

[Chairman: Mr. Bogle]

[9:08 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll officially convene the meeting. Just to recap, we're scheduled to meet today until noon. Lunch is being served at that time, but the official portion of the meeting will conclude at noon. We're confirming November 5 from 4 to 6 p.m., and I've asked you to hold November 6 from 5 to 7 p.m. in the event that's needed. The purpose of those meetings for the 5th will be to review the text of our report. If there are any other last-minute changes that are proposed, I suppose they could be dealt with then too, but the primary purpose is to review the wording of the report.

MS BARRETT: Bob, it's 4 to 6 p.m. on Monday the 5th.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MS BARRETT: Not 3. Okay.

MR. BRUSEKER: I thought it was 3 to 6.

MR. CARDINAL: I have 3.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Robert?

MR. PRITCHARD: I thought it was 4 to 6.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you comfortable with 3? If you're comfortable with 3, let's make it 3 to 6. If we don't need the time, we can always adjourn early.

MRS. BLACK: Maybe we could make it 3 to 5:30. There are some of us who have to get back.

MR. DAY: No; 5:42.

MS BARRETT: Five forty-seven or bust.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. It's 3 to 6, and we may adjourn early if need be, and the following day we're reserving 5 to 7 with dinner included.

MR. DAY: Sorry, Tuesday is at 5, right, Bob?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah, 5. All right?

All right. Now then, if we can back up to our agenda, we had completed the motion dealing with the makeup of the commission when we dealt with the motion dealing with the percentage variation formula. Two members of the committee had indicated that they may be bringing forward amendments today. I'm wondering if you'd like to do that at this time, or would you rather proceed with the other major items and come back to item 3 later today? The Chair is in the hands of the committee.

MS BARRETT: I prefer to deal with the amendments and see what we've got.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You're comfortable with that? All right, then, I'll ask Mike: have you've got yours?

MR. CARDINAL: Yeah; I'll maybe circulate that. It's minor.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Mike, you had indicated this is an amendment to further expand the definition of the multi-municipal constituency.

MR. CARDINAL: Yeah, right. It explains it on top there. There are five points on the amendment. Sparsity and density of population is one; number 2, community interests, including Indian reservations, Metis settlements, special areas, and improvement districts. Item 3 is number of municipalities, school boards, hospital boards, et cetera. Number 4 is geographical features including the existing road system, and the fifth item is understandable, clean boundaries.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. The motion is put forward. Discussion on the amendment? Yes.

MS BARRETT: I don't understand why you're advancing this. You're not calling for these to be exceptions to any rule, right?

MR. CARDINAL: Not really, no.

MS BARRETT: Is it your intent that this would be written in the legislation?

MR. CARDINAL: Yes, because one of the areas we have to make sure we have in any variance we identify here is that we should have some form of rationale behind it. I'd think that when we know that this will automatically be considered, we'd be foolish not to put it into legislation. Looking at other jurisdictions, everybody keeps going back to say, "There has to be some rationale for what you're doing." I feel when you review this - we have to have some form of rationale. Now, you know, if somebody has additional issues you'd like to add on to it, of course you can amend my amendment.

MS BARRETT: No, no, I don't want to do that.

MR. CARDINAL: It's very brief and basic.

MS BARRETT: Well, I'll tell you, what occurs to me is that this is the sort of thing that used to be used in the old Act, which allowed for distinction between urban and rural ridings, right? This is the same concept.

Now, if you have a multimunicipal constituency, that's as straightforward as that needs to be. In establishing multi-municipal constituencies, we don't have any criteria at all. We know that all multimunicipal constituencies must not be exactly the same as those which are defined as the single-municipal constituencies. Boy, these are long words. Anyway, what you've got here is something like a draft of exceptions to a rule. There are no exceptions or inclusions to a rule in defining multi-municipal constituencies except that they shall not be the ones that are cited as single-municipal constituencies. If what you're trying to get at is that the commission should take the following factors into account, then why does it have to be like this only in establishing multimunicipal constituencies? For example, "community interests": well, even within single-municipal constituencies you may want to take into account community interests. You might want to take into account geographical features, including rivers, for example. "Understandable, clean boundaries": like a freeway that cuts through a city. You see what I'm saying? If you want to advance it, why don't you

advance it as something that the commission is allowed to take into account in every instance it wants to?

MR. CARDINAL: Well, I think, Pam, if you want to make a motion on that basis, you have every opportunity to do so, but I feel that anywhere there's a variance, we should have some rationale. I think Pat's motion fell short of that, and that's why I'm bringing this forward.

MS BARRETT: Look, I'm not fighting with you; I'm just trying to get some sense out of this. Let me ask you this: if you advance this and this passes this way, does it mean that the commission cannot take into account community of interests in a single-municipal division?

MR. CARDINAL: No, no.

MS BARRETT: Okay. Then you get my point. Do you understand? If you want this – I don't care if we have it or not – it should be that "the commission may take into account under any circumstances the following."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair understood from yesterday's discussion that Mike felt that the definition of multimunicipality constituency needed some broadening, and I did not take that this was meant to in any way put the commission in a straitjacket. It's further rationale for the difference between the two.

MS BARRETT: Well, just a second. It says "other factors to be considered," not "which may be considered." You've got to be really careful with the language.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, we're not writing the legislation. What we're doing is presenting recommendations to the Assembly.

MS BARRETT: Even still, my interpretation of this – and I'll bet you can phone a lot of people who are sophisticated draftsmen and they will say the same thing. "Other factors to" means you have to take them into account, and when you cite specifically multimunicipal constituencies, that means the exclusion of single-municipal constituencies. I think it's a problem.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, would you like to amend the motion? Would you accept a friendly amendment?

MR. CARDINAL: Oh, sure, no problem. If it's going to make the system better, I don't mind. That's what I'm here for, to make sure we have a good system for the whole province, and I don't mind an amendment.

MR. SIGURDSON: Where is the amendment being placed in the motion?

MS BARRETT: Up here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Under multimunicipality constituency, under the definition.

MS BARRETT: "... defined wherein the constituency includes two or more municipalities." It should read "and the commission may consider other factors including ..."

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, will you accept that as a friendly amendment?

MR. CARDINAL: I'll accept that, sure.

MS BARRETT: Actually, what the proper wording would be would be a separate paragraph after the reference to "multi." "In establishing constituencies, the commission may consider the following."

MR. CARDINAL: Yeah, sure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Then list the five points?

MR. CARDINAL: Yeah, no problem.

MS BARRETT: Uh huh.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. That's accepted as a friendly amendment. Any further debate on the friendly subamendment, or amendment to the amendment?

MR. SIGURDSON: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are we ready for the question? All in favour? Opposed? Would you like that recorded? All right. Carried.

All right. Now we're back dealing with the amendment as amended. Any further debate? Ready for the question?

MS BARRETT: Sure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question's called. All in favour? Opposed? Would you like that recorded?

MR. BRUSEKER: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let the record show it's carried.

It's now understood that we have added an amended amendment to the definition of the multimunicipal constituency.

MS BARRETT: No; it's not to multi. Remember, my sub-amendment is a separate paragraph. "In establishing constituencies, the commission may take into account the following ..."

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's further clarification.

MS BARRETT: Yeah. It doesn't just redefine "multi"; it sets out the parameters for the commission, period.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. The committee's comfortable with that? All right. Are there any further amendments to put forward at this time? We're dealing with the percentage variation formula.

MR. DAY: I have one. In terms of yesterday we were talking about looking at multimunicipal constituencies and we were trying to find a way to craft the words that would embrace all of our concerns. I think we can do it where it says "other cities and smaller centres." If we were to add "may include parts of Edmonton, Calgary, or any other single-municipal constituency," I think that would handle our concerns that we were trying to deal with yesterday. It's just really a clarification. "May include

parts of Edmonton, Calgary, or any other single-municipal constituency"; in other words, it could include . . .

MR. BRUSEKER: So you're saying delete where it says "other cities and smaller centres" and . . .

MR. DAY: I have no problem with that staying there, but that may be redundant now too.

MR. BRUSEKER: Can you just read it once again, please.

MR. DAY: Okay. Actually, it could be parentheses. After "other cities and smaller centres," "may include parts of Edmonton, Calgary, or any other single-municipal constituency."

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is to give clarification to when we're primarily speaking of acreages, undeveloped portions of cities.

MR. DAY: Right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Questions for clarification on the amendment? Yes, Tom.

MR. SIGURDSON: I understand the intent, but I'm not sure that that's the language. I don't know how you can include part of a single-municipal constituency.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, under the existing legislation the only two municipalities that are excluded are Edmonton and Calgary. So the commission had the opportunity to include parts of Lethbridge or Medicine Hat in ridings adjacent to the cities. The commission chose not to, and they may choose not to under this scenario. My understanding was that the intent of the motion was to clarify that it was a factor the commission could look at, and under that scenario you could see five MLAs as part-time Edmonton MLAs, looking at the five boundaries that come up against the city or, in the case of Calgary, four.

MS BARRETT: Did anybody get a chance to talk to a draftsman about this? I think I want some clarification about something. When we finish doing this today and send it off for writing, is somebody going to also take these items and put them into legislative form for a Bill for us to look at?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would you like that done?

MS BARRETT: Oh, yeah. It's really important.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Well, then I think Bob should contact Peter Pagano.

MS BARRETT: Yeah; that's right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It should be through Peter Pagano, again keeping the embargo on our report in place.

MS BARRETT: The other thing that would be really important in doing that would be to show Peter - or whoever is working on this draft, because it might not be him; they've got a whole team of them there - the *Hansard* from yesterday and today, because a lot of intent is made clear in the discussion. Then I'm not so worried about exact wording, because they're professionals. They'll find a way to put it into form.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let's do that, and we'll deal with any feedback we receive from them on the 5th.

MRS. BLACK: Who is Peter Pagano?

MS BARRETT: Just for clarification, she said, "Who is Peter Pagano?" He's the chief draftsman in the Attorney General's department.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For legislation.

MS BARRETT: Called Leg. Counsel?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

I think that's an excellent point, Pam.

MR. PRITCHARD: Is he a lawyer?

MS BARRETT: Oh, yeah. They're all lawyers. They've got a whole bunch of them, I think.

MR. BRUSEKER: We won't hold that against them.

MS BARRETT: I won't start telling lawyer jokes. No. Not me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As the mover of the amendment slipped out to return a call, we'll take a short three and a half minute break until he returns.

MS BARRETT: I move 3.37 minutes.

[The committee adjourned from 9:25 a.m. to 9:29 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll reconvene. We're dealing with the amendment put forward by Stock. Any further discussion on the amendment?

MS BARRETT: My support for the amendment is provisional, I suppose, because of the discussion we had a minute ago about the need to see this in legal form after it's been interpreted. So that's my only concern, but I certainly support that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah, okay. But is the intent clear to everyone?

MS BARRETT: Yeah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right.

MR. DAY: I'm comfortable with that provision.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're ready for the question?

MS BARRETT: Uh huh.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question's been called. All in favour? Opposed? Frank, would you like your vote recorded?

MR. BRUSEKER: No; just that it's not unanimous.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right.

MR. SIGURDSON: Mr. Chairman, I, too, want to move an amendment. It's nothing to be added; it's something to be

deleted in two spots. The first line, "percentage variation formula between ridings plus or minus 25%," deleting the following words: "with extreme criteria to minus 50%." Then the second part is to delete everything after the word "constituencies" where we have "total of 40 constituencies." So the deletion would be: "At least 95% of 83 to meet plus or minus 25% criteria" and everything thereafter. The reason is rather straightforward. I think the percentage variation between ridings of plus or minus 25 percent is sufficient enough to accommodate all constituencies. I don't think we need the criteria to go up to 50 percent at all, and the 40 constituencies to be split up amongst the rest of the province I think is more than ample.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. I think the intent of the motion is quite clear.

MR. BRUSEKER: Could I just . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, go ahead, Frank.

MR. BRUSEKER: I'd just like to support that, and I think it's a very reasonable amendment. I guess it goes back to the comments I made yesterday. Having identified 43 single-municipal constituencies and 40 multimunicipal constituencies, we're going to see most of those constituencies residing at the extremes of the plus or minus 25 percent already. I think that variation of some 14,000 persons using the '86 census data is adequate. I don't see the need for extreme criteria to minus 50 percent. So I support Tom's motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
Pam?

MS BARRETT: I did a calculation last night when I was looking at this. For example, let's just use round figures. Let's say an average constituency is supposed to be a thousand people; 25 percent below that is 750, and 25 percent above that is 1,250. If you take the difference - that is, 500 - and compare that to the low range of 750, what you have, in fact, is the potential variation of 66.6 percent. I guess I can't see any reason that we would ever need to go beyond a real total variation of 66 percent. So I support the amendment as well.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Anyone else? Stock?

MR. DAY: Yeah. I'd like actually about two minutes just to crunch some of these numbers that Pam has just brought up before I feel comfortable voting for or against this. Could we just have a two-minute number-crunching break?

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right.

[The committee adjourned from 9:33 a.m. to 9:41 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're dealing with the amendment which would eliminate "extreme criteria to minus 50 percent" and everything in the main motion after the words "total of 40 constituencies," which includes the definition of factors to be considered under the criteria for special consideration.

MR. DAY: I want to take just another look at it because I was a bit surprised. I thought we had some informal - albeit I realize it was informal - consensus on this point. As long as we kept it to no more than 5 percent of the ridings, I thought we

had the feeling that there could be the possibility of extreme criteria. McLachlin does speak to that issue, a number of jurisdictions across Canada allow for it, and for all those reasons I thought at the time we looked at it that we should have it also here in Alberta. In looking at the numbers, I still feel we can do that given the fact that like B.C. it may come to a place where it wouldn't have to be activated. B.C. has the allowance for it; they haven't had to activate it. The commission may or may not activate that. But I think that at least as long as it's no more than 5 percent of the ridings, we do need that variance. I think it is supported by McLachlin, and just for the sake of Albertans caught in an extreme crunch, I think we should leave that in. So I would be opposed to the amendment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Anyone else?

MR. CARDINAL: Yeah. I'd also like to speak against the amendment. I feel there are too many regional disparities across the province at this time to eliminate the variance that we're proposing. Once we eliminate the disparities then I think some day we can move closer to the average and probably people would be very happy.

Again looking at the Constitution Act of 1982, part III, Equalization and Regional Disparities, indicates that

. . . the government of Canada and provincial governments, are committed to

(a) promoting equal opportunities for the well-being of Canadians;

(b) furthering economic development to reduce disparity in opportunities; and

(c) providing essential public services of reasonable quality to all Canadians.

I think with that we should move forward in allowing greater variances until we resolve the regional disparities that exist, and some day I hope that happens.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any further comment?

MRS. BLACK: I'd like to just comment, Mr. Chairman, since this is my motion that's being amended. The rationale behind the extreme criteria for a variance being allowed up to 50 percent was something we heard from the people. We looked at that and we assessed it. We added up the numbers for the times that we heard these things, and almost in all 39 hearings people said, "Yes, a variance of 25 percent is what's been tested, tried and true, but there are other factors that have to be considered." We listed those other factors in the original motion. Those were things that came up time and time again.

I think you have to listen to the people. We were a committee that went out and sat at 39 public hearings. I think you have to take into account what the people told us, and they told us that there were problems with the size of constituencies, there were problems with the transportation, there were problems with special interests in their communities. Those things were all items that were identified by the people of this province. This is in response to that. We've tightened it up by allowing only 5 percent to fall into that category. Where other jurisdictions have gone as high as 10 or 15 percent, we've only allowed 5 percent to waiver from the 25 percent variance. But this is in response to what the people said and what the people requested: that we look at other factors; we don't just look at population. I really think we have to listen to the people, and that's why it's in this motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Tom.

MR. SIGURDSON: I'll close debate. Indeed there was some understanding that we might support up to 5 percent of the constituencies falling outside plus or minus 25 percent. That was contingent upon the fact of all other 79 constituencies moving closer to the middle. We've not done that. In fact, what we've done is taken 36 constituencies, all of which are in Edmonton and Calgary, and put them at the near end of the extreme on the plus side, at 17 or 18 percent.

MR. BRUSEKER: Using '86 data.

MR. SIGURDSON: Using '86 data; thank you.

So what we've done is said, well, there are 40 constituencies that are outside that are now falling into multimunicipal constituencies; they will by their very nature probably be at the mean or lower. The single-municipality constituencies other than for the cities of Calgary, Edmonton, and Fort McMurray will probably be at the mean, whereas those that I've just named will probably be well above the mean. So I don't see any need for those up to four constituencies having any further permitted variance to the extreme of minus 50 percent.

To deal quickly with the question of disparity, I, too, look forward to the day that we end some of the disparity that's in our province, and I can think of some inner-city ridings that are going to need some very special consideration. I don't know, quite frankly, given the number here, that we're going to be able to deal with the problems that some of the inner-city ridings face that are unique to those ridings. I don't see how it's going to be done. Anyway, I move my motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Tom.

Are you ready for the question?

MS BARRETT: Uh huh.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All in favour of the amendment? Opposed to the amendment? Let the record show it was a tie vote. The chairman votes against the amendment.

MR. SIGURDSON: Could it be recorded, please?

MR. CHAIRMAN: To be recorded: those supporting the motion were the mover, Tom; Pam; and Frank. Those opposed were Pat, Stockwell, and Mike, and the chairman voted against it as well.

Are there any other amendments to item 3, the percentage variation formula? All right.

Yesterday we dealt with number 1, the number of seats; number 2, the population; and number 4, the makeup of the commission. We've dealt with some amendments today on item 3, percentage variation formula. Are we now ready to move on to item 5, which is instructions to the commission? Yes, Stock.

MR. DAY: I'd like to make a motion - I have something typed out here - that the commission be guided by the legislation which will follow the report.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MR. DAY: I think it's as simple as that. I think I might have handed some out already yesterday. Here we go.

MS BARRETT: Did you say you handed something out?

MR. DAY: I couldn't remember if I did. But basically it's as simple as that: the motion is that instructions to the commission are that they take their direction through the legislation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right.

MR. DAY: It may seem just restating the obvious, but it reflects some remarks by our Chief Electoral Officer in terms of his feeling that a commission would feel best having a clear idea of what its direction should be. It minimizes the chance for interpretation and things like that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's been appropriately brought to my attention that we really should have had a formal vote on the percentage variation formula with the approved amendments. There is another motion on the floor right now. Could you withdraw it?

MR. DAY: I'll withdraw it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. The Chair apologizes to the committee for that oversight.

Could we go back to the amended motion dealing with percentage variation formula? Are we ready for the question?

MS BARRETT: Sure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is called. All in favour of the motion as amended? Opposed to the motion as amended? Let the record show it's a tie vote; let the record show the chairman votes in favour of the motion. Would you like it recorded?

HON. MEMBERS: Yes, please.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Those in favour of the motion, then, are Stockwell, Mike, and Pat. Those opposed were Pam, Tom, and Frank. The chairman voted in favour, so the motion as amended passed.

Now, if you would re-enter your motion on the books, please.

MR. DAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to move that the commission receive its direction through the legislation. I'll try and keep it as simple as that.

MRS. BLACK: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question's been called. All in favour? Let the record show it's carried unanimously.

Number 6, length of time between redistribution. Mike?

MR. CARDINAL: I'd like to make a motion that the length of time between redistribution be after every second election but not less than every eight years.

MS BARRETT: I'd like to move to amend that motion to strike the reference to "not less than every eight years" and simply leave it as "after every second election," the reason being that the percentage variation that has just been approved by this committee is already, as far as I can see, seriously out of whack with reality, given the demographics, given the fact that 51 percent of the population doesn't carry even 50 percent of the seats. In fact what is it? Forty-two percent?

MR. BRUSEKER: Forty-three, I believe.

MS BARRETT: Forty-three percent of the seats.

We're dealing with old data; that is, census data. I mean, we just have no power to get it any faster. If ever there is to be a move towards voter equality – and I'm not talking in absolute terms; I said "towards" – then you just have to be able to do your redrawing more frequently. Considering especially that right now what we're talking about is 1986 data being used – and we're in 1990 – at least until 1998, that is a very serious problem that would result in massive shifts in the 1998 redistribution, which would indicate that things had become grossly unfair.

I can't support the motion the way it is, and I move my amendment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, the amendment is on the table. Does anyone else wish to speak to the amendment? Yes, Stock.

MR. DAY: Well, again we're trotting out the old arguments here, Pam with hers, and mine – not old; I see them as new and refreshing. That item's up for debate too, I understand.

Pam correctly identified that we are increasingly moving to what some people may determine to be voter equality if you're looking at heading to the zero or to the mean, which McLachlin does not require us to do, but we are doing that regardless. Even Calgary and Edmonton, looking at the present formula, will probably average out somewhere around 17 percent off the mean, which is comfortably below 25. As we already indicated yesterday – and the remarks can be seen in *Hansard* – their own percentage is increasing all the time relative to number of seats.

I believe we need the eight-year provision to protect against the possibility – and I would hope that it would be extremely remote – of a situation, for instance, which Manitoba found itself in or even which we found ourselves in federally in '79 and '80, where we had minority governments. If you have a series of minority governments, you're going to have rises and falls in fairly rapid succession with the accompanying fairly prohibitive costs in terms of what's involved in doing an enumeration. We don't want to become like a banana republic situation that's in other countries, where you're dealing with these things every 18 months or so. I think it's reasonable. A lot of other provinces state 10 years. Myself, I wouldn't have had any problem with 10 years. Certainly we see demographic fluctuations, but those flow both ways or, in some parts of the province, stay relatively static. It's not a perfect system. I think it's a compromise moving from 10 to eight. I just think it's important that we have the eight-year thing, one of the main reasons being protection against that minority government scenario.

MS BARRETT: Stock, would you just clarify one thing? When you were saying moving from 10 to eight, you don't mean that in the Alberta context, because you know there's no reference to years in current legislation.

MR. DAY: Right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Anyone else speaking to the amendment? Are you ready for the question?

MS BARRETT: Sure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right. The question's been called. All in favour of the amendment? Opposed to the amendment? A tie

vote. Let the record show that the chairman votes against the amendment.

Would you like it recorded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Please.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Those in favour of the amendment were Pam, Tom, and Frank. Those opposed were Mike, Stock, and Pat, and the chairman voted against as well.

So now back to the main motion. Yes, Frank.

MR. BRUSEKER: For the record I'd like to propose another amendment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right.

MR. BRUSEKER: The motion – and I'll just follow Mike's statement on it – is: the length of time between redistribution is to be after every second election but not less than every eight years. I would like to change it to simply say: after every election.

I've heard Stock speak eloquently about the costs, and . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Can we pause for a moment? What you would be doing is substantially changing the intent of the motion. You're saying that you would want to see redistribution after every election?

MR. BRUSEKER: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair has great difficulty accepting that as an amendment as the motion reads "after every second election but not less than every eight years." The Chair accepted the amendment by Pam because it struck out part of the motion but did not completely gut the motion. As I read your amendment, it does so, and therefore the Chair must rule it out of order.

MR. BRUSEKER: Speaking to the motion, since I have to accept your ruling, I would speak against the motion. I recognize what Stockwell and Pat said earlier about the cost of enumerations, and clearly that is a concern. But it's been said by wiser minds than mine that democracy isn't perfect but it's the best we've got, and I think we have to be prepared to pay the price for that. It wasn't too many years ago when people were prepared to pay with their lives to get out of East Germany into West Germany because they perceived there was a better system on the other side, and if those people thought that it would have taken 4 and a half million dollars to get out, I'm sure they would have sooner paid 4 and a half million dollars than lose their lives to go across no-man's-land to get from East Germany to West Germany. So I think the 4 and a half million dollars is, quite frankly, a red herring.

I think we're dealing here with old data – you're going to be using 1986 data – and we're not going to be able to change that until 1998 according to this motion. By then the data will be 14 years old, and, contrary to what Stockwell has said, that will be the longest period of redistribution, the oldest data that we will have in the country. We will be working with the oldest data bar no other jurisdiction.

A cost of 4 and a half million dollars: I have no problem with that kind of expenditure. If we simply cut back on grants to businesses that are not appropriate, we can certainly find 4 and a half million dollars. I think we have to be prepared to accept

the fact that democracy costs money. I mean, the fact that we have a Legislature with 83 members in it, that we're prepared to support a Legislature with that number of people in it and the costs of maintaining those salaries and office staff and transportation allowances and so on, says that we're prepared to pay that cost. If we're prepared to pay that kind of cost, I think we should be prepared to pay the kind of cost it needs for more frequent redistribution. So I would speak against the motion as proposed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. We're now speaking to the motion.

MRS. BLACK: Just for clarification, Mr. Chairman, I think that information is inaccurate. New Brunswick had their last commission in 1974, so that is not accurate information, Frank.

MS BARRETT: Oh, but there's a difference, Pat, between a commission and the data. He's talking about the data.

MR. BRUSEKER: I'm talking about the data.

MRS. BLACK: Well, their last commission sat in '74. What data would they be using?

MS BARRETT: I think he's right. They have the right to sit and review. I mean, they activate themselves if there's a need. You see what I'm saying? This prevents that activation, so I think he's right.

MRS. BLACK: Well, I think the thing is skewed in the fact that there are some jurisdictions that go over the 10 years. In fact, in New Brunswick the last time their commission actually felt the need to sit was 1974.

MS BARRETT: Because their data obviously didn't change.

MRS. BLACK: Well, we don't know that. So I think that's misleading; therefore, I would call it inaccurate. That's just for clarification.

MR. BRUSEKER: We also have some jurisdictions that have no legislation to deal with it at all.

MRS. BLACK: That's right.

MR. BRUSEKER: But what we are proposing is legislation. When we just talked earlier on: what is passed here in motions, yesterday and today, is going to be cast into legislation. So comparing us to others that have no legislation or no set period is putting things in the light that you choose to put it. If you look at every other one, it says 10 years, six years, 10 years, et cetera. What we're going to see is that our data will be 14 years old before we have a redistribution again.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, go ahead, Tom.

MR. SIGURDSON: I think I have an amendment that will stand, Mr. Chairman, and that is that following the last word of Mike's motion: the Chief Electoral Officer shall report to the Legislature the number of seats that fall outside the permitted variance following the publication of every census.

The reason for this amendment is that the Legislature can

change the Act anytime it wants if it finds following the publication of the census that there is need for a commission to be struck. The Legislature can do that. If it's satisfied that 40 or 50 seats fall outside the permitted variance that we establish, then the Legislature will live with that decision. This allows for two elections to pass, eight years to pass, but it does include that the Chief Electoral Officer must report to the Legislature, and then the Legislature has to deal with it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Speaking to the amendment, Stock.

MR. DAY: Well, Tom's point was the one I wanted to make. The Legislature is always the servant of the people. If there was such a radical demographic change required following a Chief Electoral Officer's report and that was in the best interest of the people and the people were wanting that, regardless of the cost, then the true servants of the people, if that's how the legislators should see themselves, would then respond accordingly. But having the two elections and the eight-year provision protects against the legislation forcing you to go too frequently at a prohibitive cost.

Frank, I don't want to minimize the tragedy of eastern Europe, but frankly, to try and whip up an emotion on that point is off base. He said that people in eastern Europe would gladly pay 4 and a half million dollars to get to freedom, so we should be willing to pay 4 and a half million dollars to have an enumeration done on a more frequent basis. That's like the city of Edmonton saying, "Look, we need a tunnel going right across the town; it'll cost \$20 million, and people in Russia would gladly pay \$20 million for a tunnel to get out of Russia, so let's have a tunnel here." I just don't think . . .

MR. BRUSEKER: I'm talking about the democratic process.

MR. DAY: I don't think the reasoning is the same. However, for all the reasons stated, I think the people of Alberta would be well served with the motion as it stands: two elections; every eight years. And of course the Legislature is always subject to the cry of the people and the concern of the people.

MS BARRETT: Well, for the first time in a long time I don't know where you stand on the amendment, Stockwell, because you didn't actually talk about . . . Are you saying that we don't need the amendment? Is that what you're saying?

MR. DAY: No. I was speaking to the issue of why I support the . . .

MS BARRETT: The main motion.

MR. DAY: Right. Every second election; eight years.

MS BARRETT: Yeah. But what about Tom's amendment?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're on the amendment at the moment.

MR. DAY: I got carried away on Frank's idea.

MS BARRETT: You were using it as an excuse to talk.

MR. SIGURDSON: You were talking about tunnels, which have absolutely nothing to do with democracy. But that's okay.

MS BARRETT: Yeah. The reason I wanted in is because you talked about 4 and a half million dollars and enumeration. Keep in mind, folks, that we already have enumerations every two years. Okay? We're not talking about enumerations now. We're talking about how often you look at whether or not your ridings conform to a rule, not that I would call this much of a rule; 66 percent variation between one riding and another is just about no rule at all. But we're not talking about enumeration. Enumeration gets done anyway, unless you also propose to amend the legislation to prevent that from happening. Look out for the person who sponsors that motion. It won't be me. So we should be very clear about this: we are not talking about enumeration. In our current legislation, two years after an election enumeration occurs and every two years. That is a system that basically means that you can have relatively recent voter data for the purposes of identification and for the purposes of voting, nothing to do with redrawing the boundaries. So let's be very clear here. We're just talking about looking at the boundaries.

In that regard she says: I do support Tom's amendment.

MR. DAY: For clarification purposes, when I was saying enumeration, I was talking about the cost of setting up a commission and going through this whole scenario; I'm not talking about enumeration.

MS BARRETT: Yeah. All right.

MR. BRUSEKER: For clarity's sake, if I recall, Pat Ledgerwood last time I think said that the commission spent \$40,000, which is less than the salary of one MLA.

MS BARRETT: Yeah. The commission is cheap.

MRS. BLACK: He also said it was \$4 million, Frank.

MR. BRUSEKER: For enumeration.

MS BARRETT: Enumeration: \$3.9 million.

MR. BRUSEKER: We're talking redistribution.

MRS. BLACK: But we're not doing enumeration; we're doing the census data, which is different.

MS BARRETT: We're talking about looking at redrawing boundaries. It can be very cheap.

MR. BRUSEKER: Last time the commission to redraw the boundaries spent \$40,000; that's what it cost. Now, enumeration is a different process, and that's what costs \$4 million. The redrawing of the boundaries costs \$40,000. What you're saying, Stockwell, is that you're not prepared to spend \$40,000 to promote democracy. I can appreciate that you'd like to save that \$40,000.

MR. CARDINAL: Maybe we should have a coffee break.

[The committee adjourned from 10:08 a.m. to 10:21 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. We have an amendment. The amendment would require the Chief Electoral Officer to report

to the Assembly following the 1992 census.

MR. SIGURDSON: He reports on the number of seats that fall outside the permitted variance following the publication of every census.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Of the census, yes. All right. Everyone clear on the motion? Are we ready for the question?

MS BARRETT: Sure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All in favour? Opposed? Can we have another vote on that, please, to make sure I'm clear?

MRS. BLACK: Well, could I . . . He said after the '92 census.

MR. SIGURDSON: No, no.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, I gave an interpretation. It was too restrictive.

MR. SIGURDSON: The Chief Electoral Officer shall report to the Legislature the number of seats that fall outside the permitted variance following the publication of every census.

MRS. BLACK: Oh, okay.

MR. DAY: Run that by me one more time. I don't know why it's confusing.

MR. SIGURDSON: The Chief Electoral Officer shall report to the Legislature the number of seats that fall outside the permitted variance following the publication of every census.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So every five years, and there'd be a lag of a year. So in 1992, when the federal census figures based on the 1991 census are available, the Chief Electoral Officer would report in his annual report to the Assembly the number of ridings which fall outside of the plus/minus 25 percent variance.

MR. CARDINAL: Bob, I have a comment on that. Shouldn't that go under Other Recommendations, because it's really . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, no. It's an acceptable amendment. It's an amendment to the motion, so we're dealing with an amendment to the main motion.

MR. SIGURDSON: What it does, again for clarification, is that it keeps the eight-year time period, if it's not necessary to establish a commission, after every second election. But the Legislature would then have the information before it, and the Legislature would be able to determine whether or not they were going to establish something outside . . .

MR. CARDINAL: Could you run that by me again?

MR. SIGURDSON: Yeah. The Chief Electoral Officer shall report to the Legislature the number of seats that fall outside the permitted variance following the publication of every census.

MR. CARDINAL: Permitted variance?

MR. SIGURDSON: Yeah, permitted variance.

MR. CARDINAL: Okay. It's tied in, of course, with the former motion.

MR. SIGURDSON: Yes.

MR. DAY: For clarification, when enumeration is done now, what is published in terms of figures, if anything?

MR. SIGURDSON: The number per constituency.

MR. DAY: Of electors?

MS BARRETT: Eligible voters, yes.

MR. DAY: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The motion merely clarifies what the Chief Electoral Officer may do, in any event. We're moving to redistribution based on census rather than enumeration.

MR. DAY: Right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. And the motion directs – it says "shall" rather than "may."

MRS. BLACK: In supporting this amendment, I think the Chief Electoral Officer's job is to alert the Assembly to dramatic changes or the lack of dramatic changes. I think that's something we discussed when we were in camera, that that would be a given, a natural function that he would perform, to alert the Assembly to dramatic shifts either way. But if it's a continuation . . .

MR. SIGURDSON: This just makes it a requirement.

MR. BRUSEKER: I wonder, Tom, if you'd just consider a friendly amendment to your amendment. As I listened to you, all I heard you say was that he will report which ones. I would also like him to report the degree of variance. So if a constituency is 26 percent out or . . . All yours says is that he will tell us for constituencies that are outside, but I'd like to know which ones and how much.

MR. SIGURDSON: I think if a person is going to argue that, thereafter it's up to the individual member to do that work, quite frankly.

MS BARRETT: I think it's pretty clear.

MRS. BLACK: He would determine that when he made the statement.

MR. DAY: I think the subamendment would just murk the waters.

MS BARRETT: Yeah. I mean, I agree with you. Or you could say: and the extent to which . . .

MR. BRUSEKER: The intent is just as to how much beyond and how many.

MR. SIGURDSON: If I were to learn that there were 10 constituencies outside the permitted variance, I would be inclined to go and do the research myself and find out.

MR. BRUSEKER: But then we'd have perhaps 83 MLAs going out and doing that. If the Chief Electoral Officer is going to prepare a report saying that anyway, why should we multiply the amount of work?

MR. SIGURDSON: The likelihood is that you'd have three people doing it, one from each caucus, and probably a researcher.

MR. DAY: He wouldn't be able to bring that information forward unless he'd done the work, because somebody could say to him, "How do you know it's out?"

MS BARRETT: That's right. It would be columnized; it would be demonstrated.

MR. DAY: It would be clear.

MS BARRETT: I agree.

MR. DAY: I don't think we should start breaking it down and telling him what colour suit he's got to wear when he delivers the message. I appreciate what Frank's saying.

MS BARRETT: I agree, and if Stan Nelson has anything to do with it, it'd be green, or for Boomer, it'd be red.

MR. BRUSEKER: I'd like to put that in as a subamendment, then, to the amendment: that you report not only the constituencies but the degree of variance that they vary.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay; the Chair will accept that. Speaking then to the subamendment. Are we ready for the question on the subamendment?

MS BARRETT: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question has been called. All in favour? Let the record show it was unanimous.

Now we're going to the amended amendment. All in favour?

MR. DAY: No. Could we have a quick discussion?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, pardon me. Discussion on the amended amendment.

MR. DAY: I just wanted to clarify it, because some members didn't understand my vocal and strong support for Tom's motion a little while ago; that is, he had enunciated all the reasons that this motion should be in place, and I support it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question's been called. All in favour of the amended amendment? Carried unanimously.

Now we are on the amended motion. The amended motion reads that there will be redistribution after every second election but not less than every eight years and that the Chief Electoral Officer shall report, following each Canadian census, variations outside the plus/minus 25 percent range.

MS BARRETT: Both the number of seats and the extent to which they exceed the maximum permitted.

MR. CARDINAL: A question on that, Bob. There was no 25 percent mentioned as allowable.

MS BARRETT: That's right; "permitted variance."

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pardon me. Because I presume that also includes the up to four ridings that are in the up to minus 25 percent.

All right. Everyone clear, then, on the amended motion? Ready for the question?

MS BARRETT: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question's been called. All in favour? Opposed? Frank, would you like that recorded?

MR. BRUSEKER: No, just not unanimous.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Fine.

All right. We're now down to Other Recommendations, and the other recommendations included . . . Well, we discussed trying to ensure balanced growth across the province, enhancing all-party standing on select special committees in their travels throughout the province, and a request that the Members' Services Committee look at services to support members to ensure that they can adequately perform their duties, with particular emphasis on large and scattered constituencies. There may be others that members wish to bring forward as well, but those are the three general areas that we heard of in the hearings and we've discussed in our own discussions.

Yes, Mike.

MR. CARDINAL: I'd like to make a motion because of part 3 of the Constitution Act under Equalization and Regional Disparities. I'd like to move that the

Legislative Assembly reaffirm its commitment to balance growth throughout the Province. This may be achieved by decentralizing government services and working with the private sector on diversification strategies.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any discussion on the motion?

MS BARRETT: He's just going with the one for now?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MS BARRETT: I'm a little worried about the second sentence, and the reason is this. It says, "This may be achieved by decentralizing government services." That reference, I realize, is just a "may," but we've seen an ideological drive in the early '80s in this regard that turned out to be a problem. I'm not against decentralizing government services where it's appropriate, but I couldn't support a sentence that says something like that in such a broad and undefined way, given what happened. There are people at this table who were in the building at the time who knew what happened with some of the decentralizing. It did cause a lot of havoc and some of it had to be recentralized. In other words, when we say . . . There's no problem about a commitment from me or anybody else, probably, working towards balanced growth throughout the province, period. It's that second sentence that I worry about and just that one part of it. I mean, diversification strategies: no sweat; that's good stuff. But would you be interested in striking the second sentence, just going with the first and leaving it like that? What it does is it takes away one specific element that is not well defined and could be used to defend something that might not be defensible in some circumstances.

MR. DAY: Would you be happy – and I would have to ask the mover too – if he added "where appropriate"?

MS BARRETT: That would help, yeah.

MR. DAY: Decentralizing government services where appropriate and working with . . .

MS BARRETT: Yeah, that would make me feel better, because I'm one of the people who has to make that decision, and I don't want to be bound to something where I don't think it's appropriate.

MR. CARDINAL: I agree. I agree fully, because I don't believe in moving around departments unless there's a reason. It has to be effective; it may be more effective in most cases, and at very minimum extra cost.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair takes that as a friendly amendment then. Can we address the friendly amendment?

MR. SIGURDSON: I guess one of the concerns that I have . . . I had a number of people that came forward following the last move to decentralize a service that was based in Edmonton and the manner in which it was done. I don't mind seeing the establishment of new services into parts of Alberta to try and get that diversification and that growth. There were some real disruptions to families in Edmonton when they were told they had to relocate. I don't think there was sufficient consultation, quite frankly, with some of the people. I don't think there was sufficient warning given to people. You know, spouses work, and when you decentralize a department out into other parts of the province, you're disrupting a family life for everybody that's concerned. Again, I don't mind if we were to set up new programs. When ADC was set up, it was set up in Camrose. But I've got some concern about a decentralization process that takes existing services and the disruption that goes on. I know the intent, I understand the intent, I appreciate the intent, and I support the intent. So if anybody can help me out, go ahead.

MS BARRETT: Can I help him?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's re the friendly amendment?

MS BARRETT: That's right. Let me just explain this. You see, what I want is something that I can vote for here but doesn't bind me in the long run. If you say, "This may be achieved by decentralizing government services where appropriate," what that means is that when we move to do something that is very good that we all agree on, then I can vote yes. If there's a move that I think is not appropriate, then I'm not hypocritical; I'm not going against my support for this recommendation by saying no. I think that satisfies the concern.

MR. CARDINAL: That's a fair amendment, yeah.

MS BARRETT: It leaves 83 people able to vote.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pat.

MRS. BLACK: On the friendly amendment, Pam's absolutely right. There are some services that ideally would not be able to be moved out of Edmonton; there are some that would be

probably better suited for even the staff and families to be moved from Edmonton or from Calgary into the areas.

MS BARRETT: Sure.

MRS. BLACK: So I think "where appropriate" is a good wording to be added onto that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ready for the question?

MS BARRETT: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question's been called. First, on the friendly amendment. All in favour? Carried unanimously.

Now on the amended motion. Any further discussion? Ready for the question?

MS BARRETT: Yeah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question's called. All in favour? Let the record show it's carried unanimously.

Thank you.

MR. SIGURDSON: Are you ready for the second recommendation, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. SIGURDSON: I would move that we recommend to the Legislature that there be:

Enhanced use of all party standing, select and special select committees holding meetings throughout Alberta.

The reason I move that is that one of the things I have found with this committee and with other committees I've traveled on is that I as an urban, or pretty much an urban, MLA have come to appreciate some of the things that rural Albertans have told me. I think I've gained a great deal of knowledge and experience by having been able to go out and listen to other Albertans about their concerns. I think it's important that rural members have the same opportunity to come in and see some of the problems that go on in the urban centres as well.

I also believe that if there were to be all-party committees, regardless of the issue - I'll just pick health, for instance - one committee goes out into rural Alberta instead of just one member. We often heard about only one member of the Legislature representing a large, vast area. Seven members may go off to Drumheller, and when they hear the needs of that particular community on a particular issue, whether it's education or health care, those seven members may be able to come back and make the pitch on behalf of the community. I think everybody would benefit: the constituents and the members as well. I just hope that we're able to utilize committees better in the service of Albertans.

MR. DAY: Could you read it again, Tom?

MR. SIGURDSON: Yes. That we recommend:

Enhanced use of all-party standing, select and special select committees holding meetings throughout Alberta.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'd like to delay calling the vote until Pam returns. She just slipped out for a moment.

Are there any other discussions or any other comments to be made on the motion?

MR. BRUSEKER: Just a brief comment. I think Tom is right on the money in terms of the educational experience. Notwithstanding whatever political decisions come out of it, I think the educational aspect and the understanding can be enhanced by members of the Legislature having the opportunity to travel outside of their own constituencies. Particularly - and I think you should be complimented on this, Mr. Chairman - we asked in all cases the host MLA to come to our committee meetings that we had here. I think that also helped our committee. I think having the host MLA coming in and saying, "Welcome to the constituency, and let me tell you a little bit about it," was a very worthwhile process.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Pat, and then Pam.

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to speak in support of this recommendation being put forward, because as a relatively new member to the Assembly, I have gained so much appreciation for different parts of the province from having had the experience and good fortune to be on some of the standing committees, and in particular this committee, where we did do so much traveling throughout the province. I think, as Frank and Tom have said, it's been a learning experience for all of us and a sharing of ideas. I think people are people all over. People are basically all the same, but what we found were differences, regional disparities and differences that did exist, and it gave us a greater appreciation for those differences. So I'm very pleased that Tom brought this recommendation forward, and I wholeheartedly support it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Pam, and then Stock.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, I'd like to add my voice to support this motion as well because of my experience on this committee. It's no secret to anybody that I was very unhappy about the decision to delay the conclusion of the public hearings. But despite my unhappiness, I must say that the whole experience of going into towns that I otherwise would not have gone into, like Rockyford for instance . . . I mean, I get invited to speak in larger centres throughout the province, but to tell you the truth, nobody from Rockyford has ever invited me before. I did learn things, and I think that even though our committee was struck and had in mind from the beginning to hold public hearings particularly in areas which might be affected by changes to the electoral boundaries - a little light reading for you there, Mike - other committees could benefit from the same approach. In other words, if you have in mind that you want to make sure that every part of the province is touched down upon every once in a while by virtually every MLA, all of whom sit on at least one - usually more than one - committee of the Assembly, then this is a very good recommendation. I can't say enough good about it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Stock.

MR. DAY: Well, Mr. Chairman, I guess working with a larger caucus, just by virtue of that, we have opportunity and occasion to be in other members' ridings either to speak on various issues or to go with them to learn about what's happening in their constituencies. So while I see where Tom is coming from, I don't sense the same degree of compelling need, just because -

and I'm not putting one caucus over another; I'm just talking sheer numbers of 59 colleagues – we are constantly hearing very diverse views and having opportunity to visit from time to time in their constituencies and deal with various issues. So that part of the learning curve is already a built-in factor in a larger caucus.

However, I would still support this motion, but I'd like to put an amendment on the end of it. You'll have to check if the grammar on this works out. It would read also as Pam's earlier one: "where appropriate and necessary." I wouldn't want the public to think we're having traveling love-ins so that we can all feel warm and fuzzy about what's going on all over this province. I think that's Tom's intent. I'm not anticipating you'll have difficulty with it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is this a friendly amendment?

MR. DAY: This is a very friendly amendment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Very friendly.

MR. DAY: It's just to put anybody else at ease, either our own members in terms of cost or whatever. This could be done, but "where appropriate and necessary."

MS BARRETT: Stock, I would just like to caution about the word "necessary." It's again very subjective, and one might ask, you know, why the trust fund committee might go to XYZ, Alberta.

MR. DAY: Yeah.

MS BARRETT: The "necessary" part may not be demonstrable. I would think that "where appropriate" is a guidance, but if you put "and necessary," it may not be demonstrable at any point why you would go to XYZ, but 10 years from then it might be discovered. Do you know what I mean? I think "where appropriate" is good enough. You see, if you say "and necessary," what I'm getting at is that then you may feel compelled to prove that your committee had to go to XYZ. "Where appropriate" means that maybe it's just time that XYZ got visited by a group of MLAs. Do you know what I'm saying?

MR. DAY: Yeah, I appreciate what you're saying, and I know your intent is right on it. But I feel that as MLAs we should be under the compulsion to show why it's necessary for us to travel to carry through any type of expenditure. I don't mind that weight being upon us to have to . . .

MS BARRETT: Okay. All right. That's okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Are you ready for the question on the amendment to the motion? The question's been called. All in favour? Let the record show it's carried unanimously.

Now the amended motion. Any further discussion on the amended motion? The question's been called. All in favour? Let the record show carried unanimously.

Thank you. Now, are there any other motions to put forward? Yes, Frank.

MR. BRUSEKER: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I do have a motion to put forward. The motion reads as follows: that we request the Special Standing Committee of the Assembly on Members' Services to review support provided to members with an

emphasis on attention to large, scattered constituencies with sparse and/or scattered population.

Just speaking to the motion briefly, one of the things we all heard in many, many cases is travel time, problems with a large area, trying to be in two areas at one time, and this committee reviewed things like fax machines and computers for all constituencies. We were talking earlier about mobile telephones for MLAs and so forth. In particular for the potential four we've identified which may be large, but even for all members right across the province, I think we need to look at how we can best improve the effectiveness. What this really does is just ask the Members' Services Committee to look at: how can we make MLAs more effective? I think that's the general intent of the motion, and that's why I made the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Discussion on the motion? Ready for the question?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question's been called. All in favour? Let the record show it's carried unanimously. Thank you.

Now, a special welcome to Pat Ledgerwood, our Chief Electoral Officer. Thank you for joining us. We are now about to discuss the length of time the commission will require to complete its work. I'm sure you want input from us on other factors, hearings and so on, because that will all have an impact. I believe Bob has had an opportunity to brief you in camera on the matters we earlier agreed to, which of course will have a bearing on the workload of the commission. Pat, are there any other questions you had for us first for clarification?

MR. LEDGERWOOD: First all, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to comment on the fact that I'm pleased all the committee is still together despite your obvious differences.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Aw, this is a good team.

MR. LEDGERWOOD: The factors that I think we should be looking at: we know it's a five-member commission, but we don't know the other commitments of the commission members. That is something I think we should be looking at. How dedicated to the commission work are the commission members? How much time are they going to have available? When we schedule meetings, when we schedule the public hearings, we need people there so that when we get down to making decisions, we can reach a consensus. So that will be a factor.

Also a factor, of course, is the number of public hearings that will be held. From the briefing Bob gave me, you can see new concepts in many areas, so we will have to have public hearings in all those areas to get good input from the public so that when the commission makes decisions, they're not going to be in conflict with too many people. I think you can appreciate that no matter what we do, there are going to be some people that will not agree with us.

Now, the changes that are required are going to be significant in some areas, so we will also have to examine the written submissions we receive from those individuals. The only specific times I have I was able to get from mapping. It takes nine working days to make the base map. It takes 20 working days to make maps of the individual electoral divisions other than those in the municipalities, and the municipalities take eight working days. Now, that was before I was briefed by Bob, so those eight days may have to go up to 10. That's a best-case

scenario. That's using all mapping personnel available in this area. If we need to decrease that time, then they would have to bring in mapping experts from other jurisdictions.

MR. DAY: A question, Mr. Chairman. Patrick, is the eight to 10 days in addition to the nine and the 20, or is that conservative?

MR. LEDGERWOOD: That's in addition to the nine and the 20.

MR. DAY: Okay.

MR. LEDGERWOOD: Those are the only exact figures I have. Also, I can tell you from experience that once the commission has finished the interim report and it goes to the printer, it will be about two weeks before we get that report back. That's the blue line, the amendments. It would normally be ready for distribution in about two weeks. Of course, that takes care of the time factors prior to release of the interim report. Then you've got your public hearings, the submissions, the changes, so you can repeat the last part, which will be duplicated after the interim report is published and changes made before the final report is published.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pat, we as a committee have not discussed during the last few days the question of some hearings prior to the interim report, although that's something we heard throughout the hearings and we had generally accepted the concept. If I'm not speaking for the committee, I know members will want to address the point. Keeping in mind the desire to see some, although a limited number, of public hearings prior to the preparation of the interim report – and I think that's all the more important because of the changes that will occur throughout the province, in some cases possibly minor changes but in many cases very major changes – and still not wanting to in any way stretch out the process, how do you see that meshing in?

MR. LEDGERWOOD: I think one of the problems with too many public hearings before the interim report is published is that you're going to get all these individual lobby groups who are trying to put their case forward and they're going to be overlapping. The same territories are going to be used by each group, so you're not going to satisfy them in the long run anyway.

The commission knows the ground rules. I think you want to have as few as possible public hearings before the interim report. The commission has got to make those hard decisions and has got to live with them. Then you can go out and get your feedback and amend as necessary. But when you have individual groups or even individuals who are looking at their own vested rights rather than the total picture, this is where it's difficult.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah. Agreed.

MR. LEDGERWOOD: You can't get them to believe what the domino effect is.

MR. CARDINAL: I just have a comment. What process would you use in advertising to make sure everyone is aware of what you're doing? I believe there is also a time line given from your last advertisement. Is there a time line? When your last advertisement appears, do you have a time set that you have to wait for . . .

MR. LEDGERWOOD: I guess the best way to answer that question, Mike, would be to go back to the commissions I'm familiar with. In our '83-84 commission we didn't have any public hearings at all before the interim report was published, but what we did was publish what the commission's task was in every weekly newspaper and every daily newspaper. We received 74 written submissions, and the commission examined each one of those submissions very carefully and used much of that data to actually draw a line. The interim report was published and was distributed throughout the province. We had only six public hearings after that, made changes, and then the final report was published.

In the case of the federal commission where I was a commissioner, we had inputs from all across the province, and I don't have the data as to the numbers. We advertised in all the weekly newspapers and, again, the daily newspapers.

MR. CARDINAL: *Canada Gazette*. You had to advertise there?

MR. LEDGERWOOD: Just wherever. We made our decisions. We printed, I believe it was, about a million copies of our recommendations, and they were distributed to every household in Alberta. Many of them got more than one copy because we put them as inserts into those daily and weekly newspapers. Then we held our public hearings and made our adjustments as a result of the inputs at the public hearings and published our final report. In both commissions . . .

MR. CARDINAL: You didn't have to advertise before your final report was published?

MR. LEDGERWOOD: No. We published the final report, distributed it. Under the federal system it then goes to the Chief Electoral Officer in Ottawa, who does the mapping, et cetera, and then it goes to Parliament. If any 10 Members of Parliament agree that there should be a change, then they go before the election services committee, and if the committee supports that, then it comes back to the commission and the commission makes the final decision.

In the case of Alberta, when we finished our final report, it was tabled, and when it was going through legislation, there were only two changes made and those were not changes to boundaries. They only changed two names.

MR. DAY: In terms of cost, there's a figure that's been kicked around that this whole process costs \$40,000. It's got to be substantially more than that.

MR. LEDGERWOOD: It was about \$60,000 and some. I don't have that figure with me.

MR. DAY: That includes the honoraria for the people on the commission, a million copies being mailed . . .

MR. LEDGERWOOD: No. Don't mix up the federal with the provincial.

MR. DAY: Oh, okay. All right, Pat.

MR. LEDGERWOOD: You see, for the provincial we only publish the two reports, the interim report and the final report.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pat, there are direct and indirect costs associated with the report. Some of the costs are absorbed by other offices or departments.

MR. DAY: Right. Okay, thanks.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pat, in the present legislation, there are two time frames given, as I recall: the 12-month period in which the commission must report back – and that's with its interim report – and then you have up to a further six months. Is that correct?

MR. LEDGERWOOD: For the final report, yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For the final report. That's 18 months. I think the real thrust of this issue is: can that be compressed keeping in mind the substantive changes that are going to occur across the province? Can you give us advice on the time frame?

MR. LEDGERWOOD: Going back to my first point, Mr. Chairman, I think it depends on the commission members and their availability, because it takes a great deal of time to brief the members to bring them up to speed, to get input not from the public but from the professionals. You have to go to the town planners, the city planners, the people in the MDs so they can tell us where their communication corridors are going to be, where their new subdivisions are going to be built, factors that have to be put into the equation. So that is the big time factor.

Now, the experience from the '83-84 commission – and remember, there were hardworking politicians on that. They made it a priority so that, as I recall, the OC was passed in mid-December, the committee met for the first time in late January, and they published their interim report in July. They had public hearings in August, and they were able to publish their final report in, I believe it was, October. Now, again there were significant changes, but a lot of it was very cosmetic, not to the extent that I foresee happening on this redistribution. Certainly if a committee has the time available and can work as a team, and again depending on how many of the people on the commission have a hidden agenda – you know, how difficult is it going to be to reach a consensus?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I think that with the motions which have been passed here – and the intent is to give very clear direction to the commission – the commission's task is to draw lines. We've taken the hard decisions and made them here, so any challenge is not to the commission; it's back to the report and whatever legislation flows from it.

MR. LEDGERWOOD: In the case of the '83-84 commission, they only had 11 meetings and they were able to reach consensus.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, have you got a recommendation for us?

MR. LEDGERWOOD: I would like to see the time lines a little shorter, and this is for personal reasons, in that if we're going to have an enumeration in September 1992 on the new boundaries, they must be passed into law by May 1, 1992. So I would hope the commission would be able to complete their activity in the calendar year '91 so the legislation can be passed very early in '92.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just for clarification, then to you, Tom.

You're speaking of calendar year '91 for some brief hearings, an interim report, full hearings, and a final report?

MR. LEDGERWOOD: Yes. It would be an ideal situation.

MR. SIGURDSON: Could we then amend "The Commission shall, after considering any representations to it and within 12 months" to eight months, and then on the amendment, amend that from six months to four months? That gives a calendar year. That gives the commission eight months to do all of its work and then a four-month period. It cuts by one-third the total time, from 18 months to one year. I guess for clarification, is eight months sufficient enough to have the commission do its work?

MR. LEDGERWOOD: Under ideal conditions they can do it in eight months, but the reservations I mentioned earlier . . .

MRS. BLACK: Eight months meaning the full report – final, final, final?

MR. LEDGERWOOD: Oh, no. There's just no way the commission could do everything in eight months.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He's talking about eight months . . .

MRS. BLACK: You're doing the interim report.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The interim report.

MRS. BLACK: For clarification, Pat. I may have misunderstood you, but did you not say that once the interim report is public, that's when the bulk of the hearings will be held?

MR. LEDGERWOOD: After the interim report.

MRS. BLACK: Now, would four months cut that shy?

MR. LEDGERWOOD: I think you'd have difficulty in completing the public hearings and bringing a report in four months.

MS BARRETT: So if you went with eight and six, would that help?

MR. LEDGERWOOD: I think eight and six would help, with the understanding that the commission would work very hard to complete the interim report in less than eight months if possible.

MRS. BLACK: Well, would eight and six be better?

MR. SIGURDSON: How about six and six?

MRS. BLACK: He needs eight. You cut him shy on the top end.

MR. BRUSEKER: What if we made a requirement that the members that are selected to be members on the commission be prepared to make this a priority? As Pat has said, when he worked before with individuals who were prepared to make redistribution a priority, the process can be completed with a five-member commission. If the commission, as I heard Pat saying, needs to go out and talk to the professionals in towns and villages and so on, goes out and gathers that information and then comes back, with a five-member commission you

should be able to facilitate that process as opposed to the three-member commission he had before.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think we have to be careful in that this commission's work will be much more difficult than the last commission's work. The last time around we created – what? – four additional seats. We didn't eliminate any; we created four additional seats. We specified the number of seats in Calgary and Edmonton and certain other municipalities. The task this time is going to be much more difficult.

I suggested earlier in a meeting that there is not a constituency that will not see its boundary change. Some of the changes may be very slight. Those are in the minority in my opinion. There will be some major changes on the electoral map in both the urban and the rural parts of the province in our single as well as our multimunicipal constituencies. I'm just focusing back.

Let's not put the commission in such a straitjacket that they can't function. The Chief Electoral Officer said that he believes he could live with eight months for the interim report and has requested moving the four- to a six-month period for the full hearings and the final report. I'm just cautioning members not to negotiate with the Chief Electoral Officer to ratchet the time down beyond what he thinks is reasonable.

Pat, Pam, and then Stock.

MRS. BLACK: I guess without having a full appreciation of the amount of work that is involved in this, maybe we shouldn't be constraining the commission at all. Naturally they want to finish this process as quickly as they can. Maybe we should leave it as is with the 12 months and then the six months. With the dramatic changes that potentially are going to take place, I certainly think it's important that you have enough time to go out and hear the people because you're playing with their boundaries, and that's important to do. So I would hate to see that period of time cut back for the sake of getting the report out a few weeks early.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pam, Stock, Tom.

MS BARRETT: Pat, I think what the other Pat – Mr. Pat – was saying is that it is better if you can shave off a bit of time, and the ideal occasion to do that is in the drafting of the interim report so that you're not cutting off time for the remaining report and public hearings. So eight and six does sound pretty reasonable.

Now, I just want to get some clarification as well, though, from Mr. Pat. You said we do enumeration in '92?

MR. LEDGERWOOD: I would like to be in a position in September of 1992 to conduct the enumeration on the new boundaries.

MS BARRETT: Okay. Good. Now, does that mean we have to amend our legislation to wipe out the '91 enumeration, or do we have to do that as well? Or should you?

MR. LEDGERWOOD: The Chief Electoral Officer is given an option of doing the enumeration in '91, and it is my intention at this time to do an enumeration in 1991 on the current boundaries.

MS BARRETT: Can you say why? Is that just basically a protective device?

MR. LEDGERWOOD: I think if we look back, we had an election in '89 and historically the governments have been three and a half years.

MS BARRETT: Yes.

MR. LEDGERWOOD: So if we were to go right on the average, we would have an election before the enumeration in '92 and the election would be conducted on the current boundaries.

MS BARRETT: So it's a just-in-case measure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think that's a matter that the Chief Electoral Officer will be discussing with Leg. Offices in a day or so.

MS BARRETT: Yeah. Oh, sure. That's fine. I just wanted to see if there was any other thing that we needed to look at.

MR. BRUSEKER: On that point, I just have a question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, the specific.

MR. BRUSEKER: Just specifically on enumerations. If this legislation is in fact passed at a fall sitting of the Legislature, is there a point in doing a September 1991 enumeration?

MS BARRETT: That's what he just answered.

MR. BRUSEKER: Well, I didn't understand, so maybe you could answer it again.

MR. LEDGERWOOD: The rationale for doing an enumeration is that if there's an election called before the enumeration is completed on the new boundaries in 1992, providing all the legislation has been passed and the new boundaries are in place in '92 . . .

MR. BRUSEKER: Oh, I see. It's not just the legislation. It's also having the new boundaries done.

MR. LEDGERWOOD: Yeah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The counterquestion to that is: would a government which has just appointed an electoral boundaries commission and the commission is doing its work call an election late in the second or early in the third year in its five-year mandate? We'll get into that very fully in the budget, because it's about a \$4 million item, as I recall, on the proposed budget for the Chief Electoral Officer.

MR. BRUSEKER: Okay. Thank you.

MR. LEDGERWOOD: It's an all-party committee, and I'm sure there'll be a lot of discussion, pros and cons, on whether or not there should be an enumeration in '91.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Stock and then Tom.

MR. DAY: I'm feeling inclined to stay with the 12 months and for this reason. The Chief Electoral Officer has indicated eight months under ideal conditions, but I'm sorry to say we're talking about a major, major overhaul. I think it would be great if they

could be done in eight months, if they could be done in less than that. I don't think there's any question around the table here that all of us want to see this done. But to unnecessarily cramp them, given the considerable overhaul like nothing we've seen in recent history, I don't think we're in fairness allowing them the leeway they may need. Now, they may not.

I think if we were dealing with a Chief Electoral Officer we didn't know, we didn't know how he operated, there might be a thought, "Well, we'd better give him a really tight time line; otherwise, they could drag this thing on." But we know how this Chief Electoral Officer works. We certainly know all the administrative support that's been given to us on the committee, we know how solidly in place and committed they are to getting the job done well and getting it done expediently. So I don't feel that we've got to lay a time line that may, indeed, cramp their style because I know they're going to be committed to hammering through and getting the job done, but I don't want to unnecessarily tether them. So I'm comfortable with leaving it, and I'm sure they can get it done in time for the '92 enumeration. Now, I'm not positive, but I would think they could.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, we should keep in mind what the Chief Electoral Officer said: trying to have the final report ready for the spring of 1992. If we went with the 12 months for the interim report and a further maximum of six months for the final report, even if the commission is struck on January 1 of '91, that takes us to June of 1992 when we're well into a spring sitting.

MRS. BLACK: But they wouldn't have to go the full 12 months if they were finished before that.

MS BARRETT: Well, there's another way around this.

MR. SIGURDSON: I guess that's why I want to reduce the time from 12 months to eight months. I think that if you give people a deadline, they work to deadlines.

MS BARRETT: Exactly.

MR. SIGURDSON: You know, once you're up to speed and you've had the reports from the town planners, all of those folk that'll be brought in, the arguments can be made on the boundaries. There may very well be a lot of argument, but, goodness knows, you get five people in a room together and they can argue for a long period of time on where a boundary should or shouldn't go. Not you and I, of course, but others might tend to prolong the debate on boundaries. I think the end of August is sufficient time for the commission to get its interim report done. I don't mind giving an extra six months, which would take it up to the end of February, for any amendment to come back, but I would sure as heck hope that by the end of August we've got some kind of interim report. I don't think that's too constraining. I know it will take a couple of months to get people up to snuff; it will take some period of time to have some public hearings. But draw the boundaries and give them a time limit to meet, and I think eight months for the introduction, hearings, and the interim report is sufficient. Then maybe go a little further than what I would like, because I had hoped to have only four months for the amendment, but maybe push it to six months. That's a 14-month total then. I think that's more than sufficient.

MR. LEDGERWOOD: As Bob's not here, I think you should look at how long this particular committee has taken in their deliberations.

MR. SIGURDSON: We had 39 public hearings.

MS BARRETT: Spread over a very long period of time.

MR. SIGURDSON: Spread over a very long period of time, with a session. We had four months of session when we had no hearings. We also had a December in there that we didn't do anything at all. Now, you'll have a December in there, admittedly . . .

MR. BRUSEKER: And a January in which we didn't do anything.

MR. SIGURDSON: . . . and a January that we didn't do anything. I don't want to be Scrooge, but I'm hoping that whoever's on the commission will be able to dedicate a little more time than we were able to.

MR. DAY: I guess, just on that point, it's another one of my concerns that you do want to get the best people you can, and there is, as you know, a little maxim; it's not always true, but if you want to get something done, get a busy person to do it. If we go too short on this - if it's Patrick or whoever it is - in finding out the work schedule of the people, by cramping it too tight, we could lose some otherwise good people who'd be prepared to put in a lot of time but not an incredible amount of time in a short space. So that's just another caution.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I call a short coffee break.

[The committee adjourned from 11:16 a.m. to 11:35 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The committee is called to order.

MS BARRETT: [Unrecorded] understand the needs of the Chief Electoral Officer and our desire to expedite the process. So what I'll move is - and I don't have it in writing, folks, so I'll speak slow and you can listen fast - that section 6(1) of the current Act, which reads, "the Commission shall, after considering any representations to it and within 12 months of the date," et cetera, be struck so that it is confined to a nine-month period during which it has time to create and present its interim report. That's a very minor amendment; it changes from 12 to nine months in the legislation. Section 8 would be unaffected by this motion. It would remain at six months.

Also, I ask for support in understanding that the commission would be deemed to be struck upon passage of the legislation. In other words, if this legislation is passed on December 20, the commission is deemed to have been struck on that day. Actually, we have to wait for Royal Assent. No, we don't; Royal Assent is something you can have afterwards. So the day the Bill is passed is the day the commission would be deemed to be struck.

Now, I want to speak to this motion because it needs explanation. What we would have to do in order to make this work, in order to make sure we've got at least six weeks in the spring of 1992 to deliberate the final boundaries, the final report of the commission, so that by May 1 we can kick into the system of

getting ready for a fall enumeration, which is the desire of the Chief Electoral Officer and is in the best interests of every Albertan, is agree in a nonbinding way that as soon as our committee finalizes its report – that is, in a couple of weeks' time – we go to our respective leaders and say, "Have your nominations ready for the day that this Bill passes." In other words, have it all ready to go so that we're not forcing the nominees, or the commission members ultimately, to a smaller time frame than what they would need.

I think that while this is not an ideal situation – nothing about this whole process is ideal – this is a reasonable compromise under the circumstances and is binding insofar as we actually do amend the legislation to shave off three months in that interim report stage.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Speaking to the motion.

MR. DAY: Well, the one part about going to our leaders: I think that's something that each committee member certainly would have the freedom to do. I don't know how cast in stone I want to make that, because it's almost like presuming on the future decisions of our colleagues in the Legislature.

MS BARRETT: I understand you. I was giving that as sort of background.

MRS. BLACK: That's not part of your motion.

MS BARRETT: It's not part of my motion.

MR. DAY: Okay.

MS BARRETT: It was just in order to facilitate this. The motion simply was to change section 6 of the current Act: strike "12 months"; reduce and replace that with nine. Also, in our recommendations, and in the legislation if necessary, state that the commission will be deemed to have been struck on the day the Bill passes. So the clock starts ticking then. That's the only way we can meet the mid-March '92 deadline that is so critical.

MR. DAY: I find myself feeling more comfortable saying January 1, for instance. Let's say this thing moved through really quickly, and in the first week of December the legislation was passed. In the whole rush of Christmas, et cetera, trying to get people, trying to secure the four individuals, you could very easily lose a month of committee working time. I'm thinking of what Patrick was saying when he was here: eight months under ideal conditions. We know it's not ideal. We're looking at a possible nine.

MS BARRETT: It can't work. It would put your deadline too late, Stock. It would put your final report into the House too late, I think.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think what's important to remember is that there are certain assumptions which Pam is making in making this motion. She's making an assumption that we will have concluded our fall sitting on or about December 20. If for some reason that's not true and we go into a Christmas adjournment and are back on January 15 and continue to debate the legislation, the commission cannot be struck because there's no legislative basis to appoint the commission. In that scenario we would have lost our objective of having a report in March or April of 1992 in any event.

MS BARRETT: If I can hop in on that point, remember that if you push that deadline further away – that is, for the final report – you really minimize the time that it's in front of the Legislature, because my experience is that at Easter time there is always a 10-day break. I mean, I'd be perfectly willing to waive that rule, but ordinarily that is what happens. So you could be pushing that May 1 deadline pretty tightly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Anyone else? Frank?

MR. BRUSEKER: Yeah, I'd like to propose a subamendment, which I am sure will be greeted warmly. Nonetheless, I shall do it because . . .

MR. DAY: Let me vote on it before you even spell it out.

MR. BRUSEKER: Okay, you're going to vote with me on this one because you told me . . .

MR. DAY: I said I'd vote on it.

MR. BRUSEKER: Oh, okay. I would like to propose an amendment to the nine-month amendment that Pam has made and suggest that that be shortened substantially. The figure I would suggest would be four months and that section 8(1) of the current Electoral Boundaries Commission Act which reads "6 months" be reduced to two months, the total time being six months.

My reason for that, if I could speak to that motion, is relating to the earlier motion which we passed that talks about 43 single-municipal and 40 multi-municipal constituencies. I strongly suspect that is going to be challenged. I have no idea where that may end up, but if this commission takes a total of 15 months to come up with a new set of boundaries and if there is a court challenge that comes out of that, then we could be looking at going to the next election on the current boundaries which we have in place right now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Frank, I really hate to do this, but I must rule your amendment out of order in that you are amending both of the key parts of the motion put forward by Pam. You're amending the nine months down to four months, and you're amending the . . . What's the other one?

MR. DAY: Six to two.

MR. BRUSEKER: Section 8.

MR. CHAIRMAN: . . . six to two, which so substantially alters the intent of the motion.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I beg leave to interrupt the proceedings for a moment. I'm obliged to be at a place for a flag raising in 16 minutes. May I request permission of the committee to leave my vote with Tom; in other words, he would record my vote. He and I have discussed this. He knows how I would vote. Is everybody agreed?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that agreeable?

MR. BRUSEKER: I have no objection to that.

MR. DAY: I would be happy to go on record, as I have in the past, accommodating Pam's absence.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay; we have unanimous concurrence with that.

MS BARRETT: Thanks very much; I appreciate it. I'll miss you all, but I'll see you on November 5. Sorry I have to leave.

MR. CARDINAL: Now Tom has two votes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah. We're back to the motion. Do you wish to speak to the motion?

MR. BRUSEKER: Well, then I will speak against the motion. I think it's far too long a time. I have consistently asked that the members of the commission be required to make a full-time commitment. I don't see any addressing of that particular issue. I think 15 months is far too long a time. I think this committee has gone on for far too long a time. I think 15 months for a commission is far too long a time, and I think a shorter time frame is in order. So that's why I attempted to make the subamendment.

With respect to hearings that have been suggested, I don't think the process of nine months is necessary to conduct hearings when they were basically being conducted in a vacuum. Because, as the Chief Electoral Officer has referred, the people that will be coming out will be talking about their own particular niche. If we think about, for example, the northeast corner of the province, there will be some substantial changes occurring there because of Fort McMurray now being identified, according to the motion being passed, as a single-municipal constituency. The end result will be that people will be talking about issues over which at that point they won't have a particular issue to discuss with the commission because they will not be particularly aware - as Mr. Ledgerwood has said, even the commission members have to be brought up to speed. When we think about when we went around the province and people said, "I want you to move the line here and there," they weren't even sure what we were doing, and we were there to explain it to them. So I'm not sure that nine months is necessary. So beating my head against the wall, I will simply close and say I speak against the motion; I can't support it.

MR. DAY: Well, Frank mentioned first this particular length of time that we've spent ourselves as a committee, and if we're going to be criticized for that, so be it. I don't think the criticism is valid, given the impact on all our calendars of the work on this committee.

But putting that aside, we're already suggesting to shorten the legislated time period, and that time period was legislated at a time when nowhere near the amount of change was anticipated. We're talking about huge, huge changes in the province, and people, as we heard in the hearings, very concerned about the changes; I mean passionately, frantically concerned about possible changes, and now we're hearing from Frank that we cut off their time. Frank makes the presumption that they won't have an issue to discuss; they weren't sure of things when we were talking to them; they're not going to be sure of things when this commission goes out. Well, then, all the more reason that we need to take the time. I don't ever want to be caught like a federal GST committee saying to people, "You simply don't understand the issues, and we're not going to drag out this public process." We're already looking at the possibility of shortening it, and, Frank, what you're suggesting to me is just an abrogation of our responsibilities to hear from the people and

their concerns. I emphatically oppose compacting the time limit that severely.

MR. SIGURDSON: Had this committee completed its work last spring, it's quite possible that a commission would now be sitting and could very well have its report done in order to have a 1991 enumeration on the new boundaries. But the committee didn't finish its work, and a 1991 enumeration on new boundaries is impossible. So we have to look at a 1992 enumeration on the new boundaries. This amendment that Pam has proposed gives the commission enough time to complete its work and get the boundaries on the maps and polling maps in place for an enumeration to be conducted on new boundaries in 1992. There's no reason to shorten the period any further. As much as I would like to see the period shortened, it wouldn't serve any purpose.

If, however, we get to a point in the spring of 1992 where I see delay going on, where any of us sees delay going on, it will give all of us the right to stand up in the Legislature and be quite critical of the work that we've done and the work that the commission is undertaking. We reserve that right unto ourselves, I'm sure. But I think the nine months now to allow the commission to go out, get up to date on all that important information that they have to absorb, to hold some public hearings, and to write an interim report is sufficient. I think the amendment of the report being six months, as it currently is, is not going to hamper the work of anybody, and it will certainly allow us to have an enumeration in the fall of '92 on the new boundaries. It's not going to move that date at all. That's the reason why I'm supporting it, because I fully expect to have an enumeration in '92 on new boundaries. If I thought for a minute that we wouldn't have that enumeration, I wouldn't support this motion. That's the only reason I support the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pat, and then Stock.

MRS. BLACK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to make two points. Let's not get off the track here. We had the Chief Electoral Officer sit with us and give us advice, and the man is an experienced man, and I value the advice he gave us. There was no way he made any suggestion to shorten the six-month period after the interim report came forward. He felt it was important to have that six-month period so that presentations could be made.

Secondly, if we have given the right instructions, which I think we have, to the commission, I think the time frame that Pam has suggested is sufficient, and I take exception to the innuendo that this committee did not work hard. I think this committee has worked very hard. We went out and listened to the people. Now, whether some of you like that or not, they are the people that we represent, and they have the right to come back to a commission and make a representation to that commission as to their boundaries. Whether you like it, Frank, or I like it is irrelevant. They are the people we represent in this Legislature, and it is our job to make sure that they have that opportunity. Whether they take it up is their option and their privilege, but we cannot eliminate the right of the people to stand up and be heard. So our hearings were extended. That was upon request of the people of this province. It didn't make any of us happy and tickled to think that the hearings were going to be extended because, again, it affected our calendars, but we are here to serve the people, so we have to accommodate the people. It

doesn't matter whether you like it or not; that's your job. That's what we're here for, and I take exception to the fact that you think this committee was dragged on and didn't push things through at your calendar. We accommodated the people, and that's what we're here for. So I really take exception to that comment of yours. I think that's unfair, because I think every member of this committee has put in due diligence on this committee and has worked very hard to try and hear what the people have said, and that's what we were struck to do.

MR. BRUSEKER: Could I respond to that, Mr. Chairman?

MRS. BLACK: I would hate to see the commission have to be hampered because it's something on your agenda or on someone else's agenda. We've got to let the people have the same opportunity to go before that commission that we gave them as a committee.

MR. BRUSEKER: As usual, your interpretation of the innuendo that wasn't there was incorrect. I did not say the members of this committee did not work hard. I never stated that, and if that's what you heard, then you heard wrong. Check the record, please.

Second, this committee was scheduled originally, when our mandate was cast, to report to the spring sitting of the last Legislature. We had to have the legislation amended because we did not have the task completed. The original agreement was that when passed on I believe it was August 16 or 17 or whatever – somewhere in there – of 1989, we would report to the Legislature, six months ago. We still have not yet completed a final report. We did present an interim report which was passed, and if you recall, the recorded vote then was that it was again not a unanimous report, that it would be an interim report. There was lots of time to get things completed. We did not meet or hold hearings in December; we did not meet or hold hearings in January, and I think that task could have been completed. We could have completed it during the legislative session. We see federal committees travel the country while the House is in session. That motion was also defeated, again, in a split motion. The opportunity was there; this committee by the majority of members chose not to complete the work until now.

MR. DAY: Speaking to the motion, though I would lean to not changing the legislation, Pam and Tom have brought out some good arguments. I'd like about two minutes just to look at Bob Pritchard's '91-92 calendars. I'd like to take a look at that before I vote.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, two minutes.

[The committee adjourned from 11:54 a.m. to 11:58 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll reconvene the meeting. Is there any further discussion on the motion?

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question's been called. All in favour of the motion? Opposed? Carried. Do you wish that recorded?

MR. BRUSEKER: Please.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Let the record show that the motion was supported by Pam, Tom, Stock, Mike, and Pat, and opposed by Frank.

Are there any other motions to put forward today?

MR. BRUSEKER: I have a question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. BRUSEKER: Now, we have asked Bob Pritchard to get in contact with – I forget the fellow's name over in the Attorney General's office.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Peter Pagano.

MR. BRUSEKER: The question I have is: he will then draft legislation; would there be a possibility of having that draft legislation issued at the same time as the report?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm not sure it's proper for this committee to do that, Frank.

MR. BRUSEKER: And have it stamped even as draft legislation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're going beyond our traditional role. My understanding is the reason the request was made to invite Peter Pagano in was to ensure that we are not inadvertently through our motions putting Leg. Counsel in a straitjacket relative to that drafting of the legislation. It was my thought that when we come back on November 5, we will have a complete report. In fact, we may even, if necessary, have Peter Pagano here. If his recommendations are minor, we can deal with them in that way.

MR. SIGURDSON: Mr. Chairman, I'm trying to recall in our interim report if there wasn't some provision for us to deal with legislation. I can't recall.

MR. PRITCHARD: I've got the interim reports, but I don't think there was anything in there, Tom.

MR. BRUSEKER: I guess the reason I raise it is that we've been talking all along about making the process move as expediently as possible now that the guts of the issue have been decided. Now let's move the process along. The draft legislation could be written, and since it won't be introduced in the Legislature by any individual, it would simply be a piece of the report and not tabled as legislation per se. I'm wondering if then it would facilitate the process. I don't know who would ultimately introduce the legislation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, the Government House Leader is the one who would introduce the legislation, Jim Horsman.

MR. BRUSEKER: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't see anything in our terms of reference which suggests we should be drafting legislation. But I repeat, by bringing Peter Pagano in now, we're allowing him to do two things: number one, to see the magnitude of the recommendations we're making and to begin to draft legislation;

and number two, to alert us if there's something we've inadvertently done which he thinks would cause a problem either to one of our major intents or to the drafting of the said legislation. We'll report back on November 5 on that.

MR. BRUSEKER: All right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think we're achieving the same thing, Frank. We're not actually drafting. I'm reluctant to see our committee get involved in something that's outside its mandate, but we will certainly be discussing the parameters on the 5th.

MR. BRUSEKER: All right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Any other questions?

MRS. BLACK: Motion for adjournment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion's moved. All in favour. Let the record show it's carried unanimously. Thank you.

[The committee adjourned at 12:01 p.m.]