. We are responsible for the discretionary use of taxpayers' dollars here, and now we have, from what I understand at least, knowingly for the first time a departure from the advertising of the existence of a constituency office.

I think the word "community" is a fine word, but where are we going to draw the line? That seems to be the question. Again, do we call it "the people's place"? Do we call it "the super MLA community fun office"? In doing what we think is appealing to a certain sector of our constituency, what kind of discretion do we use when we're talking about taxpayers' dollars? This isn't our money. This isn't our own personal advertising campaign. It's just simply a way of addressing the concerns and putting out some guidelines so that it doesn't become an offence either to the integrity of the use of Legislative Assembly dollars or to constituents.

The Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place also talked about – I don't know what he's talking about here – laying off staff and shutting down part of the operation. If it does happen to be a problem, I'd be happy to recommend excellent sign painters, sign workers, who – and it's done all the time – come up with a word on a banner that sticks over the word "community," and it says "constituency," and you can't see it unless you get up there with a magnifying glass. You caught me on a sympathetic day; I may even be willing to help with the cost of that, because I don't think it's prohibitive.

Let's stick to the issue at hand in terms of the discretion of taxpayers' dollars when we're advertising. We do it with ads in the paper, and we recognize that there's some discretion that we use there. When we're talking about limited space on a sign of a constituency office or the notation in a directory, here is simply a way of putting in the guidelines to limit that discretionary use and wrap it up in quite a neat way.

Like I said, this isn't a party function. If the members of this committee don't like this motion, then let's vote it down and get on with business.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Parliamentary Counsel, it was the interpretation of both Parliamentary Counsel that this presented a legal difficulty; is that not correct?

MR. M. CLEGG: It's difficult to say to what extent it's a legal difficulty. It is a description which is not in accordance with the order. Of course, for anything which is done, there are two ways of assessing its nature. One is by the internal nature of it, whether it is in fact a constituency office, and the other is how it is presented to the community. I suppose you can say that in the end it's a mixture of the two. The order refers to "constituency offices," and it may well be understood that these are constituency offices, and it may not. It's hard to define exactly whether it's an immediate legal problem. It certainly is not a description which is in accordance with the publicly funded program which we have under the Members' Services order.

But, in fact, if somebody were to take it to a court and say that a member is using funds for something which is not authorized, the court would look at both the description, the presentation, and the substance. I don't think it would be appropriate for me to say which is the most important of the two, but in drafting this order, I must say that I put down all the things which I thought would be necessary and convenient for a member to have on his window, but I only had a short time to think. It may be that other members not at this meeting will say, "Well, I have on my window the following," and all members here might agree that that's entirely appropriate, but it's not on this list. The Member for Red Deer-North has mentioned that he might agree to other alternates to (f), including provincial symbols, although we do have to avoid using government symbols in that connection. But it does show that there may be signage on windows which wouldn't come within this list, and I don't know what it would be.

MR. McINNIS: This is a real tough one . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry, no. It's a call for the question. That was just because of legal clarification.

MR. McINNIS: You guys aren't even going to hear what I have to say.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, hon. member, that's not true.

MR. McINNIS: What's not true?

MR. CHAIRMAN: People have been willing to listen to what you've had to say. We've gone through the matter of the speaking order. There was the call for the question. I asked the Parliamentary Counsel about that. The Member for Red Deer-North had spoken in summation immediately following yourself. You know the rules of procedure of the House and here. We were into the formal discussion of the motion. I'm sorry; your comment was out of order.

There's a call for the question. All those in favour of the motion, please signify. Opposed? It's carried by a vote of 4 to 3.

MR. McINNIS: Good God.

Well, I do want to say something, and that is that this business that was just raised by Parliamentary Counsel is a very important point, and I attempted to express a concern about it before the vote was taken on the motion, because there may indeed be a number of members who have things on display in their offices which are not covered by this list only because the list was drawn

up over the noon hour in response to a problem that hasn't even been defined by the mover of the motion. He said it has something to do with not wanting to have "the real Canadian super MLA office" or some other such ludicrous thing. I happen to display a sign of Neighbourhood Watch, a crime prevention sign, in my office, and I don't believe that this committee really wants me to take that sign down or, for that matter, to incur the expense that would be necessary to cause that to be removed from my sign. But as it is, I'm in violation on two counts as of this moment, because this motion was passed as quickly as it was, and there may indeed be others. So what position are we in as of this moment? Do I have to leave here and cover that up tonight . . .

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Chairman, can I ask for a recount because something . . .

MR. McINNIS: Percy, could I just conclude my remarks for a second?

MR. WICKMAN: Sure.

MR. McINNIS: The other thing . . .

MR. WICKMAN: Something's gone wrong here with the vote.

MR. McINNIS: Pardon me?

MR. WICKMAN: I'm just saying that I was going to ask for a recount because obviously a 4 to 3 vote doesn't make sense with the number of people that are here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, hon. member, your speculation doesn't much matter at this point, because Edmonton-Jasper Place still has the floor. I'll get to you in a moment. The whole discussion is after the fact anyway.

Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: I want to assure the Member for Red Deer-North that I don't think he wants to label every item in the offices, but I was responding to a suggestion that was made by Mrs. Mirosch that somehow the requirement that there be a sign saying "constituency office" was contained in the initial order, and that's simply not the case. That was my point. If that were a logical conclusion, then you would have to label everything by what it's named in the order, and of course you don't. That was my point, pure and simple.

MRS. BLACK: On that point, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Calgary-Foothills.

MRS. BLACK: I think the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place said something earlier about a Neighbourhood Watch sign. Well, you certainly didn't use constituency funds to buy a Neighbourhood Watch sign, did you?

MR. McINNIS: The Neighbourhood Watch logo is printed on my sign.

MRS. BLACK: Did you buy that from constituency funds?

MR. McINNIS: Did I buy what?

MRS. BLACK: The Neighbourhood Watch sign.

MR. McINNIS: It's not a Neighbourhood Watch sign; it's a Neighbourhood Watch logo, and it's on my sign.

MRS. BLACK: It's incorporated into the artwork of your sign then.

MR. McINNIS: That's correct.

MRS. BLACK: I see.

MR. WICKMAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, from a procedural point of view - if you can give me some direction - if I call for a standing vote, is that going to allow us to clarify exactly how we get the seven votes when there are eight of us, not counting yourself, here?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Because perhaps some members didn't vote.

MR. WICKMAN: They have to vote.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I know they have to vote, but I'm telling you how many I could count.

MR. WICKMAN: Could I ask for another vote, Mr. Chairman?

AN HON. MEMBER: Since when do they have to vote?

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's like the Chamber; you have to vote. We've never bothered to go through it in terms of recording every single vote, but I suppose that might become a new procedure.

Red Deer-North.

MR. S. DAY: Mr. Chairman, there seems to be a number of things flying around on this, including the count of the vote. I don't want to shock the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, but just in his few words recently he has raised one cogent point which I'd like to somehow allow for consideration. Bona fide items, like a Neighbourhood Watch sign, obviously we don't want to impact upon. Can we put a following motion that this motion which has just passed not be enacted until, as an arbitrary date, January 1? That would give more time for this committee to assess the various implications of what we're doing here.

MR. McINNIS: Isn't the time to assess the implications before you vote rather than after?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, hon. member. You had your chance to speak. We're not going to spend all afternoon running around in circles.

First, give me a recount. Those in favour of the motion, please signify. Thank you. Opposed? Five to 3. Thank you. Taber-Warner.

MR. BOGLE: Well, Mr. Chairman, the concept of the constituency office was worked on by this committee before I became a member of the committee in 1986. From 1986 through until the last election the committee worked long and hard in a nonpartisan way to increase the tools by which a member could reach out and serve the constituents they were elected to represent.

Most, if not all, people will recognize that the workload for members has increased over the years. I learned yesterday that two of our colleagues, both of whom sit around this table, had chosen to drop the word "constituency" and insert the word "community" in the title. Show me one order that we have that makes reference to community offices. The orders all refer to constituency offices, and clearly if a member wishes to be innovative, the onus is on the member to go back to the Speaker first or, if they wish, to come back to this committee and discuss the matter. If we all charge out and do our own thing and then say, "Well, it wasn't specifically stated anyplace in the order that I couldn't do it," where does that leave us?

Now, the hon. member earlier said he would only take his sign down if he was ordered to do so by a motion of the committee. The committee's moved; the matter's been dealt with. I think we should carry on.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have a new motion before the committee that the effective date be January 1, 1991. I've recognized two members who have spoken to it: Red Deer-North and Taber-Warner. Additional speakers?

MR. M. CLEGG: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I believe the motion of the Member for Red Deer-North was that the order not be enacted until January 1, which would be a little different because it would mean that I wouldn't prepare it for your signature until that date. It's maybe a minor procedural point, but I think the committee should decide which it should be: whether it should be an order signed now which is effective January 1 or an order which is not going to be presented for signature to you until that date and, therefore, will not, as it were, be in the orders until that date.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I think the original motion was – you know, they were making the motion to deal with it as of today. They could delay it, but you tell me.

MR. S. DAY: The intent of this motion which was just brought forward is to have it for your signature January 1, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Then it will be enacted January 1. Okay, additional?

Call for the question.

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Those in favour of the motion by Red Deer-North with regard to January 1, 1991, please signify, and put your hands up high so I don't lose your arms and some eyesight. Opposed? The matter carries 5 to 3. Thank you.

Additional items of business. Date of Next Meeting. Will we leave it at call of the Chair and look at some dates sometime in August, later in August? I know that gives problems with the Electoral Boundaries Committee.

MRS. BLACK: There are four members here on that committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Would members be good enough to give me dates when you're not available, and then we'll try to work a co-ordination out of that.

MR. BOGLE: For which month? Are you still trying for August?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think we would try, or the first week of September, somewhere around about September 6. If you want to all get notice to my office, and then we'll work it from there. Okay?

Motion to adjourn. Thank you, Calgary-Foothills.

[The committee adjourned at 3:26 p.m.]