

[Chairman: Dr. Elliott]

[2 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: This meeting is now officially started. I'm going to start it with this cartoon which has a senior citizen couple out for a walk in the park, and this elderly lady says to her elderly husband, when does "the best is yet to be" start?

MR. THOMPSON: It's always about five years down the line.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Or it's passed.

MR. THOMPSON: Or else it's over with.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll call the meeting to order, and I draw your attention to the follow-up items on the list provided. I'm going to start by asking for the approval of the minutes of the Tuesday, May 29, meeting. These were circulated just now. Is this too soon for people to glance at them?

MR. NOTLEY: So moved.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have a motion. A seconder? We don't need a seconder and don't have a seconder. You know, I used to have that problem with another meeting. I had two sets of meetings, one where there was always a seconder. We always have a seconder here, don't we?

MR. PURDY: We follow the Legislative Assembly rules, and we don't require a seconder in the Assembly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. I have the motion for the minutes of Tuesday, May 29. Are there any questions about the motion? Those in favour? The motion is carried.

Item number one on the follow-up items is our request to the Ombudsman for reports on conferences attended out of province. It's understood that when the Ombudsman returns from the international program in Sweden and Finland, there will be reports as requested.

Item number two on the follow-up items is discussion of the function for the new and the departing Ombudsmen. I've been following that up with the Speaker of the Legislature, and we have nothing new to offer at this particular moment, other than what we've already talked about. For purposes of review, the suggestion is that in both instances — that is, for the new Ombudsman and the departing Ombudsman — they will be relatively low-key receptions, with a short invitation list. Other than our committee members, there could be people like the Speaker of the House. In view of the nature of the office, there could be certain other people that we might want to add to the list. But that's something that would be followed up on later.

In both cases, the suggestion is that we will be doing this after the end of August because, in the first place, the new Ombudsman will not be on the job until September 1. The departing Ombudsman will be around for the month of September and on into October, and give us an opportunity to call him in and have a wine and cheese type of reception or something.

That's the thinking I've been exposed to up to this point. I share that with you as just one area in which the thinking has been going. If there's any discussion on any of these items — yes, John?

MR. THOMPSON: I suggest that it be some time after the fall session of the Legislature starts. I don't know how big it's going to be, but I do think members of the Legislature should be given an invitation. If they want to attend and meet the new Ombudsman, shake hands and say good-bye to the old one, I think it should be after the fall session starts, so it's convenient for them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's an excellent point. Would that apply to both functions we're talking about, which would be held on separate dates?

MR. NOTLEY: Are we looking at separate dates for the two?

MR. THOMPSON: I thought it was going to be a joint ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: In a very brief discussion I had with our present Ombudsman, his strong recommendation was that we do not mix them. He said, do nothing that would take away from the formal welcome and installation exercise of the new Ombudsman. He said he would rather not be around at all at that time. Whether or not we have something for the present Ombudsman, he personally didn't express an opinion. What happened is that I asked him if he could guide us in what was done for him when he arrived. He gave us that short letter, which has been circulated, that gave his recollection of what he recalled.

So that was another expression of opinion. Number one was to hold separate functions. Number two, the Speaker has recommended that it be relatively low key. We have John Thompson's recommendation to have it at a time when all the members of the Legislature could be present. That would be no problem with the new Ombudsman. It might be a problem with the old Ombudsman if he has left the country or left the community completely by the time the session starts. Those are all comments I'll take into consideration when I go back to the Speaker to see how we can work this stuff together.

MR. HIEBERT: Mr. Chairman, what were the reasons given for not wanting the joint reception, one to say farewell and the other to welcome?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The only comment I had on that, Al, was from Dr. Ivany, who asked us not to include him in the welcoming exercises for the new Ombudsman because he felt there should be no other activity that would detract from the importance and the exercise of welcoming and installing the new Ombudsman. He figured that that was his day and it should be his day alone. The only comment I've had on that question was from Dr. Ivany. I haven't had a comment from the Speaker on it, and I haven't really pursued the topic that far with anybody else.

MR. HIEBERT: Let me ask a second question, Mr. Chairman. Did there appear to be any expectation on

the part of the departing Ombudsman relative to his experience or his recollection from the previous one? Is there any kind of expectation?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The only comment we had from the present Ombudsman about the previous installation exercise was a short ceremony. I think it was in the Speaker's lounge or suite, whatever you call it. There was the — I'm trying to recall the memo we received from him. I think it's been circulated to members. Does anybody recall? He implied that there were about three. Here it is:

When I was appointed Ombudsman, I was sworn in by the Speaker at a ceremony in the Speaker's office. My family attended, as did The Honourable Lou Hyndman, representing the government and, as I recall, a few other Members of the Assembly. The media was also invited to attend, and a few did.

I know that when Dr. Dan Hill, the new Ombudsman for Ontario, was sworn in, invitations to the ceremony were sent to most of the Canadian Ombudsmen, although I am not sure how many attended. I did not, since I felt that there was little point in spending that amount of money to go to Toronto for a brief ceremony.

I hope that this information will be of some assistance to you.

I understood that letter had been circulated.

MR. HIEBERT: Yes, I recollect it.

DR. CARTER: Mr. Chairman, there's no mention of what happened to the previous Ombudsman, George McClellan, when he departed. I personally think two short ceremonies in the Speaker's suite would be appropriate, one in August — and whoever is around is around — to have the brief good-bye to Ivany. Then we'd have another one scheduled for, say, the second week of September, and have it in the Speaker's suite and have the members of the committee or just a very few people there to say hello.

MR. CHAIRMAN: David, this is virtually the first item we started on. Just before you came in, John Thompson made the comment that he thought it would be important that we have the function after the session starts, so all members would feel free or would have access to the function. I'm not trying to debate your point; I just want to make sure you knew how John felt on that.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, the swearing in should be as close to the commencement of his duties as possible. I suppose he starts as of September 1, whether he's sworn in or not, but maybe you should look at it the other way around — swearing-in ceremony first, and then away he goes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Give him the keys to the office.

MR. NOTLEY: I kind of like John's idea, though, of at least letting all the members know, because he is a servant of all the members of the Legislature, not just this committee. Whether or not they turn up is

beside the point. Presumably not everybody would if the House isn't in session, but I kind of like the idea. The Speaker's suite can hold 30 or 40 if need be, and we wouldn't get any more than that.

DR. CARTER: We could have it in the rotunda if we got an avalanche of people.

MR. THOMPSON: We could hold it here.

MR. NOTLEY: Sure, this is a nice room.

MR. THOMPSON: If you had it on a day between sessions — very brief, come in and shake hands, have a sandwich if you wish, and walk back out. Just to familiarize people with — we're familiar with him, but . . . I think it would be of some help to the Ombudsman himself for people to have an opportunity to size him up, instead of a figure off downtown somewhere.

MR. HIEBERT: Mr. Chairman, it appears that we're developing into something here, the idea of having a swearing-in ceremony in the early part of the term and then maybe look at a meet-the-Ombudsman reception or something at a subsequent time, and differentiate the two; have two different purposes in mind.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For the new Ombudsman.

MR. HIEBERT: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Were you thinking that way when you were talking?

MR. NOTLEY: I'm open on it. I think what Al is saying is that the swearing-in ceremony would be relatively low key but open to the press, I presume. But I think John's point is a good one. At some early point, since the Ombudsman is a servant of the entire Legislature, the entire Legislature should at least have the option of meeting him and saying hello.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is what you call "tagalong discussion". I'm offering a suggestion. Let's swear in the new Ombudsman at one ceremony and, on another occasion, have a meet-the-Legislative-Officers day. We have three of them.

DR. CARTER: Sure, that's fair.

MR. NOTLEY: That's even better. That's a good idea.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'll bet you there are lots of MLAs who haven't met Bill Rogers or Kenneth Wark.

MR. HIEBERT: That's an excellent suggestion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Then we the committee could host some little thing. That could be done after the session starts.

MR. NOTLEY: Then how would we deal with the Ivany question? Do we say good-bye to Ivany at this meet-the-officers, and just sort of save us — that might be appropriate.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think the Ivany one is . . . Is it legit for the Chair to make an expression of opinion on this, Mr. Thompson?

MR. THOMPSON: Right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. With his support and encouragement, I think the Dr. Ivany farewell ceremony is something to which all members will receive an invitation. I think it should be close to the time when he leaves the office, either just before or immediately afterwards, and I think it should be an opportunity for those of us who have been working with him to shake his hand, say good-bye, and thank him. That would include the Speaker, it would include our committee, and it would include the invitation to the MLAs for those who are able to come. I think it would be an opportunity for his office staff to — I don't know; I'm just asking. Maybe we could include office staff at that time, or whether they'd have their own farewell for him — maybe it wouldn't mix, and it should stay as an MLA thing.

DR. CARTER: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If there's anybody wishing for the opportunity to say thank you, good-bye, that would be it. That's one of the ways I've been seeing it develop. A comment on that one, Al? How do you feel about that for Dr. Ivany?

MR. HIEBERT: Appropriate. It should be before he leaves, which means the end of August. I'm sure his staff, his office, will have some type of affair over there for him, and we should make it strictly a Legislature kind of approach to saying good-bye.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What about his family when he comes to see us? When we hold our thing for him, would we have his wife?

DR. CARTER: The swearing in?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, I'm talking about the farewell to Dr. Ivany. I'm assuming we will have the family at the swearing in for Brian.

MR. NOTLEY: Why not.

MR. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I don't know how many people on this committee are on the heritage trust fund committee, but hopefully we can pick — it seems like we're up here half the time in August and September. Hopefully we can pick a date to have this little party so we don't have to make a special trip up here. On some Heritage Savings Trust Fund evening, we could work it in there somehow. That's the only suggestion I have.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Fine.

MR. NOTLEY: With those things in mind, I move that the chairman carry on with full authority to make whatever appropriate arrangements are necessary.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. We have the motion. Any comment on the motion? Those in favour? We will continue with crystallizing our plans

on it.

Item number three of the follow-up items is the discussion of salary increments for Legislative Officers. I was instructed at the last meeting to follow up on the government guidelines for senior government officials of the deputy minister class; that area is where our officers fall. In my research on that topic yesterday, I was advised that those guidelines will not be formalized for a while yet. I was also notified that people in the deputy minister group usually have their salaries settled on August 1. Either that's their commencement date, or retroactive to whatever date they have.

I also share with you the unofficial position — now this is dangerous, isn't it, because we don't know where this is going, and it's not August 1 yet. But I think the Treasurer's budget speech gave us the guidelines. It's zero. That's the best I've been able to get as I walk up and down these hallways, talking to the people I think are supposed to be putting out the guidelines we're looking for, for guidance.

So with that much information, if we wish to continue discussion on this topic, it is on the agenda as discussion on salary increments because it was left in the minutes of last meeting. With that report, I'm going to ask the committee whether they wish to proceed with discussing it further or whether we wish to leave further discussion on salary increments to another meeting, at another time. Would you please help me out there.

DR. CARTER: I think we are discussing.

MR. HIEBERT: Mr. Chairman, I think we have evidence of other kinds of guidelines when we're sitting around this table. We know what has happened, and I think officers of the Legislature fall into the same realm. It is my suggestion that we make a determination of this today so we can move on with the matter. I don't think we should await any other deliberations.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There are two comments. Anybody else want to comment?

MR. PURDY: My view is that we should wait. I think we know what the outcome will be with the Executive Council decision — probably zero percentage because of what the Provincial Treasurer indicated already. But maybe this committee should wait until such time as that particular order in council comes out, saying that the increment is going to be zero.

MR. THOMPSON: I tend to agree with Bill. As a committee in salary negotiations, I think we have been able to rely on the fact that we were keeping in step with the deputy ministers. If we get off that track, in the future we're into a new area entirely and these guidelines become more and more faint as we go along. I'm not saying we can't do it; I'm just saying that for our own peace of mind, possibly we should wait and find out for sure what's going to happen. That's my opinion anyway, Mr. Chairman.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I tend to agree with John on this. I suspect that the guideline will be zero, so it's just a question of whether we present the good news now or later. But the problem we have is

that while MLAs took zero, in a sense we were masters of our own fate. We had the power to do it, and we did it. While Legislative Officers would logically follow the same thing, it seems to me that if we end at the same result a little later on, when we have deputy ministers getting zero, we're going to have less hard feelings than our officers getting zero and then the off chance that perhaps Executive Council decides on a 2 or 3 percent increase; then we do have hard feelings. So why don't we just wait, and then we're not in a position of being seen to be arbitrary and unfair to them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I asked the committee the question whether we should proceed with the discussion now. I had two members say we should proceed and I had three members who did in fact proceed. Do you want to go back here? Have either of you gentlemen got an opinion on the nature in which the discussion has flowed since you've agreed to let us go into the discussion?

DR. CARTER: Mr. Chairman, I didn't get a chance to make my comments. There are two things we have to remember. I'm quite prepared to go along with the comments made by the last three speakers. We just have to flag something, that we have a present Ombudsman who probably figures he's going to get a raise for January through to the end of August. So he will probably be receiving some more pressure on that point, aside from all of his other prerequisites.

The other thing is much more significant. The Auditor General — remember what we gave him last year? Didn't we give him zero or 2.1?

MR. CHAIRMAN: It was 2.5 percent, I think.

DR. CARTER: His anniversary date was January 1, and he is comparing his 2.5 to whatever deputy ministers got last year, which I think was 3. So he himself has the feeling that the committee has the power and did act but he was off half a percentage point and so forth. That's fine too. I suspect that in actual fact, even if we wait until after August 1 and decide it's zero, that will be accepted as well, because he realizes full well that he's at the top of scale. But there is a time sequence thing which is going to be brought up to you in individual conversations.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For the sake of the record, David, at our July 18 meeting last summer the committee approved an increase of 2 percent to the Auditor General's salary of \$91,000, retroactive to January 1, 1983.

MR. THOMPSON: What was the date on that again, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The date of our meeting? It was July 18, 1983, and it was made retroactive to January 1. So his term runs on the calendar year.

DR. CARTER: So the deputy ministers got what? We guess 3? But I still think, fine; let's hold on until we hear what the news is, and all officers can just wait.

MR. HIEBERT: Mr. Chairman, I just felt that we could have dealt with it now, because I like to see this committee being somewhat independent from the tagalong approach. To automatically follow is not always the best thing. But I can live with the waiting period for this particular year, because it would then appear to be perceived as being fair. I have no difficulty with that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have a couple of questions I would ask just for clarification or for the record. In the first place, we're only talking about two of the officers, because the Ombudsman is coming in on a new contract arrangement which — did we settle that last time, David? Is it in your report that his contract price will be effective from here to here, type of thing?

DR. CARTER: The contract is in the final stage of negotiation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, sorry.

DR. CARTER: My understanding is that it had been as good as verified. The only thing being changed on it was the matter of the Legislature covering the cost of legitimate moving expenses between Calgary and Edmonton at the commencement of the term and the return moving expenses to Calgary at the completion of the term, whenever that might be — whether it's five, 10, or whatever years. That was the last thing to be initialed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So we'll have that to go by when the time comes. Just to refresh your memory, I point out that last year the Auditor General received a 2 percent increase, the Chief Electoral Officer received 5 percent on a salary of \$57,780, effective April 1, 1983, and the Ombudsman received 5 percent on a salary of \$60,990, effective April 1, 1983. Those are the decisions we made last year. Those were the actions taken.

DR. CARTER: What the new Ombudsman gets is that same salary but factored into it is the in lieu of benefits and pension. So he has a car, plus that base figure, plus the value of what the benefits are, without receiving pension. That's factored in. He's getting roughly the same as what the present Ombudsman is getting.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Each of our three officers get the car, do they not?

DR. CARTER: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For purposes of this discussion today, I hear the committee unanimously saying that we will put this item back on the agenda for further discussion at a later meeting.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

DR. CARTER: Mr. Chairman, I can make arrangements for my copy of that contract on the Ombudsman thing to get over here if the committee wants to look at it right now. Or we could deal with

that later on just to give the imprimatur of the committee to it at the tail end of July. At the last meeting or so, the committee told me to go off and look after the fine tuning.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That was right. Does anybody see any reason why we should have that contract in our possession this summer?

MR. THOMPSON: I honestly believe that when we do get around to salary discussion — anyway, last year we had each of the people come in and talk salary. Bill Rogers never came; he sent his emissaries. But basically I think we should follow that same procedure. If we have a meeting re salaries, I think we should have an opportunity for each one of these people to come in and discuss the pros and cons. When you want to do that, Mr. Chairman, is basically up to you as far as the discussion is concerned.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think you're right, because with any job or position, more than just salary is involved. There is the relationship between the officer and this committee, for example, that we might want to discuss this. But I think you're right. We are suggesting that we could probably go ahead with the nonsalary part of that discussion, or should we wait until we get a firm opinion on salary?

MR. THOMPSON: I would prefer waiting and just having a salary day.

MR. NOTLEY: At the call of the Chair after the guidelines come down in August.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. As I was suggesting, item three will go back on the agenda for probably a late July meeting.

I added four or five items to the agenda for today's review, and I would like to ask for your comments on them. Item number four on my agenda is in the form of the question: what is the position of our committee with respect to the annual reports submitted by each of the three officers for whom we are responsible, such as the sixth annual report of the Chief Electoral Officer, the 17th annual report of the Ombudsman, et cetera. I am suggesting that as a committee we have a responsibility to make sure that some member of our committee, or a subcommittee, review these individual reports, be prepared to comment on them briefly within the committee and/or even have the author present to answer questions and expand on some aspects of his report. This would not only give us a much closer understanding of how these various officers work, I think it would also create a feeling of accountability from the standpoint of the officer with respect to this committee. I introduce that topic now for comment.

MR. PURDY: My comment is that two of the reports are probably pretty straightforward. Those are the Ombudsman and the Chief Electoral Officer. The other one that comes out, the Auditor General, is pretty complicated. I don't know if your intent is that we discuss it within this committee, or are we also available to answer it at other places at other times — say, with the press? That's my concern.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would not think that we would be in position to front-end for any of these people, to interpret their report to the press. Each of these officers is available to talk to the press themselves.

MR. PURDY: Or to interpret it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm concerned about whether we as a committee understand the report or have any questions arising from the report.

MR. PURDY: So in essence what you're saying is that before you table it in the Legislature, we should have an opportunity as a committee to look at it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I was wondering about the before or after tabling bit. I think it should be very close to that time, so we know what we are tabling. If these officers are going to submit an annual report — I hadn't developed the plans to the point where I was going to make a review at this table a prerequisite to tabling. I hadn't gone that far. You're almost implying that by your question, aren't you?

MR. PURDY: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No firm plan there, Bill. I was more concerned about the relationship of this committee with the officer who wrote the report. Do we have a good understanding of his work? Does he have a good understanding of our knowledge of his work? Do we have questions about what he does? Are we satisfied with the way in which he conducts his office? And does the report reflect part of that understanding?

MR. PURDY: One more comment. Is it not an ongoing commitment of this committee that we have the ability anyway to call that particular officer in and question that officer if we as a committee feel they are taking a direction they're not supposed to?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think we have that option, and we can do that anytime we want.

MR. THOMPSON: We'd be very careful.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This way, we're committing ourselves to at least an annual review outside of the salary review discussion. This is a sort of performance assessment or something like that — I don't know; those aren't good words for purposes of this discussion.

MR. PURDY: My final comment is this. I support that, but when would we have an opportunity to review that report? Before or after the tabling?

MR. CHAIRMAN: With the exception of — the Auditor General is extremely squeezey about having his report out anywhere before it's tabled. I am quite sure we the committee could get access to the other two a week or two in advance. That would have to be with the co-operation of the author. I'm not sure that what we have to say about it is going to have any bearing on whether it's tabled or not. My concern is that we know what's in it so we can discuss it with the author.

MR. HIEBERT: One of the prime objectives of this committee has been to try to increase the profile and that relationship to each officer. If we're going to do that and we're going to stick just to salaries, I think we are undercutting that objective immediately. I think the annual report from each officer is an important thing, and we should be having a discussion at some time with the officer and making that kind of part of the dialogue that goes on. It will reinforce in the officer's mind that they are working for the Legislature and that this subcommittee represents all the members in that go-between. That is what you're really reinforcing.

Whether I would want to have it before or after is a sensitive question, because I don't think our role is wanting to gerrymander or direct the report; therefore, there might be some value in doing it afterwards, so we can have a chance to study it and it becomes a meaningful thing, as opposed to the other way. If you do it before, why are you doing it before? You want to know something in there, and will you want to try to redirect? I think that causes too much of a suspicion on the part of the writer, and I would tend to favour doing it after it's filed.

DR. CARTER: I think there are three issues here. One is yes, we dialogue with the various officers about their reports. In my opinion, we do it after the report has been tabled. The third issue is this: who the heck does the tabling? The Speaker seems to think it's him who does the tabling. I can go in both directions. Either it's the Speaker, on behalf of the fact that these three are officers of the Legislature, or you as chairman should be doing the tabling. That's an unresolved issue at this stage.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In the two terms I've been involved, I've tabled two of the reports; namely, the Auditor General and the Ombudsman. The Speaker tables the Chief Electoral Officer. I don't have an explanation as to why it is that way.

MR. PURDY: The Speaker has always tabled the Ombudsman too. And before this committee, I'm not sure who tabled the Auditor General's. Was it the Provincial Treasurer? I don't recall now.

DR. CARTER: I think we're back into developing the ongoing life of the committee as to what has become the tradition. We now have some of them doing it, and I think all of them should do it via the chairman of this committee.

MR. PURDY: Yes.

MR. NOTLEY: There has to be some consistency across the board.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do I have your approval to write out . . .

DR. CARTER: That's a motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Any question on the motion? Those in favour? That motion is carried. Does anybody have any objection if the chairman of this committee advises the Speaker by letter that the unanimous decision of this committee is the way we'd like to do it in the future, and see what kind of

reaction we get? Would I wait for his reaction before I advise each of the officers that this is the way it will be done?

MR. THOMPSON: That would be prudent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Or do I advise the Speaker and the officers at the same time, by the same letter? I'll sort that one out.

MR. NOTLEY: There's one other thing I want to raise on this, Mr. Chairman. I think it's good to wait until after we have the reports, so we don't tend to alter or influence or even appear to influence. The only difficulty I see is the timing. Frankly, I hope we might be able to still do that before the spring session begins, because we don't do much justice — maybe I have to speak for myself here but when we get into the House, time is a very serious problem. I like the idea of sitting down in a relatively relaxed, nonconfrontational way, when we aren't struck with all kinds of time frame problems, to do justice to the kind of relationship we want to develop with each of these officers individually.

So I think it would be useful if it could be arranged before the spring session starts, even if it was just in that two-week period before.

MR. PURDY: One question to follow up. When are these reports usually tabled? Are they in the fall or . . .

DR. CARTER: Spring.

MR. CHAIRMAN: They're tabled in the spring session according to a very firm set of rules about how things are tabled. A follow-up to that comment of yours: there's the Auditor General's report. If we don't have the pretabling discussion misconstrued as a sort of embargo on it, a censoring kind of thing, but in the light of the way Grant described it we can always look at the raw manuscript, which is what I have here from the Auditor General from this last year. If that can be explained that way to the officers, they might feel quite comfortable in letting us see the manuscript prior to the printing thing so we can have one of those, as you say, relaxed dialogue discussions with them.

MR. THOMPSON: I'd like to speak on this. I think we're getting into a very delicate area here, and I think we have to proceed with caution. These are independent people. We're not supposed to direct them, and I don't even want to. So I would be basically in favour of looking at it afterwards.

But there is an area, and I'll wait till after your motion on it, of how much we do direct these people. I want to discuss travel, for instance, but not at this time. I do think it's an area where we want to be extremely cautious in starting to impinge on their so-called authority without some pretty good reasons for doing it. They are set up to work independently, and I don't want to move in any way to appear that our committee is starting to lessen that ability to operate.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What you said is right there. It's coming up, John. We'll go on to that one in a minute. We'll go back to this discussion about these

reports and using them.

MR. HIEBERT: There's one other report, Mr. Chairman. That is the one from the committee itself.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's right. It's on my list, and I want to ask you about it.

MR. HIEBERT: Do you want to cover it now or later?

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's all part of the same discussion. In addition to that I have another item, the preparation of our own budget. But let's stick to the reports.

MR. HIEBERT: There's a report you as the chairman have to file on behalf of this committee. I think you have a requirement to do that annually, do you not?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, I do. I'm sorry; I do not. We do that as a courtesy. Did you notice it was not tabled? It was filed with the library.

MR. HIEBERT: There is only one comment I would make. That is one report that probably we should — and maybe I missed a meeting, but it might be advisable that we should discuss that particular report before it goes in, as opposed to the other ones we've been talking about, because it represents all of us as a committee. I think that would be a very useful thing for ourselves, because it would do an assessment of what we've done for the year and may be helpful in making suggestions in terms of something being omitted or whatever.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I want to make that very recommendation. Historically, this report that the chairman files on behalf of the committee has been prepared from the minutes by somebody in the Auditor General's office. I don't even know who it is.

DR. CARTER: In the Auditor General's office?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Auditor General's office. He prepared the Bill Mack story, Bill Mack's report a year ago. The Auditor General offered those services to me, and I said that's fine. If somebody wants to go through the minutes and hit the highlights, I'll see what comes out of it. I worked through the minutes and hit the highlights. The product I got from the offer that came through the Auditor General's office was completely acceptable to me. I signed it and filed it. We had 25 or 30 copies made. I think each of you people got a copy, each of the officers got a copy, and there were three or four filed with the library.

As soon as I had done that, I said that's the last time I'm going to do that, because I was on the same wavelength as you're on now. That report will be written in a different manner and earlier. It might appear the same, but it will be prepared on a different basis. It will be written earlier and will be submitted to the members of this committee for approval before it is filed in the library. That's a promise I make.

Could we take this one step further to things like our budget? I think we're getting into a committee

structure, with activities and functions. That's going to require a more formal approach to our budget. Right now we are in a fiscal year when the budget was prepared on our behalf by Doug Blain.

MR. PURDY: And Members' Services.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Was it?

MR. PURDY: We had a bit of it, but not very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But we as a committee had very little to do with formulating our own budget. I would like to suggest that maybe the Chair could share or assign one or two people to take a look at our expenditures during the present fiscal year and what we might consider the next year. We don't have to do this for perhaps another two or three months, but if we keep that in mind, at a meeting like this, if we know that that's the way we're going to go and follow up on it in September, October, November, so we have our budget in place rather than having it prepared externally. That's one of the thoughts I've had, and I had it down here for comment. We're jumping through topics pretty fast here, and don't let me cut anybody off.

DR. CARTER: Just a minute. What's the time line when we have to have this proposed budget in the fall, so we have enough lead time, because that was part of our problem last year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's right. We ran out of lead time last year.

MR. PURDY: It comes back to Members' Services eventually, and we like to have them not later than November 1.

DR. CARTER: Mr. Chairman, we need to request that all three officers do their projection of conferences for next year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Then we as a committee can determine how our participation might fall in place and how much money we're going to require for it.

DR. CARTER: We're talking about till March 31, 1986.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes we are.

DR. CARTER: That's the letter that should go right now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. Thank you.

MR. NOTLEY: Do we agree that you, Mr. Chairman, will write the letter?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will write the letter.

MR. NOTLEY: Do we also agree that the chairman and vice-chairman come back with a proposed budget for some meeting before the target date in November.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I missed it, Grant, but I'll write the letter to the . . .

MR. NOTLEY: I would then suggest that the chairman and vice-chairman be the committee to prepare a budget and present it to us at some point so we can get it to Members' Services before November 1.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I did something wrong; that backfired. The Chair will be happy to put something together. We have a motion, don't we?

MR. NOTLEY: I move that a subcommittee of the chairman and vice-chairman be authorized to prepare a budget for 1985-86.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Is there any question on the motion?

MR. PURDY: Just one. At the same time, I think — I've put the date and frequency of meetings as number seven on our agenda today. That has to be worked in there too.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

DR. CARTER: Yes, and building up the per diems and expenses.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll have the vote on that motion. Those in favour of the motion? The motion is carried. Thank you.

While we're talking about reports and people filing reports on their activities, we expect a report from the three officers on their meetings, especially out-of-province meetings. As I reported earlier, I've been in contact with the Ombudsman. We're looking forward to a report from him on the various meetings he's been attending that are outstanding, including the one in Sweden. I assume it would also be fair to ask for a report from our own committee members who attend out-of-province meetings, such as the one we received from David Carter dated May 25, a two-page memo, an excellent report on where he went. This is the kind of thing I think should be considered standard procedure in this committee.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there anything else under review procedure for reports, et cetera? Going on to item five on my agenda, I was going to ask for a motion from this committee authorizing yesterday and today as pay days for the chairman. I was instructed that that has to be done meeting-by-meeting and each day by motion.

DR. CARTER: Mr. Chairman, we can do it for yesterday, but today you automatically get it off this sheet. I move that yesterday was an appropriate day for paying the chairman.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. That motion is carried.

Item number six is the motion for member participation in out-of-province conferences. We have the Sweden and Finland one looked after by motion, if I remember correctly. If we haven't, I'm in error. But it seems to me that we have it covered.

MR. PURDY: I think that was done some time ago.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. Under item number six, I'd like authorization to attend the national meeting of the auditors general in Charlottetown in July. We should also have a motion for three members of this committee to attend the annual conference of Canadian chief electoral officers in Winnipeg in July. The names we suggested at that time were names like Anderson, Hiebert, Purdy, and Buck. If there is any doubt about some of those names — and we want to specify the names in the motion, but we should have a motion authorizing membership participation in Winnipeg.

DR. CARTER: First, Mr. Chairman, I move that the chairman be sent to the annual meeting of auditors general in Prince Edward Island.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. That's the motion. Any question on the motion.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That one is carried. The second motion will deal with the Winnipeg meeting July 17 to 19.

DR. CARTER: My understanding was that we were going to send two members.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, we were.

DR. CARTER: I must go on record as saying that I'm not prepared to send Dr. Buck anywhere, not anywhere that's in this life.

MR. THOMPSON: We know where you stand.

DR. CARTER: I think that would be totally inappropriate, since he hasn't turned up for a meeting yet.

MR. HIEBERT: Mr. Chairman, I'm unable to attend. With a wedding this summer, I have enough.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have Al Anderson and Bill Purdy available to go to Winnipeg July 17 to 19.

DR. CARTER: Who's Al Anderson?

MR. PURDY: Al Anderson is in [inaudible].

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dennis.

MR. PURDY: I'm not available either. That's the start of K-days in Edmonton. I'm on the Northlands board and have to spend some time there.

MRS. DAVIDSON: Mr. Chairman, I believe there are going to be public hearings on senate reform around those dates.

MR. NOTLEY: I guess the only one who can go is Walter Buck.

MR. PURDY: Dr. Carter will go in lieu.

DR. CARTER: John, can you go then?

MR. THOMPSON: I said last meeting that July was hung up for me.

DR. CARTER: Surely the Leader of the Opposition can go.

MR. NOTLEY: The Leader of the Opposition is not able to go.

MR. PURDY: The dates are the 17th, 18th, and 19th. What's travel time and so on? Can we get some more information?

DR. CARTER: If the senate committee hearings are on — we have a conference call on that in half an hour. It may be that there aren't any hearings on those dates, and then perhaps Dennis Anderson could go. If we really have nobody else, I suppose maybe I could go for . . .

MR. PURDY: That's what I'm trying to determine too. I've already committed myself to Northlands for the 18th and 19th.

DR. CARTER: Mr. Chairman, I move that we leave it to the discretion of the Chair to send or not send, but I add my proviso that Dr. Buck not be sent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, I heard that.

MR. THOMPSON: It's on tape; it's on paper.

MR. PURDY: It's written on the walls.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I appreciate the guidance of the committee on this topic.

DR. CARTER: No, that's just me; that's not the committee.

MR. HIEBERT: The principle is sound.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have the necessary motion concerning . . . I'm sorry, David.

DR. CARTER: Just left to the discretion of you as chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Will that trigger the funding?

DR. CARTER: And that not more than two members of the committee go.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's the motion. It's agreed that not more than two members of the committee go. That motion is passed. That's the motion that will trigger the financial support for that trip.

The next item on my schedule is the discussion that was introduced a minute ago by Bill Purdy; that is, I'd like some discussion on how you think our committee should conduct its activities from the standpoint of regular or irregular meetings and frequency. I'm finding that some of the committees and commissions and councils that I work on are getting into long-term planning with very fixed schedules. It would appear that if there are certain jobs we're going to be doing, we're going to have to look ahead to some planning for things like budgets, review of reports, reports on conference travel —

this sort of thing. I'd like some comments on that, please. Bill, you started the discussion. Do you want to follow up on any part of that?

MR. PURDY: It's just an item we should be looking at for the chairman to determine the frequency we should be meeting and what topics we'll be discussing on those particular dates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Anybody else?

MR. THOMPSON: I prefer flexibility. I don't know if we want to start getting too rigid in this. I have enough to do without having meetings for meetings' sake. If you set up a rigid schedule, sometimes you end up manufacturing agenda items. From my point of view, I would prefer the flexibility we've operated under in the past.

MR. NOTLEY: Agreed.

DR. CARTER: I see the flexible situation being the case but that for budget purposes we build in an item, say, nine or 10 times a year. Then we could calculate that maybe three or four of those would be meetings in session. Then we have provision made for some other meetings outside legislative sitting time. I see it more as a budget building block for us to adjust at will.

MR. NOTLEY: This summer we see one meeting which should be held sometime after we get the guidelines, so that's late July or August, and obviously one meeting before November for the presentation of the budget. Then I hope the three meetings with the officers, the sort of in-depth meetings apart from salary, could be held before the spring session.

DR. CARTER: Before spring or before fall?

MR. NOTLEY: I'm easy. Since the reports are coming in the spring, it might be better to do it in early fall. I just don't want to — I'm thinking out loud here. The problem with August and September, for those of us on the heritage trust fund, is that it's so demanding. We've got that time taken up. The problem after November is that you begin to run the risk of influencing the report. So it might be better to have it just before the spring session, when presumably the report is prepared.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And how about having it on their turf? Work that back into our system again?

MR. THOMPSON: On that point of Grant's, if we have these meetings with the individual officers, I think that word "report" should be verboten. We should not even discuss it then if we have it "pre". We should sit down and say, do you have any concerns, do you have any areas you think — a kind of short discussion where they can sit down with us and say, here's an area we've let slip for two or three years and possibly it needs attention; that type of thing. After the reports, if we feel it's necessary . . .

MR. NOTLEY: Then we have the right to request.

MR. HIEBERT: Mr. Chairman, I favour the view of

block budgeting for so many meetings, identifying certain key meetings that we would have, and some of them have been named; in terms of scheduling, flexible. With all the other committees that are locked in, I think flexibility will increase the likelihood of having people out. From time to time we do it and sometimes the Chair has to do it, but I prefer the way we've handled it over the past year. After all, we have to recollect that over the past year not only did we establish these contacts but we also dealt with the Ombudsman thing. I think our procedure in that was one of flexibility, and it worked out very well.

MR. NOTLEY: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Any further comment on that one? I'm influenced by only one observation. I am on a committee that is very, very flexible and notice of the meetings is very short; maybe that's where the problem is. I am invariably unavailable to go to those meetings. Maybe that is what's happening to Dr. Buck with this meeting. I just want to point that out. I would like to think that our meetings are being held in a manner that we aren't excluding any members because of this flexibility. If we gave more lead time, would it be more fair to all members? I just raise it to ask a question. I want to make sure we understand it.

MR. THOMPSON: It's a point, Bob. How much lead time do we get now for a meeting? I realize that it varies.

MR. CHAIRMAN: At least a week to two weeks is what I try for.

MR. THOMPSON: When we're not in session, I think a minimum of two weeks.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I understand that Louise usually phones around and hopes she can find a quorum, and then we send the notices out.

MR. NOTLEY: I don't think that has been an overwhelming problem, Bob, in terms of people coming or not coming.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think we've already dealt with the last thing I have on my list; that is, the topic of budget items and budget construction. We dealt with it earlier to my satisfaction. Does anybody want to pursue it further?

DR. CARTER: I just made some quick notes that for the budget thing we would make provision for meetings; the travel together with Legislative Officers to various conferences; secretarial staff input; annual report costs, which I assume are fairly minimal; and a miscellaneous catchall thing, so you would have some for entertainment. I think it's also appropriate that there should be a bit of a budget for the chairman to have lunch with those various officers, with it being paid for by this committee rather than you getting the bill paid by them or it coming out of your private pocket.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have to admit that I can outfumble them. They pick up the tab every time,

because then I know who is paying for it.

DR. CARTER: That's fine, but if we're going to have our independence as a committee, I think we need to have that appropriately built in.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Quite frankly, David, I think you're right.

MR. THOMPSON: For the integrity of the committee, if nothing else.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Item number nine on my agenda — and I'm adding to it. If I may interrupt myself, I didn't ask for a cutting off time on this meeting. Are we okay for another 15 minutes?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Item number nine could be a relatively large item for discussion, and I want to identify it. John Thompson touched on it. To what degree do we as a committee monitor the activities of these offices, and to what degree do we interfere? For example, some committees ask their officers to submit their travel plans, and then we approve their travel plans and payment of their expense accounts, and things like this. In other words, we get right down to the day-to-day operation of the office. We operated at quite a long arm's length away from them. We get the courtesy of being advised when they're out of province. They do not leave with our permission. This is leading into a discussion of the real role of a committee of this type.

I think I will introduce that topic as notice for the agenda coming up. I would ask people to think about it. I'm reluctant to become too much more involved than we are. If we're going to get more involved, we have to do so with real care and study. That's why I think we should take a hard look at it. I'm sorry to be bringing my personal opinions in on this sort of discussion; that's not the intent.

MR. NOTLEY: I wonder if, through the Parliamentary Association, we might find out what is done, what the practice is. I think there are a lot of sensitive areas here. We don't want to erode the independence of any of the officers. On the other hand, there have been certain travel things that are perhaps a bit questionable.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Grant, that leads right in to my next question, my 10th and final point; that is, should we as a committee ask one of the researchers, legislative interns, or something, to sit with us and research topics for us at our request?

MR. NOTLEY: In terms of getting this information, I'm not so sure you want to be contacting the other offices. I'm sure ombudsmen offices or auditor general offices or anything else would tend to contact one another, and we don't want to create the impression that we're on some kind of witch-hunt. On the other hand, it would be useful to know the practice on this in other provinces. It's a delicate issue of balancing some sense of restraint against the independence factor. If other provinces have looked at it, it would be useful if we had this information. I

don't know if there's somebody in the Legislative Assembly office who could do that, but it might be appropriate if there were — or through the Parliamentary Association.

MR. PURDY: The Speaker has an executive assistant.

MR. NOTLEY: Why don't we ask the Speaker's executive assistant? Is he busy during the summer? It would be an appropriate thing for him to do.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And then invite him to come and give us a little report on how other legislative offices committees operate. Did you get that suggestion, secretary? It's also on tape, I suppose. I keep forgetting that this cotton-picking tape is going all the time.

MRS. DAVIDSON: Did you want that as a motion?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. I'll take that on as an assignment and see what comes out of it.

The other question I indicated here is whether we would have need of the services of a researcher to search up certain functions or activities with respect to our program. I just throw that out for you to think about for a while. Something may come up in the future. We don't have to review it today. I don't think we yet have need to go as far as the Ontario committee, that has its own legal counsel sitting in.

MR. THOMPSON: Oh boy.

MR. PURDY: No way.

MR. NOTLEY: We don't want to get into that kind of mess.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Maybe from time to time we would have topics we'd like to have reviewed for our own benefit and use the services of the legislative interns.

That exhausts my agenda. Has anybody other things they'd like to bring up? The next meeting will probably be near or after August 1, when hopefully we'll have more information on how to proceed with salary discussions.

MR. PURDY: I move adjournment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. I also want to thank you all very much for coming. It's pretty difficult for a chairman to hold a meeting if nobody comes.

[The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.]

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