

8:53 a.m.

Tuesday, November 5, 1991

[Chairman: Mr. Horsman]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, let's get under way. I'm sorry I'm late. Wouldn't you know it. When the plane is 20 minutes late leaving Calgary, it means it's 20 minutes late getting here. I know that we have an agenda which requires a number of you people to leave to get to Calgary. What time do you have to leave?

MRS. GAGNON: We have to leave at 10:30 at the latest.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have to be at . . .

MRS. GAGNON: No, we leave here at 10:30.

MR. SEVERTSON: I've got to leave at 10:15 for my plane if I'm going to make it; 11:45 is the luncheon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Well, we'll try and get done in about an hour anyway.

Let's proceed to today's business. We have a report here from subcommittee C dealing with the issue of the poll. We've got a problem with regard to the budget, I guess, so perhaps we could ask our representative of the polling firm to take us through this situation relative to what the options are. We're making certain that you get on right at the beginning today so we don't run into the problem we had last time.

MR. CAMERON: Right. Well, the main challenge is really that the questionnaire is longer than anticipated given the budget and the length that we initially quoted, which was 20 minutes. We were initially aiming for a 20-minute questionnaire; right now it is about 26 to 27 minutes, I believe. Now, some of the options we've outlined are increasing the budget for the project or cutting some questions. We've outlined basically three questions that could be considered for deletion. Our recommendation is that any two of the three would be fine to keep the project close to budget.

One aspect of the project that we did not anticipate is the amount of executive time that would be required to consult on this, given that this is the fifth draft and we'll probably end up with a sixth draft of the questionnaire. We did anticipate that there would be considerable time spent, but not as much; therefore, regardless of the options chosen, there will be an additional cost of \$4,500 for the executive time associated with the extra consulting on the project. That is basically not part of the options – that cost overrun, if you want – in that we've put in a great deal more time than anticipated.

The options the committee has to consider are really which of these question to delete, if deletion is desired, or approving the additional budget. So what we have is question 2, dealing with the constituent assembly; question 8, dealing with who would manage and administer the various services and programs; and question 10, which is the bank of statements on the social charter issue and the issue of including property rights in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Those are the three questions to consider, whether we want to include them or delete them. You can delete the sample size slightly to compensate for the extra cost if that's also desired, although it wouldn't be our recommendation given the need for regional representation in this area.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Are there questions?
Gary Severtson, and Pearl.

MR. SEVERTSON: I've got some questions. On some of the questions – a little off 2, 8, and 10 so it has a little before we lose them. On questions 6, 7, and 8, the (a) part of the question is on social services, income support programs, and unemployment insurance. There's a mixture of programs in there. All the other questions, from (b) to (k), are basically one program. Both of them are provincial and federal programs as of now.

MR. ADY: You're saying there's a mixture in there.

MR. SEVERTSON: Yeah; unemployment's a federal one, social services is a provincial one. We're asking a question on different programs.

MS BARRETT: That's right.

MR. SEVERTSON: Whereas the other one, education, is one thing. It's on education only.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Gary, if we could come back to that, perhaps, and try and concentrate on this issue of the length rather than try to start digging into individual questions. Primarily what subcommittee C recommended was that questions 2, 8, and 10 of the draft questionnaire be deleted in order to condense the length of the questionnaire. The options I guess we have are – let's just outline – to do that or two of the three or cut the size of the survey or increase the budget.

Yes, Pearl.

MS CALAHASEN: I just wanted to ask: when you're saying that you're lowering the sample by six to seven respondents and you indicated something about a regional representation, what do you mean by that in terms of saying that once we cut the 2, 8, and 10 off? It's going to be impacting how?

MR. CAMERON: Well, the total sample was 1,200. Although it wouldn't reduce it a great deal by eliminating 67 from the sample, basically the way it would impact on regional representation is it would decrease the sample on the regional level by about 14, 13 surveys. I mean, on a statistical level it is not that significant. We could go ahead and do that samplewise. It would impact it by about plus or minus .2 percent in terms of accuracy, which is fairly minimal, but it does reduce the overall size of the sample, which I don't recommend.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have you on the list, Pam.
Okay; Yolande, Pam, Dennis, and Jack.

MRS. GAGNON: Just in order to get something on the table that we can discuss in concrete terms, I'd like to move that we keep 2(a) but dump 2(b) and (c), the reason being that 2(a) is the overall principle. It asks whether people want a constituent assembly or not; 2(b) and (c) talk about how this assembly should be formed and so on. I think we would get the indication from the public at large that they want one or they don't want one. The matters of how this is to come about are not that important. So that is my motion: to keep 2(a) and dump 2(b) and (c). I think maybe we could get clarification as to how much time that would save and what the dollar amount saved might be.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. We have a specific motion on the floor then. One would have to speak to the motion. Do you want to answer the question?

MR. CAMERON: Sure, I'll answer the question. We estimated that the entire question 2, including 2(a), 2(b), and 2(c), would be about two minutes, so this would cut about a minute and a half off that. Therefore, doing some quick calculations here, that would be sufficient to reduce the questionnaire by about a minute and a half. That wouldn't alone deal with the problem; there would have to be another question, as well, eliminated.

MRS. GAGNON: But combined with something else here, it may be enough to make a difference.

MR. CAMERON: Yeah. Combined with something else, that could be.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just before we proceed to discuss this motion, let me just take the chairman's prerogative here. We have options of increasing the budget, decreasing the size of the sample, or eliminating some of the questions. Those are the three options that we have. What you're suggesting in essence in your motion is that we cut some of the questions in order to stay within the budget and keep the sample size at what was recommended originally.

MRS. GAGNON: Yes. However, I would like to see for this motion maybe the final vote held off, because this combined with something on questions 8 and 10 might make the kind of compromise that we need to still meet our budget and keep the sampling where it is.

9:03

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, but inherent in what you're saying is that we're going to shorten the time of the question.

MRS. GAGNON: As one of the options. Maybe somewhere else we'd decrease the number of respondents by a hundred, like on 10.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I see. Okay.

Now, do you have any follow-up motions that you intend to put forward just to perhaps get comprehensive input?

MRS. GAGNON: Yeah. To look at it as a package, I would suggest that we save question 8 and save question 10 but decrease the number of respondents, the number of people who would be asked to respond.

MR. SCHUMACHER: So you're really recommending a mix.

MRS. GAGNON: Yeah, of options.

MR. SCHUMACHER: Reducing the sample size and questions.

MRS. GAGNON: Uh huh. But I think question 8 is really very important, the powers. It's what a lot of people are discussing. I don't think we can eliminate that one.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I know that we have a specific motion.

MRS. GAGNON: If my motion has complicated things, I can withdraw it for now, if you'd prefer to have a discussion on the whole thing before we have a motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It might be helpful so that we can just get a feel, rather than jumping into making a specific motion, for what options we want to adopt or whether we want to combine.

MR. CAMERON: Mr. Chairman, a point of information on the issue of the constituent assembly. We looked into the results of the national unity study, which we presented to the committee, and we do have that general question about Canadians' reactions to the idea of a constituent assembly already. The results of that basic question, 2(a), we already have. In fact, the results, if I can just share them with you right here: 66 percent of Canadians said it would be a good idea, 27 percent said it would be a bad idea, and 8 percent were unsure. Specifically within Alberta the proportion of people who said it was a good idea was 71 percent, and the people who said it was a bad idea were 19 percent, and 10 percent were unsure. So we do have that basic component that could be incorporated into the report, based on our previous national unity study, which may allow you to look at eliminating question 2 altogether and keeping the other questions.

MRS. GAGNON: Could I have some clarification on the national unity study? Who took part; what are you referring to?

MR. CAMERON: Well, it was a sample throughout Canada. The number of people we interviewed in Alberta was 300. So it is fairly good. I don't think the results would change dramatically if we did the same question.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: What was the timing of that?

MR. CAMERON: The timing of that was in May. That was conducted in May.

MS CALAHASEN: On that point, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Just on that point. We have a list now. I think if we can just have a sort of general discussion first, then we'll come back to it.

MR. CHIVERS: Mr. Chairman, I just have a question from the discussion last time. Was there not a suggestion that the polling corporation would gift us a question? Wasn't there a suggestion that they would do one for free, so to speak?

MR. CAMERON: Basically, our proposal was that even though it would go over the time limit that we had set as a goal initially, we would accept to include two out of the three questions. That's still on the table. So if we eliminate 2, then perhaps we can just go ahead with questions 8 and 10, if that's to the liking of the committee, and that would meet our time requirements.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MR. CHIVERS: So you're saying we only need to discuss the elimination of one question?

MR. CAMERON: The elimination of one of those three questions.

MR. CHIVERS: But also if we wanted to increase the budget, we'd only need to increase the budget for the one question?

MR. CAMERON: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. I'm a little confused, but anyway . . . [interjections] Let's try and direct our questions through the Chair, or we're going to run into a Tower of Babel.

Pearl, and then Pam Barrett.

MS CALAHASEN: Mr. Chairman, thanks. You indicated that if we eliminated 2(a) – does that mean that we have to eliminate 2(b) also, in terms of what you were saying; 2 entirely?

MR. CAMERON: Yes. I think the package of 2(b) and 2(c) really has to be preceded by 2(a), which is the general concept. The reason why we included 2(b) and 2(c), based on the subcommittee hearings, was that the initial thought of the subcommittee was that it would be useful to have more information about how that constituent assembly would be composed. It's just more detail.

MS CALAHASEN: Right. But do you have any information based on what you've done in other polls regarding how it should be done?

MR. CAMERON: No, we don't. We haven't dealt with the composition question in other polls.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Pam Barrett, who's been anxiously and patiently waiting.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sure that by now everybody heard about last night's hearings in Winnipeg, and in the event that you didn't, I can just tell you that the public is not happy about the way silly little matters are intervening and overtaking the broader questions. My guess is that between subcommittee costs and having Michael here for several meetings during which he was not even able to speak, it has already cost this committee and the taxpayers about an extra \$2,500 just in those small costs. It's costing about an extra \$4,500 in executive costs related to the drafting of the questionnaire itself. I think it's time we stopped spending this sort of money and get on with the agenda.

It's very clear: if 71 percent of 300 Albertans surveyed in May said yes to a constituent assembly, I think we have an obligation to ask them how they want that struck. I think we need to be very open and give all the options we can in a questionnaire so that when we go out on the road next week, we're not chewed up with the federal people, who have also been accused of monkeying unfairly with this business. Either we're trying an honest approach or we're not.

I'm speaking against Yolande's motion because I think we do have to ask the people how they want to do it. If they want a constituent assembly, let's find out how they would like it to be conducted or struck. I think we need to go with the whole package as it is. If it costs an extra \$2,700, my guess is that that comes to about .2 of 1 percent, in other words, of this committee's overall budget. Let's get on with it. We're wasting a lot of money and time just arguing about it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. What's your position, then, relative to the whole survey? Are you prepared to go with increasing the budget?

MS BARRETT: Absolutely.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. To accommodate all the questions that are incorporated herein?

MS BARRETT: Yes. In fact, I would further clarify that by adding the extra approximately \$2,700, we could have saved about 7 and a half thousand dollars, in my estimation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. All right. That's a clear point of view. Let's speak to that and determine whether or not there is approval in principle for amending the budget to incorporate the additional time that we had not anticipated originally. That's a very clear way of putting it, and it puts the issue on the table. Who wishes to speak to that question relative to the budget?

Why don't you make a motion to that effect?

MS BARRETT: I move that we adopt the full questionnaire as presented and expand the budget by the amount necessary to sustain it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Speaking to that point, the motion now clearly before us.

Gary Severtson.

MR. SEVERTSON: That motion disallows me to speak to some of the questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, it does.

MR. SEVERTSON: Particularly one I didn't get to, and I think everybody would agree to it. That's on question 19(j), the triple E Senate reform, one that has equal regional representation. You don't talk about provincial equalization.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry; which question, Gary?

MR. SEVERTSON: Question 19(j).

MS BARRETT: What about it?

MR. SEVERTSON: Well, we've got regional representation now. If you want to count the west as a region, what is regional representation? It should be provincial.

MS BARRETT: Oh, I see.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's right. We'll get to some of the specifics that people have in mind, but the motion itself, Gary . . .

MR. SEVERTSON: As is, though, that . . .

MS BARRETT: Yeah, I understand. We're talking in principle, though.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll get back to some of the questions like that. We have to make sure that is quite clear.

Fred.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Chairman, we referred this whole question to a subcommittee of our members to try and reduce the amount of our time to consider these things. From my reading of the subcommittee report, they considered that item in terms of increasing the budget. The recommendation that comes back is that we should consider reducing the length of the questionnaire. I think we should support the subcommittee in terms of the direction they've taken and the consideration they've given, and I don't think in these times we can be fiscally responsible by increasing the budget. I don't think we can go back to our colleagues every time we run into some problems and ask for additional dollars on this thing. We should try and stick within the budget which has been allocated. Therefore, I would recommend that we do not support the motion that's on the floor.

9:13

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right.

Other people wishing to speak to the motion? Jack.

MR. ADY: I just think that we've got a really extensive survey here, and surely we can find a way to reduce it an amount that we don't have to go back for more money. I support Fred's position.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Barrie Chivers.

MR. CHIVERS: I have no doubt that this committee, by spending another day or two, could find a way to reduce this questionnaire in terms of the amount of time to come in within the budget. The point is that we've already wasted a good deal of taxpayers' money, and it doesn't seem to me to make any sense to be talking about fiscal responsibility. It's fiscally irresponsible, in my opinion, not to put a questionnaire that asks all of the salient questions. This questionnaire is already a compromise amongst the members of the subcommittee. I think it's a realistic compromise, I think it surveys the areas that need to be surveyed, and I think to spend the time that we are spending on reguessing the work of the subcommittee in the first place is counterproductive and is an extremely expensive and unnecessary process. I support the concept of increasing the budget. It's a minimal increase, and it seems to me that it's fiscally responsible to do that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Bob Hawkesworth.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I think the determining questions should be: are the questions valid, and are they a matter of significant discussion in terms of the constitutional debate? I think that should be what drives the questionnaire. Either we want to find out what the public thinks about important questions that are part of the constitutional debate or we don't. Once we start picking and choosing and saying, "Well, we'll take this one and not that one," I think we have to use as a criterion: are the questions being considered important ones in that debate?

I think the question of the process of public input into the decision-making on constitutional reform is an important question. That has to do with a constituent assembly. It's an important question. The question about the Charter of Rights and Freedoms: what should be in it; what should not be in it? The federal proposal has now introduced the question of property rights. I think that creates a new and important dimension to ask people about. If a constitution is not about a division of powers, I don't know what it's about. It seems to me that these are three very important questions. The committee's done a good job in terms of identifying generally the landscape, and I think if it's important to the debate, then we should be asking Albertans' opinions on it. So I would be supporting the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Other questions? Other comments? Jack Ady, Pearl Calahasen.

MR. ADY: I'd just like to get back in with an addendum to why not. I'm not suggesting that we go on for two or three more days to discuss this. Certainly if we can't resolve this this morning or whatever time we have for this meeting, then it does become uneconomical to call another meeting or another two meetings. I would surely think that we should put forth some effort to try to find a way to reduce it since we're already met this morning. If that can't be done, if it comes out after a good brainstorming

session that in all reality that cannot be done to serve the purpose of the survey, then I suppose I would have to support the motion from a fiscal position as opposed to two more meetings at a cost which would amount to the \$2,500.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Well, we're not going to have two more meetings to solve this issue.

MR. ADY: Right. That was my assumption.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's for sure.

Okay. Fred, you've spoken once. Pearl wanted in.

MS CALAHASEN: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I haven't had an opportunity to go through the questionnaires; unfortunately I didn't get the information. However, one of my concerns is that we keep hearing that the people are tired of having to go through and listen to some of this information. I've been out in my constituency in the last few weeks, and I keep hearing that people want us to settle this as quickly as we can. The question keeps popping up about public input and the process to be used for the people to be involved. Yes, that's important; however, when we're looking at the reality of talking to people, whether it's on the phone or talking to them, asking them questions, length is so important. As a person who's been involved in dealing with polls, in my view 15 minutes is long to hold a person on-line on a phone; 20 minutes is almost like saying you're giving half of your day up; 25 minutes is losing them in terms of the credibility of the questions that you ask. Towards the end of the questioning you usually lose people, and they really don't care what you ask them at that point. I think 30 minutes sometimes is beyond even understanding what's coming through in the questions.

What I want to ask is: what length would this make this if we included all questions? Would it be 30 minutes? Would it be 28 minutes, 27 minutes, 25 minutes? Presently we had indicated a 20-minute line so that we can look at the reasonableness of having people on the phone for a good 20 minutes and being able to get some really good answers to that. So I just want to ask what possibilities exist of us getting some really good answers for questions if we go beyond the 20 minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's the key question. I just want to add as chairman that that was my concern originally. The 20 minutes was about the maximum you could expect people to really be held on the phone. That was my concern about this whole thing. Perhaps you could be precise on that when you respond.

MR. CAMERON: Angus Reid Group has done a number of surveys which have extended beyond 20 minutes, and depending upon the topic that is being discussed, the rate of refusals or the respondent fatigue varies. Just one example is we did a very extensive survey on Canadians' attitudes towards aboriginal issues. That survey was on average 37 minutes long. We had the lowest rate of refusal that we have seen in any one of the major surveys we've ever done. Now, that issue was very, very topical. At the time we did it, people were very concerned about it, so they really spent the time.

Our experience on constitutional issues has been that regardless of the length of the surveys, if the questions are direct and simple enough for people to understand, they are very interested in answering because it is a critical issue.

We pretested this questionnaire twice now in its various lengths. The most recent was this questionnaire before the committee right now. As I said, the questionnaire was 27 minutes in length. So

if the questionnaire was passed as is, it would be 27 minutes long. There was no noticeable respondent fatigue. We ask our interviewers who pretest those questionnaires to tell us whether or not people were getting very impatient by the end of the survey. That didn't happen during the pretesting. So according to our pretesting we think a 27-minute questionnaire would work. People would not be overly fatigued by answering a 27-minute questionnaire. From the pretest I would say that the length is not going to be a problem by extending it. We're not going to lose people as a result of extending it by seven minutes.

MS CALAHASEN: So we'll get credible answers or at least answers which they think about.

MR. CAMERON: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.
Fred, and then Stan.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Chairman, I just want to go back to the fact that subcommittee C met on October 22 to consider these questions of whether to increase the budget, reduce the sample size, or reduce the length of the questionnaire. We have a report back from that committee which moves towards the third option, being reduce the length of the questionnaire, and they gave some specifics to us. I'd like to ask the chairman of that committee if that committee had all-party representation on it, and was the decision of that committee unanimous?

MR. SCHUMACHER: Mr. Chairman, I guess our speaking order is fortuitous. We had some disagreement and discussion, but we did not have any disagreement on votes in the committee. As I recall, there wasn't really any real disagreement about the budget. We were all agreed that we shouldn't bust the budget, although I think we probably felt we didn't have any real jurisdiction to increase it in that subcommittee. I as chairman felt that there was general agreement that the questionnaire should be shortened. If I understood Bruce correctly, now instead of deleting three questions to get to the desired result, we could probably get by with deleting one question.

9:23

MR. CAMERON: Yes, with that costing \$2,500. Basically, that would be the additional cost.

MR. SCHUMACHER: In the discussion in the subcommittee when Michael was here, it was the understanding, I believe, of the subcommittee that if we reduced the sample, it would have an adverse effect on the regional representation, the regional aspects of the poll. So we did not want to reduce the sample for that reason.

I just want to express my personal opinion. If we have to decide, I would rather have 10 deleted, quite frankly, but if it's a trade-off, I'd be willing to accept the deletion of 2 on the basis that it's already been tested, and we do have some rather recent information on that.

MR. CHIVERS: Mr. Chairman, I just have a question for Mr. Schumacher arising from that committee. My understanding was that the committee unanimously agreed that question 8 could be deleted without doing the survey any harm.

MR. SCHUMACHER: That's true; that's true.

MR. CHIVERS: Well, it seems to me that that's the answer to the question. If question 8 can be deleted with no harm and we can deal with that one and get that one out of the way, then it seems to me that all we have to deal with is what the consequences are if we go ahead with 2 and 10.

MR. SCHUMACHER: Good suggestion, Barrie.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Eight is a bit of a duplication, is it not, of 6?

MR. CAMERON: Yeah. The original intent of question 8: it is really part of a package of 6, 7, and 8. Six deals with the issue of ultimate authority in a number of those areas between the federal government or the provincial government or shared; then question 7 deals with the issue of establishing standards in those areas; question 8 was the follow-up to deal with responsibility to manage and administer those services. It is not a total duplication of other questions. It's just really the extension of the authority, the ultimate authority, then the actual issue of establishing standards, and then finally managing and administering. That's just to clarify.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Does everybody understand that now? We're drifting around the motion in a sense here.

Yolande wanted in, and then Bob Hawkesworth.

MRS. GAGNON: I'd like some clarification for purposes of making a decision on Pam's motion. You tell us that we only need to eliminate one question now for the budget to be valid, so to speak, or to come within our budget, right?

MR. CAMERON: Actually, no, no. Basically, if we go with two out of these three questions, we will be slightly over. It will cost \$2,500 to go with two out of the three that are on here. Okay? It will cost \$2,500 in additional budget.

MRS. GAGNON: As far as elimination, does it have to be a question, or could it be a combination of options that would eliminate the extra cost?

MR. CAMERON: Yes. It's basically the time. What we have to do is eliminate two minutes. Now, we've broken it down so that you can look at it by question.

MR. ANDERSON: The total we have to eliminate is two minutes?

MR. CAMERON: Well, if you eliminated two minutes, it would still cost an additional \$2,500. Let me clarify for the committee what the options are really. I know it seems to be a little confusing right now. Basically, the questionnaire is over length, so if we go with this survey as is, we would be looking at increasing the cost by \$2,500. That's right. Just to clarify because I was unclear earlier. Now, if we decide to eliminate one of these questions, the cost would remain the same with the exception of the executive time that I had talked about previously. There would be no additional costs. So if question 2 or 8 or 10, any one of those, was eliminated, then we would be looking at simply the issue of additional executive time.

MR. ADY: That happens regardless at this juncture.

MR. CAMERON: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let me just make a suggestion.

MR. BRADLEY: So that's an increase to the budget of \$4,000 to \$5,000.

MRS. GAGNON: But we have no choice. It's there.

MR. CAMERON: It's basically due to the time spent.

MR. BRADLEY: So to get back on budget, we'd have to reduce it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'd have to reduce it considerably. May I just make this suggestion then? If the committee did agree unanimously to eliminate question 8 and to include the other two, we're only talking about an additional \$2,500. Perhaps we could go with that as a compromise position. How would the mover of the motion feel about that particular proposal?

MS BARRETT: Quite frankly, I understood that to be my motion, because I was talking about the additional \$2,500, and I also assumed that the only question that was unanimously agreed to by the subcommittee was the dropping of question 8. You will remember that when I first spoke, it was to Yolande's motion that we drop 2. I was arguing that 2 and 10 must not be dropped. If you guys want to save another \$2,500, folks, I'll help you; I'll find ways to save it. On a budget of \$1.3 million I'm talking about .2 percent. That was my assumption.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. That was not my understanding of the motion. If that's a clarification, how would members feel about adopting that? In effect, what we would have is that the budget would be increased by \$2,500 and question 8 would be dropped.

MR. ADY: Mr. Chairman, that's not what he said.

MR. CAMERON: Actually, that's true. What the chairman just said is true. I misspoke. [interjection] Exactly. No. It would still increase the budget if we eliminated one of these questions, because we've got an extra length. What the chairman just said was accurate in that it would cost \$2,500 if question 8 were eliminated and the rest of the survey stood as is.

MS BARRETT: Right.

MR. CAMERON: It would cost an additional \$2,500 in terms of the questionnaire length.

MR. BRADLEY: For the survey cost plus the executive time before. So you're looking at about \$7,500.

MS BARRETT: But that's already lost. That's already happened.

MR. BRADLEY: Not necessarily.

MS BARRETT: I'll tell you: 600 bucks a pop to bring these guys out for one day.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. All right. [interjections] Please. I want to try and get down to a reasonable way of handling this.

Now, it's been suggested that if question 8 were dropped, for an additional \$2,500 the balance of the survey could go. Would that be an agreeable position? Pam says that was her motion, although

we've had to, I think, rephrase it a little bit from its original moving. Now, I want you to speak to that particular proposal. Barrie.

MR. CHIVERS: Mr. Chairman, I support that particular proposal. I suggest that we conduct the procedural part of the meeting by having a straw vote on these so that we can see what the sense of the meeting is. Thirdly, I want to draw to the attention of the committee that according to the letter of October 28, if we delete or eliminate all three of these questions, we only lower our budget by a total of \$1,250. So we really are arguing over peanuts, and it seems to me that we will have spent more money at this meeting.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The purpose of this meeting is not solely to deal with this issue, remember.

MR. CHIVERS: I appreciate that fact. In any event, Mr. Chairman, I support it. I suggest that we have a straw vote.

MS CALAHASEN: That's the only reason we came in, eh?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, there's something else coming up next week which is extremely important to discuss.

Bob, Dennis, Jack. Please, let's speak in the order of our names being named.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Chairman, I just appreciate your taking all the information and comments that have been made in the last 10 minutes and summarizing them so succinctly. If the subcommittee's unanimous recommendation to us is to drop question 8, let's do that, and then for an extra \$2,500 we can put this whole matter to rest and put it in the field and get on with the rest of it. I appreciate your putting it succinctly, and I support it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dennis.

9:33

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Chairman, please excuse my voice. During the subcommittee meetings I argued that really all three of the questions are not necessary for us to have a comprehensive survey. Question 2, as was mentioned, has already been dealt with in basic form in a previous survey. Question 8, as we've discussed, is an addendum and probably not essential given questions 7 and 6 before it. Question 10 speaks to only about 40 of the 1,400 submissions we've had in one form or another with the committee. So I don't think elimination of any of those questions harms the credibility of the survey itself. I support the motion inasmuch as it removes question 8, but my personal preference would be to remove all three from the questionnaire and proceed somewhat under the budget. To me the topics raised are not essential. Nonetheless, we'll see how this vote goes. I think we have to reach a compromise; I agree with that. We can waste more money in talking than we can by adding significantly. But I don't believe we would lose anything by removing all three of the questions.

MR. ADY: My ground's been covered between what I found in the memo and the comments.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Does anybody else wish to speak to the motion as we understand it to be? All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is defeated.

Now, that being the case, we then have to look at doing something else. I'll need another motion in order to . . . We could go back to Yolande's if you wish, and we'll go through each of these.

Yes, Gary.

MR. SEVERTSON: I'd like to make a motion on what Dennis just said about eliminating all three.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. That's the motion.
People wishing to speak to that motion? Yolande.

MRS. GAGNON: I'd like a question clarified, maybe by Stan, who's chairman of the subcommittee. The recommendation from Angus Reid is that 2 and 8 be eliminated but 10 be retained. That would bring us back to the realm of spending only \$2,700 – right? – because two are gift questions. I mean, by eliminating all three, we're cutting more than we need to? That's my question.

MR. CAMERON: I'm sorry, I don't . . .

MRS. GAGNON: If we eliminate the three questions, as recommended by the subcommittee – and I must note that our member wasn't there, so when it's unanimous, it should be noted there was one party missing at the meeting – we're going too far, because Angus Reid is recommending that we eliminate only two questions and retain number 10. So my question is: if we eliminate all three, we're cutting further than we need to, right?

MR. CAMERON: Well, our written recommendation was that if the committee was considering cutting, in order of priority we would recommend question 10 be included simply because the issue has been debated considerably. That was the position stated in the letter we had sent to the committee. So if the committee was considering cutting any two questions, it would be our recommendation in order of priority that question 10 be retained and questions 2 and 8 be eliminated.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. We're clear on that. Gary's motion is that all three be deleted. We've all spoken one way or another to the issue. Are we ready for the question? All those in favour of the motion that all three questions be deleted? Opposed? The motion is carried.

Okay. We've dealt with that. Now we have to go on to deal with some specifics on the questionnaire. There was one raised, and I think we have to agree that has to be clarified. On the issue of the triple E Senate, item 19(j), that has to be "equal provincial representation." Are we all agreed with that?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any other specifics relative to this questionnaire? We want to get on with it.
Gary.

MR. SEVERTSON: Just back to section 7. I think the answer will be meaningless if you include social services and unemployment. If you strongly agree to provincial, does that mean you wouldn't want the federal government to look after unemployment? We've got two mixed in there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. You're making the point that we're blending in social services and income support programs, which are now provincial. Right?

MR. SEVERTSON: Yeah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Unemployment insurance, which is federal, should be separated.

MR. SEVERTSON: Yes. Because whatever answer we get doesn't mean anything.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Does anybody wish to comment on that? Could you divide that question?

MR. CAMERON: Yes. That would have the implication of basically expanding the questionnaire by two item banks, right?

MR. SEVERTSON: If you want to ask on three different programs, yes, it would be three questions, or we could just ask two of them.

MR. CAMERON: Yeah, right, if it was split out.

MR. SEVERTSON: Two of them, I guess: social services and income support and then unemployment insurance.

MR. CAMERON: So it would add to the length of the questionnaire by two items, which is a marginal cost. The committee has just decided to eliminate three questions, which lowered the budget by \$1,250. Any minor additions could be covered by that and the budget would be finalized.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. All right.
Yolande, and then Bob Hawkesworth.

MRS. GAGNON: I don't share Gary's concern. What you're discussing now, the fact that we're talking about some things that are federal and some that are provincial, is the status quo. The questionnaire is meant to find out what people want in the future. Do they want it shared? Do they want it exclusively provincial or exclusively federal? So it doesn't matter how it's constructed or what is listed, in my opinion.

MR. SEVERTSON: Can I answer that one?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Gary, and then Bob Hawkesworth.

MR. SEVERTSON: For discussion's sake, we say it's exclusive provincial power and check that off. Does that mean we want unemployment to move to provincial? Now, if you go the other way, exclusive federal powers, does that mean we want to take social services to federal? We've got two different programs that are delivered two different ways now. So when they give an answer, it doesn't clearly answer which program they want to move.

MRS. GAGNON: Most people will put shared and they'll have it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That still won't tell us anything.

MR. SEVERTSON: Then it should say they want to move unemployment to shared.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Bob Hawkesworth.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: The fact of the matter is that there are others as well. I mean, day care isn't mentioned and old age security isn't specifically identified. The fact of the matter is that in a broad item like that, you're going to have some mixing or else you'll have to almost take each item individually: where would you like day care, where would you like old age security, and where would you like unemployment insurance? I don't think that was the intention of the question. As I understood the intention of the question, it was to identify areas in a broad sense, and social services covers a lot of programs so it was lumped together. That's my understanding of why it was written the way it is. If you want to divide them into individual program areas, there are other programs you could also ask that question about. I just see it as a blanket kind of question intended to illustrate more than asking about specific programs.

MR. ROSTAD: That's true; it is an illustration. But you're mixing two things. You can say yes, make it all provincial. Are you saying you want only social services to be provincial, or do you want to take unemployment, which is now federal, and make it provincial, or vice versa if you want it to be federal? Do you want all social services to go? You're right. You could take each individual program and put it. I don't think Gary's saying that. In fact, delete unemployment, then, if you want to just leave it as provincial programs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The problem is that you're mixing two things. Why wouldn't it be easier to shorten it and say "social services and income support programs," period?

MR. SCHUMACHER: Yeah. Leave out the illustration. The illustration really goes against the general tone of the question, because social services are generally provincial. Why would we say "such as unemployment insurance," which is totally a federal thing?

MRS. GAGNON: But that's the status quo. We're looking here at what people want for the future. That's the point.

9:43

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think you're muddying the water by putting in illustrations such as unemployment insurance and welfare. It's really the question: how do you want social services and income support programs in the future, period? Rather than adding something to it, we just make the question a little shorter. Or do you think it's necessary in there so people understand what you're talking about?

MR. CAMERON: Actually, I think the comments about mixing of federal and provincial responsibilities is a valid one. If there is any confusion generated in the minds of the respondents about social services, which is currently provincial, and unemployment insurance and programs like that that are federal, that could really make analysis of that question very difficult. So I agree that the question, that statement, needs to be clarified.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, could we leave it up to the experts to clarify it rather than have a question designed by a committee? Okay?

Anything else anyone wishes to deal with specifically relative to the questionnaire? Okay; then we agree that it will go as amended? All right. Thank you very much.

MRS. GAGNON: A further question, please. When will this questionnaire be administered? What are your time lines from now on in?

MR. CAMERON: Well, now that we have approval of the questionnaire, I will get back to the committee by tomorrow to let the secretary know when we'll be fielding. I have to check with our field people, because obviously the field dates have been switched around a number of times. We expect to be in field within a week. I will outline the schedule to the committee in terms of release of results and preparation of the report once we finalize the field dates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Now in terms of the timetable, I just want to raise this question. It's a very important question. We will be having this special joint committee process in place next week here in Alberta. Would it be wise to have this questionnaire going at precisely the same time, or do you want to wait until that particular committee concludes its Alberta hearings? I don't think it should be delayed unduly, quite frankly, but if it could be held just after that committee leaves Alberta, we may have heightened public awareness.

MR. CAMERON: That's true. It's typically our experience that if a questionnaire is in field after something has been brought up in the public's mind through the press, you get much better informed opinions and people do state their views because they've been prompted by reminders in the press about it. So I think delaying until after the federal committee has left the province may be a wise idea.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Then following right on the heels of it would strike me as being a good time. Is that agreeable generally? Anybody on the committee have any adverse comments to that? Okay, can we agree to that?

MRS. GAGNON: Keeping that in mind then, if I might make one other comment or observation: since we would still be listening to people through a poll, I think it behooves the committee not to make any definite statements next week, because otherwise the polling is a total waste of time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. I think we have to get to how we're going to approach our meetings and discussions with the joint committee. I think that's part of what we're going to do. Can we then turn to that? Is there anything else on polling? Thank you very much. We'll be interested in the results.

Let's go on to the next item on the agenda, which is meeting of the joint parliamentary committee. We have an itinerary here. I'd like Gary to take us through it.

MR. POCOCK: The full schedule to date is that the joint parliamentary committee and the Alberta select committee would meet in the morning of the 12th for a joint session on the floor of the Assembly to begin at 10 o'clock and then break for lunch, which would be hosted by the province at the Glenora Club. Then later in the afternoon the two committees would again meet on the floor of the Assembly to meet with four interest groups. In the evening the federal committee is going to break up into six groups and visit - four in Edmonton and two local centres.

On the 13th the federal committee will break up into six groups and visit Fort McMurray, Fort Macleod, Lethbridge, Barrhead, Brooks, and Medicine Hat.

The following day on the 14th the committee will be breaking into six groups in Calgary and area and convening later in the afternoon for a wrap-up session. The idea is that a spokesperson from each of the subgroups that visited the regional centres at a preliminary session in Calgary would report to the wrap-up.

If members of the Alberta select committee wish to travel and attend some of the sessions on the 12th, 13th, or 14th, could you advise us as soon as possible so we can make the appropriate travel arrangements? We are currently looking into the availability of some Alberta government aircraft to help facilitate in such a short period of time the various travel arrangements that need to be made.

Just to return to the 12th, a suggestion in terms of the agenda. I spoke to the Clerk. They did not have a formal agenda in the past when they met with Prince Edward Island and Ontario and Manitoba. It was more of a free-flowing discussion between the committee members. Both seating arrangements would be a mixture on both sides of the House. Since Alberta has a 16-member committee, the suggestion would be eight on either side of the House followed with federal committee members seated around.

I think that's about it, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. In terms of availability of members of our select committee, how many of you are not going to be able to participate on the first day, which would be the one held here? Fred Bradley. All the rest of you, then, will be here next Tuesday morning for participation with the federal joint parliamentary committee in the Chamber next door. Okay.

What about the following two days? Who will not be able to be part of the process?

MR. SCHUMACHER: Let's do it by day.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Wednesday. That's a very difficult day.

MR. ANDERSON: I could maybe for the morning, Jim, but I have to be in Calgary for the afternoon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Who is going to be available?

MR. SCHUMACHER: But you're not in any centre in the morning, Dennis.

MR. ANDERSON: That's what I'm worried about.

MR. ADY: It's too far out. I could go in the morning too, but at 3 o'clock I have to be back here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. That makes it difficult, but some members will be able to participate with them.

Thursday. Who will not be able to be in attendance in Calgary? Well, we have a better attendance there. Okay.

We will advise members of the Legislature whose constituencies will be visited that they will be invited to participate. I think that was to be done, and that, of course, would mean everybody in Calgary, likewise in Edmonton. That would involve more members of the opposition parties in Edmonton in the evening of the 12th. I trust your caucuses will be notified, and we will do the same with the government members' caucus.

Bob.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Just on the question about the 14th in Calgary, it's very sketchy where people in Calgary will be going and that sort of thing arriving with the party. Is there any sense of when the blanks will be filled in and we'll have a clear idea?

Just one thing: this Calgary northwest team looks to me like it's going to have a . . . Isn't that more a southwest rather than a northwest?

9:53

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, there's a Calgary northwest, Calgary north, southwest.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Wise Wood, Central Memorial, Scarlett.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Centre southeast, Okotoks, Airdrie.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Yeah. I think it's just mislabeled there.

I'm just saying, Mr. Chairman, that there are a lot of blanks here, and I'm just wondering if we have any sense of when we'll get a more detailed itinerary.

MR. POCKOCK: It's being organized by a federal organizing committee. It's difficult for me to anticipate when those blanks will be filled in. I am in daily contact with them, so as soon as we can get something that's more firm, I'll ensure that all committee members receive a copy.

MRS. GAGNON: I think the point is – like Wise Wood is down in the south, that kind of thing.

AN HON. MEMBER: Where's Scarlett?

MRS. GAGNON: E.P. Scarlett? I'm not sure. Where's Scarlett?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dennis, where's E.P. Scarlett? That's in your constituency, isn't it?

MR. ANDERSON: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, anyway, we'll get that information out as soon as possible. There is a short time frame here, obviously. That's pretty sketchy, isn't it? For example, in Okotoks we would notify the MLA for Highwood; in Airdrie we'd notify the MLA for Three Hills.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Another question, Mr. Chairman. Has there been any sense yet from the federal committee whether this is their last, their one and only visit to Alberta, or is there going to be any other opportunity? Again, from the news reports from Manitoba the suggestions seem to be that if some of the party leaders want to make presentations, they'd have to go to Ottawa; at least that was in the news report today. So I'm just wondering if we have some sense that this committee is making one tour to each province and that will be it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In discussing the matter with the member of the parliamentary committee on the weekend, I was told that there's a very good chance that they will return to Alberta before they submit their final report. As far as the detail on that, I haven't got it, but there's a very good chance that we'll get another shot after their return here.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: I suppose we don't know the answer to this question either, but we were going to leave it up to them to

decide who the four groups would be that we would hear in the afternoon of the 12th. I don't know whether an announcement has been made yet which four groups those would be.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. Have you heard, Garry?

MR. POCKOCK: No, I haven't heard who it would be, but it would be the federal committee making that decision.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think we agreed on that last time: that we would not try and set the agenda as to who they should hear.
Yes, Yolande.

MRS. GAGNON: Will it be jointly chaired by yourself and their two co-Chairs?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's what I understand. I'll get down to some more details on that.

MRS. GAGNON: And in the morning it is strictly the two committees, no members of the public?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's correct. Well, they'd be there as observers but not participants.

MRS. GAGNON: As an audience. Okay.

My concern is that we find some way of assuring that each member of both committees gets a few minutes to have their say. I don't know if we have to formalize that, but just that that be an understanding that no one can hog the floor for 10 minutes and then that's eliminating 10 people from having their two minutes kind of thing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We ought to try and work that out with the chairman, but I certainly would agree with you that everybody should be given a chance to participate. It's not a long time for 40 people, and not everybody may want to, but everybody should have the opportunity.

It strikes me that this is a time for us to share with them what we've been hearing over the last several months, such things as Albertans' views on the triple E Senate. No doubt the Quebec members of their committee will want to talk to us a bit about what they feel about what is meant by a "distinct society." I don't think there's anybody who doesn't recognize that those two words are run up the flagpole for everybody to look at and to start to understand. That's the type of dialogue that I hope will take place.

MRS. GAGNON: Okay. One further follow-up question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Furthermore, there'll be a wrap-up, too, at the end of the three days in the McDougall Centre, which will allow for additional togetherness and input.

MRS. GAGNON: Right.

I'm concerned now about what happens next, and maybe I'm anticipating our agenda here under Other and Date of Next Meeting. It was a concern Sheldon expressed the last time we met, and I'm expressing it on his behalf. How would we input the federal committee other than this opportunity? You say there may be another opportunity? Will we have our report prepared by then? At the next meeting would we determine how to structure

our report according to common stance and disagreements and that kind of thing?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think that immediately following this meeting with the federal group we will have to meet again and start putting a structure to our report. That would clearly be a matter which is going to take some time and will probably involve a full day or so in which we are going to have to sit down and collectively think through how our report is going to be structured without starting the detailed writing on it, but that, I think, will have to follow on this.

There is one other element here, and that is the joint provincial committees meeting. As you know, Premier Harcourt, designate - I guess today is the day that their cabinet will be sworn in in British Columbia, and the Premier will also act as minister of intergovernmental affairs, which I assume means that he will accept the constitutional responsibility of that government. He is chairman of the Premiers' Conference for this year and will have to make a decision as to how to carry out that mandate that was given to British Columbia at the Premiers' Conference in Whistler. There's obviously going to be some uncertainty there, but I think that before the end of the year that group will collect together, or maybe earlier in the new year depending on how his timetable is. Then when that group gets together, it would certainly be helpful for us, if we don't have our report written in final detail, to have the general principles in position to discuss with our counterparts from other provinces.

MRS. GAGNON: I think you've answered my question. It was basically: what is our time line for some type of interim report?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think that's what we're looking at. We're operating in a sort of fluid situation, but things are shaping up. I don't know Premier Harcourt - maybe some of you gentlemen who know him better can help me out on this - but I gather he has a real interest in this issue, that he intends to take a leadership role on the part of the British Columbia government, and that it would be very unlikely that he would defer the calling of such a meeting or not go ahead with it. Can you help me out at all on that, Bob or Barrie? Do you have any reading on that?

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Pam's waving her hand at the back.

10:03

MS BARRETT: I can tell you that the New Democrats from each province are meeting in Montreal today, so we'll probably have a statement from them today.

MR. CHAIRMAN: From British Columbia?

MS BARRETT: Presumably it would be a group decision, yes, but I think so. B.C. has its representative there. It might be Mike himself, I don't know. They started meeting yesterday, and they'll conclude their meeting today.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He's being sworn in today as Premier.

MS BARRETT: Oh, well, then he's not going to be there, but their representative will be there. So I'm sure we'll hear from them by tomorrow on this question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Very well. As I say, I expect it will go ahead. Bob Rae was very enthusiastic about getting all groups together, and I would expect Roy Romanow because of his

particular interest in constitutional matters will also be playing a leadership role. I think he would want to participate in this type of event as well.

Okay. Anything else on this meeting with the joint parliamentary committee? I view it as a real opportunity for us to engage in some important discussions with our federal counterparts. When you've never done it before, you don't know what it's going to end up doing. So we'll give it a shot, and I expect all of us will be there with our thinking caps on.

I don't have anything under Other.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Just maybe following up from our discussion about the other provinces, I was in Toronto the weekend that the Ontario government sponsored a mini constituent assembly with invited representatives and members of their select committee. I'm not sure of the makeup, of all the people that came. I'm just wondering if we've had any reports back yet from them, or if there's been any information shared about how that was conducted: whether there were any conclusions reached at the end of it, or how generally it came off.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Garry Pocock attended as an observer on behalf of Alberta, so perhaps Garry could take a moment or two to tell us what he observed.

MR. POCOCK: I haven't had an opportunity to be able to write a report as yet. Approximately 180 people attended the conference, and they broke up into workshops on a number of different areas. The areas were on division of powers, the fundamental characteristics of Canada, on institutional reform, on aboriginal issues, and on the Charter of Rights. There were approximately 20 people in each workshop, and there was a facilitator that was hired to help facilitate those meetings. At the end of the day and a half they reported back to a preliminary session on each of the areas of consensus.

I don't want to take up the committee's time to go through each area now, and I will be writing a report on that fairly soon. I think all the participants thought it was a useful exercise. The one area of concern I heard expressed was that they had difficulty with the length of time because they were just starting, I think, to really get into a lot of the particular issue areas and to engage in their dialogue and found the time constraints there.

The one thing I found as an observer was that there was, I guess, a great diversity in terms of the knowledge and expertise that participants brought to the conference, and I think in many instances during my observations . . . I'll give you an example. On Senate reform I think they were missing a lot of the particular issues in relation to that matter, perhaps because in Ontario it hasn't been as large an issue as it has been here. They could have been a little more informed, I think, during the discussions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You will be putting in a tape, and we'll get a copy of your written comments.

Okay. If there's nothing else under Other, perhaps we could hold the date of the next meeting until after we've met. We'll try and seek out a date after the meeting with our federal counterparts. I would think that at the end of the day on the 14th, next Thursday, we will have a better idea of just how effective that process has been, and when we can get together again will follow shortly after that. I don't know if we want to wait until the poll results are available till we hold another meeting. That's a possibility too. We'll try and work out a calendar that's acceptable. I know all of us are busy people.

Can we adjourn then?

MR. SCHUMACHER: I move that we adjourn.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

[The committee adjourned at 10:09 a.m.]

