

[Deputy Chairman: Dr. Carter]

[9:05 a.m.]

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We'll call the meeting to order. I expect that Mr. Hiebert will be along shortly. He had to go to another office first. Regrets from Dr. Elliott, who's on the water management hearing which is taking place in the Brooks area.

Welcome, Mr. Sawyer and Mr. Pennett. It's my understanding that if you really want to stretch our meeting time till noon, we can go that far. The purpose is first of all to deal with the matter of the proposed budget for the next fiscal year. From our point of view, after that we have some time set aside just to meet you for a general discussion of the workings of the Ombudsman's office. I assume that everyone knows everyone.

Would you take the committee through your budget, please?

MR. SAWYER: Mr. Chairman, I believe the budget was circulated to all members of the committee. It is a fairly simple document. With the exception of a couple of changes which I can deal with, it carries forward in anticipation of a continuation of the program that was established for the current fiscal year. The vast majority of costs associated with the office are for salaries, and the salary budget provides for 18 positions, including mine. One position is vacant at the moment, the position that was occupied by Bob Wyatt, who was executive assistant to Dr. Ivany. To this point I haven't decided whether I'm going to fill the position and, if so, with what kind of position I would fill it. Somehow I doubt that I would fill it with an executive assistant who functions similar to the way Bob Wyatt did. I'll come back to that in a moment, but in essence, because I am uncertain I have left the position in the budget.

There are adjustments in the rates of pay for some of the staff for next year as compared to this year. Those are adjustments that are built into the pay structure. They're not COLA increases; they're merit increases that relate from one year to the next. There's an adjustment inasmuch as the gross that is paid to me is a little higher than that paid to Dr. Ivany. That adjustment is built in. The total of those changes is \$16,000.

The only other significant difference in the budget has to do with a change in the amount provided for travel expenses. A total of \$92,000 was provided in the budget for the current fiscal year. The amount was higher than in previous years, because 1984 saw the quadrennial — if that means every four years — international conference, and there were some significant expenses associated with that. We believe that our travel expense budget for next year should be lower, although for reasons that I can explain in a moment I expect there will be somewhat more travel in the province by investigators. That has to do with style of investigation. So there's a bit of an offset there.

The need I've identified as being required in the office is for word processing equipment and equipment that will enable us to automate the records system. We have thousands and thousands of cards filed by name in stacks of filing cabinets. I think we should start to automate that information. Right now we have in the office two word processors,

which do not effectively serve the office. One is placed at my secretary's desk; the second is a machine that different people use. The whole process is not that effective. We've looked into the possibility of either buying or leasing word processing equipment that is similar to the equipment used in the Legislature by, among others, the Clerk's office. We think that equipment should be at the five workstations where we have people preparing reports. We've priced that out, and the purchase price is roughly \$43,000 or \$44,000.

We're aware that the Leg. Assembly itself has rented the equipment on a three-year lease, I presume, with the option to buy at the end of that time. That seems a reasonable way to go. The lease cost to us for five stations, plus a computer component that will enable us to automate our file records and indices, is \$22,000. So what we've done is reduce our travel expenses for next year by that amount and provided a sum of \$22,000 further down for the acquisition of this equipment.

Those basically are the changes: the acquisition of word processing equipment for all stations, which is covered by a reduction in our travel expense budget, and the \$16,000 statutory increase in wages from one year to the next. So our total budget reflects a \$16,000 increase.

Backup detail is attached to the material. I don't profess to understand the provincial accounting system, at least not yet. Do you fellows?

AN HON. MEMBER: No.

MR. SAWYER: Mr. Pennett is my admin officer, and he can answer any specific questions you might have about any detail in the budget. He assures me that the submission is compiled in accordance with instructions from the budget office and from the Leg. Assembly office as well.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Questions.

MR. THOMPSON: I have a couple of questions. Naturally the first one has to do with salaries. I understand about your area, Brian, so we won't go into that. You said that for the staff there were built-in increases in the salary schedule. Maybe you could just go into that a little more fully. I picked this out of your little letter that came:

The increase of \$16,000 which is reflected in this submission consists almost entirely of normal salary adjustments for existing staff.

On the outside you say the \$16,000 lumps in your increase. Maybe you can give us a breakdown of what's involved in that.

MR. SAWYER: Joe, do you have the specifics on those figures?

MR. PENNETT: The normal increments, merit increases, are added in every year. You'll notice that the DPC 632 lists all the staff and salaries. Mr. Sawyer is on contract, and his salary wasn't included in that total amount.

MR. THOMPSON: So that's over and above.

MR. SAWYER: It's in the \$16,000, but it's not on this page.

MR. PENNETT: These salaries are set up by the pay plan with Personnel Admin Office for management and employees. You'll see areas where increments are listed and added in. These are normal adjustments that come up on merit increases.

MR. SAWYER: Employees have a salary range, and they start at one point in the range, depending on the skills they bring to the job. Each year they progress through the range until they reach maximum. A number of the employees are at maximum, so there is no adjustment for them. Some who started down the range get an automatic increase, and that's the increase that's reflected here.

MR. THOMPSON: That's fine, then, unless there's something else you'd like to mention.

MR. PENNETT: The only other thing I was going to mention is that you'll notice there has been a decrease in salaries for permanent positions from last year but an increase in payments to contract employees. That's where the change comes in. Because Mr. Sawyer is on contract, there's a switch in the payment code.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Our basic problem is a zero percent increase across the board for everybody. We need to know what the exact facts are, because somebody will be after us. If the explanation we've received from Mr. Sawyer is satisfactory to the committee, that's how it will have to be.

MR. SAWYER: We can give you the figure that represents the difference between my gross take-out and Dr. Ivany's. That is one part of the \$16,000. Then we can give you the increment they are entitled to, by employee. There has been no curb on that. Those increments are a matter of contract, and they work their way through it. We can give you those two figures.

MR. THOMPSON: The point I'm trying to make is: is this consistent with what's going on with the rest of the government employees? I don't want your office to be any different. If there's a zero increase for the Department of Transportation and increments aren't allowed this year or last year . . . I can't tell you whether they are or not, but the point I'm making is that I hope you people conform to what's going on in the rest of the government departments.

MR. PENNETT: The only merit increases that are included are merit increases for nonmanagement staff. Management hasn't got anything; no increase at all.

MR. SAWYER: The point that's being made is: how are the other departments interpreting zero growth? My interpretation of growth is either a COLA increase or additional people or additional something. At the moment I don't think a legislated and contracted difference in salary from one year to the other is growth. We'll have to check that out.

MR. PENNETT: Our increases are handled the same as any other department's.

MR. SAWYER: Can we validate that, though? Can we verify it? For instance, can we ensure that if Transportation's budget was \$100 million — I don't know what their budget is — it is going to be \$103 million this year to cover . . .

MR. PENNETT: That's difficult to say. If they . . .

MR. SAWYER: We'll find out.

MR. PENNETT: If they get rid of two positions . . .

MR. PURDY: Maybe I can answer that, being clerk of committees and having some understanding of it. In legislative estimates there is a contingency vote for salaries. That covers merit increases for various departments, and as I understand it, it's divvied up out of that. If some employee is entitled to a raise from one step to the next, that comes automatically. What we're talking about is zero-based budgeting for salary increases. From \$30,000 up there will be nothing; it will be frozen at \$30,000. But the person could not be at the top of that scale, so may get a 2 per cent increase, or whatever the figure is, as per the negotiations and the agreement.

MR. THOMPSON: Okay. As long as we're conforming, that's all. I have one more question, and then I'll sit back and listen.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I just want to make a comment, member from Spring Coulee. Out of all this you might be able to make the deduction that MLAs are not worthy of merit increases.

MR. THOMPSON: I don't get a merit increase myself.

We'll get back to this word processor thing you're bringing in. Are you just doing this in the Edmonton office, or does this go to the Calgary office? Is there a communications link?

MR. SAWYER: I would love to have the ability to buy a telephone line between Calgary and Edmonton so we could put the same equipment there and transmit reports on the word processor, but telephone lines between the cities are expensive. This isn't the year to do it, but I'll come back to you on that eventually.

In the meantime, we'll move one of the machines we have here to Calgary so that they will be automated down there. They prepare their own reports and ship them up by courier. We will have a second machine here, which we will declare surplus and which will be disposed of by Crown assets.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Bill.

MR. PURDY: My questions have been asked, and I answered one. The other one was on the computer.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Good. I look forward to your supplying the memo which gives an explanation in absolute detail, which we were originally going to get from them. I'll get both copies and compare

them.

MR. MILLER: Brian, I presume you hire your own staff.

MR. SAWYER: Yes.

MR. MILLER: Do you negotiate the salaries of the people you hire?

MR. SAWYER: The range is established and has been negotiated and set. I negotiate within that range.

MR. MILLER: The classification is done by the government, and then you fit them into that classification.

The rent for the premises you occupy is paid by Public Works, so that doesn't enter into your budget.

MR. SAWYER: We have just asked them to negotiate a renewal of the lease arrangement for the space we're in. It's not great space, but it's entirely adequate, so we're going to stay there.

MR. MILLER: It's a pretty good location.

MR. SAWYER: The location is fine.

MR. MILLER: If they're negotiating a lease at this time, they should be able to make a damn good deal.

MR. SAWYER: I hope so.

MR. MILLER: All businesses are the same; when you get word processors and computers, it's supposed to make everything easier and give you a lot more information. Sometimes this information is good, and sometimes you wish you didn't have it. Although we get all this extra, nice, new, fancy equipment, it's my impression that the number of people on staff remains constant, not only in your shop but in all government shops. Sometimes I think we go overboard in getting equipment, and a lot of the information is useless information. Would you agree?

MR. SAWYER: I agree that as a general premise when you go into computers you don't wind up cutting staff. At best you stay level, and not infrequently you increase. In my previous job, I oversaw the introduction of computers in a lot of areas. While there may have been some decrease in staff for a while, it caught up again fairly quickly. That's because you have the capacity to generate more information, and then for some reason we seem to decide that we need more information.

I hasten to point out that that's not what we're doing here; we're buying word processing equipment. The computer add-on is a very small component which simply will automate the three-by-five index cards, so we'll have that in the machine and it can be called up. That's all the computer capacity we're using.

We have five people who type reports, and I am very, very fussy about the letters that go out to complainants and departments. I want them as letter perfect as we can get them. I'm not talking about style or format; I'm talking about content. I read all those letters, and to this point I've been very demanding on how they're done. Until people get

used to my expectations, it means they're redone a number of times. This cries for word processing, so you can change and add things and bang out a number of copies. It's just the word processing we're getting.

MR. THOMPSON: I'd just like to comment. I got a letter from Brian, and I really look on it as a work of art.

MR. SAWYER: Great.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: After this meeting we're all invited to go by your office to see this framed copy.

Obviously you feel you need all five stations on the word processing system at once. What's the cost of an individual station?

MR. PENNETT: For a buy-out?

MR. SAWYER: No. What would be the difference in cost if we only had four stations?

MR. PENNETT: About \$911, and then there would be maintenance on top of that.

MR. SAWYER: Three are \$911, and then the extra two . . . Is this the buy-out?

MR. PENNETT: No, that's leased.

MR. SAWYER: About \$200 a month or \$2,400 per year per station.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I'm pleased that the process of the processor is likely to go ahead. I just wish you'd come over and convince Members' Services that the MLAs could get the same kind of . . .

MR. THOMPSON: They're working on it.

MR. PURDY: We've worked on it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I'm just pointing out that we don't have the same flexibility with our own budget.

MR. THOMPSON: I'd like to make a comment on that. I think you are wise to have five stations for morale reasons, if for no other reason, so everybody is working from the same base. I think it's a smart move. You either go one way or the other, but don't go part way. I think you just cause yourself a whole bunch of problems personnelwise.

MR. SAWYER: I agree.

MR. PURDY: Just to follow on that, I hope you're putting in a quality printer too.

MR. SAWYER: We're having one high-quality printer; all the machines feed into the same printer in a central location.

MR. PURDY: What's the cost of that? About \$1,000?

MR. SAWYER: It's included. The basic package is three stations and a printer. The total of that is

\$1,200 a month, \$14,000 a year. So we're attaching two extra stations to that. We can't break down the cost of the printer, but it's a high quality printer.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Do I assume that the equipment bought in last year's extraordinary . . . I think we gave permission for a B budget item to pick up a computer. Did we do that last year?

MR. PENNETT: Application was made for a computer, and it was turned down.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We turned it down. Thank you.

MR. SAWYER: I don't think the office needs one. This little add-on component will do all we need.

MR. PURDY: All you want to do is sort, file, and keep things. So you don't have to be that sophisticated.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I appreciate the budget information and the breakdown. It's been useful. I wonder if you would elaborate on page 2, category 200, Travel Expenses, possible transfer of personnel between Calgary and Edmonton offices.

MR. SAWYER: There are two solicitors on the staff of the Ombudsman's office at the present time: one in Edmonton and one in Calgary. The one in Calgary impresses me as having a good grasp of administrative law, and she happens to be very interested in familiarizing herself with administrative law decisions across the country. I think she's wasted in Calgary. I would much rather have her in Edmonton where she can provide direct assistance to me and to the other investigators. I've discussed with her the possibility of moving to Edmonton. She was transferred to Calgary — what, four years ago?

MR. PENNETT: She started in Calgary.

MR. SAWYER: In any event, I've discussed with her the possibility of moving here, and she's receptive to doing so next spring. The cost of the move will be minimal because she is a single woman who rents a furnished apartment; the expenses will be low. I think she should be here providing direct assistance. So that's what that is. That would create a vacancy in Calgary, for which I would propose to recruit in Calgary so there would be no transfer expenses. If one of the staff members here wanted to go to Calgary, I'd only be prepared to consider it if they were prepared to hitchhike down and do it at minimum cost.

MR. PURDY: Just to follow up on that, is that the person who may fill the executive assistant vacancy?

MR. SAWYER: No. There are some other changes in the office staff which I would like to discuss with you later on, which will probably clarify what I have in mind.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Any more questions on the budget side of it, gentlemen?

MR. PURDY: Are you going to do an investigation for the budget next year on what it would cost to put in a modem between Edmonton and Calgary for your word processing stations? You'd have to go to a computer then.

MR. SAWYER: I don't know that we necessarily would. I think the phone tie-in and modem are all we need, that we don't need anything more than that. Apparently this system already has a tie-in and phone line elsewhere in the provincial public service. Is that correct, Louise, as far as you know?

MRS. EMPSON: Yes.

MR. PENNETT: The cost is tremendous for the phone line.

MR. SAWYER: It's the phone line that's expensive.

MR. PENNETT: We looked at that two years ago when we purchased the two stand-alone word processors; we have one in Calgary and one here. One is at Brian's secretary's station. We talked about tying them together, and a fantastic amount of money was involved. The security angle was looked at more than anything. We thought it was an exorbitant amount of money to have an individual line, so we didn't ask for the link at that time.

MR. SAWYER: I think the security aspect is probably over-rated. I think standard security is adequate for our needs. If there were some way I could piggyback onto another line, I would be happy to do so. Failing that, I don't know if we can lean on AGT. Do we have any push with AGT?

Having the two word processors tied in is certainly a logical step in due course. That's the way communications is going. There may be some technological breakthrough that will enable us to do it for less money. Who knows?

MR. PURDY: In the company I'm with, TransAlta, we're back and forth with messages between our office and Calgary every day. It's such a unique setup.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Hiebert, we've been going through the budget side of it, and questions have been asked along the lines of staff salary increases and the matter of the overseas portion of the travel budget being substantially reduced. The last number of questions have been with regard to installing word processing equipment and stations. As you know, we're going to spend some more time with the Ombudsman later this morning. Do you have any specific budget questions?

MR. HIEBERT: Sorry for coming in late. I guess have a general question. If you recall, one of the prime concerns expressed during your pre-time of coming into the job was how you would handle certain staff situations with regard to the changeover. Maybe that question has been asked. How has the transition from one to the other gone?

MR. SAWYER: Reasonably well. I have no problem discussing my reaction to the staff with Mr. Pennett here, but he might. I'm entirely happy with Mr.

Pennett — for today anyway. [laughter] Generally speaking, it's gone pretty well, although I'm going to make some changes in personnel. I was prepared to talk about that later on. Insofar as budget is concerned, we have one vacancy at the moment. Mr. Wyatt, Dr. Ivany's exec assistant, left at the time I came; he went back into private industry. I have not filled that position, and I haven't decided yet whether I'm going to. I've left it in the budget, but I haven't decided whether I'm going to fill it. I said earlier that if I did fill it I wouldn't fill it with the same kind of person, doing the same kind of thing Mr. Wyatt was doing. Frankly I haven't decided whether I will fill it with another investigator or with somebody who has writing skills. In my judgment, there's a dearth of writing skills in the office, but I don't know that I would hire a journalist to be the writer. I also wouldn't hire an academic, but that's another point.

MR. HIEBERT: That's precisely why I came to the question. Maybe how that translates into the budgetary system should come up later.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: For the purposes of the budget, you haven't had a raft of resignations so that we can reduce the budget in that way.

MR. SAWYER: Not yet. We're having another meeting tomorrow in which I'm going to outline a couple of changes to the staff. We've already had one pretty good meeting, and I'll tell you about that later.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Any other questions?

MR. PURDY: I move that the budget estimates for 1985-86 be accepted.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: A seconder for the motion.

MR. MILLER: I'll second it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: All those in favour, please signify. Carried unanimously.

As a footnote to that, hopefully next year we'll have these discussions a couple of months earlier, in the first couple of weeks of September. We know that a combination of events has made the process somewhat tardy over the years. Next year we'll be seeing you on the budget issue in September.

We'll have a five-minute stretch, grab a cup of coffee, and come right back. Thank you, Mr. Pennett.

MR. PENNETT: You're welcome.

[The committee recessed for five minutes]

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Brian, just let it run for the next little while. I know you'd like it to be a candid interchange about some of the ideas you have about the office and vice versa. Over to you.

MR. SAWYER: I've just jotted down a couple of headings to keep my thoughts on track. If I say anything that is confusing or puzzling, would somebody please interrupt and seek clarification?

First I'd like to talk about the staff. In terms of

quality, in my judgment there is a mix of people. This is all opinion, of course. I've had about 10 weeks to form some opinions.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Excuse me, Brian. Committee members, I wonder if we really want the transcript going.

MR. THOMPSON: No. I think this should be a kind of . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Chair will entertain a motion that this committee is . . .

MR. HIEBERT: I so move.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you. All those in favour? Carried.

[The committee moved in camera at 9:37 a.m.]

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[Deputy Chairman: Dr. Carter] [2:15 p.m.]

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I think Al is lost, so we'll commence. Thank you for coming, gentlemen. I apologize for our esteemed chairman, who is off managing the water resources somewhere in southern Alberta.

We met earlier today and went over the budget estimates for the Ombudsman, and next Wednesday we meet again to go over the estimates for the Auditor General. We also anticipate that next year we will attempt to meet with you in September, so we can get things back into the normal cycle of events.

If you'd like to take us through your document, Mr. Wark, we'll entertain questions afterwards.

MR. WARK: Mr. Chairman, gentlemen, and Louise, we sent over the document and, really, other than the words I put in the memo, appendices A, B, and C are the ones that are operational. I simply sent along the copies of the forms that budget bureau require my controller to send over for machine input. So if you agree, we could perhaps ignore D.

Just a few comments. As you've probably noticed, the budget this year is considerably larger than last year's. It's certainly not very involved. The total estimated budget is \$4.3 million. I'd like to confirm that there's no change in our office size, with eight permanent positions. In fact all the same people are aboard. The increase I mentioned is from last year and is almost totally involved in the general enumeration we have planned for September '85.

Breaking it down, following the appendices, appendix A is really our office operation. It's the administrative support for the eight of us. There's no change whatsoever in the overall total there.

Appendix B: some years ago we agreed with Treasury to keep the enumeration, administration, and election in separate votes. I guess they handle it as such. We are budgeting there for \$140,000 less than last year, and there's a good reason. We have on the shelf practically all the paper for the next election; not quite but just about all the forms, ballots, and all. We'll need the \$100,000 shown there mainly for by-elections, returning officer training, and returning officer and our own office travel. Certainly \$100,000 will get us through, unless by any chance we happen to have a spate of by-elections, in which case we'd have to transfer some funds from the enumeration budget. That's not difficult. I can do that over my own signature without having to come to the Assembly.

Appendix C is the one where we'll spend the greatest amount of money, and that's to cover the enumeration. We've attempted to reduce it a little, from experience in the '81 and '82 enumerations. The estimated total is \$3.8 million — a few thousand from there. I think it will probably be closer to \$3.4 million, but we can't take a chance on paring it that far because the area of doubt is in enumerators. The Act allows a rural returning officer to hire one or two enumerators. From the experience in '81 and '82, more and more rural ROs are coming back to one enumerator. But a lot of them still have two, because if they happen to be ladies they don't like going around alone and they get either another lady or a gentleman to go with them. Every enumerator

costs a lot of money. About 85 percent of this \$3.8 million we're talking about is for enumerators. So those extra 2,000 or 3,000, depending on what the rural ROs want to do, make a difference.

At any rate, to give you an idea of our estimate, when we came to your committee in '82 our budget was \$4.389 million. From the experience in the '81 and '82 enumerations, this time we've pared it back to \$3.8 million, and it's mainly our experience with ROs not hiring two rural enumerators. City ROs have to have two enumerators. So in effect we've lowered it by \$500,000, and I think we may save a little more, because ROs won't take as many enumerators as we'd planned. I'm sure you appreciate that I can't leave the money out in case they do.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Any other comments?

MR. WARK: There is a \$31,000 increase to cover the cost recovery of mapping. That hasn't been in a budget before, because mapping didn't have a cost recovery system. They've gone to cost recovery. I think you'll appreciate that advertising, freight, postage, telephone — any of those things — have gone up considerably. So there are a few more dollars there. We aren't recommending any increases in the fee schedule for returning officers or enumerators, so nothing has changed there.

We're plotting a list of electors. With statistics, we work it out that there will be about 1.4 million. It really won't be an increase from 1982. Having said that, I should say that I don't think we'll register 1.4 million electors. In a non-election year, a lot of people don't bother with the notices you leave, saying, "Phone, because you weren't at home," or whatever. They're not too keen or too interested in getting on the list. So we're looking at comparing a list of electors that was done in 1982, the month before an election. I think the public knew an election was coming. Everybody was keen. The phones were ringing off the hook to get on the list of electors. That won't happen this time. I don't think we'll get to 1.4 million, but at any rate, that's the projection.

That's about it, gentlemen. That's why we need to spend that much money.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Mr. Miller.

MR. MILLER: Ken, you're talking about having an enumeration, and the boundaries are changing. Will you be enumerating on the basis of the new boundaries or the present boundaries?

MR. WARK: If something isn't done to the Election Act, I must enumerate on the present boundaries. A previous section 12(1) of the Act said that I enumerate every year except the year of an election and the year following an election. This section 12 says what I enumerate, and 12(1) says that the enumeration will be conducted using the schedule to the Electoral Divisions Act. That's the one that has the 79 ridings. But then (2) says that if there has been a boundary commission and the boundary commission recommendations have been enacted but not proclaimed by March 1 of an enumeration year, the Chief Electoral Officer may deem them to be in

effect for the enumeration.

The bind I'm in right now, sitting here — it's quite obvious that Bill won't get passed and enacted by March 1. I've talked to Bill Payne. We're going to have to amend the Election Act, or I'd be enumerating and wasting \$3.3 million on a list of electors that wouldn't be worth anything if we did it on the old electoral divisions. So we're doing all our planning and are going to brief the returning officers as if we were going right ahead with the 83, hoping that someone will amend the Act. We certainly don't intend to enumerate based on 79 electoral division boundaries.

We've had a couple of meetings with Leg. Counsel and Mr. Payne, and I think they know what has to be done. We'll have to do something for the '85 enumeration to make that March 1 date June 1 or something, depending on when the Bill changing to the 83 electoral divisions is passed.

MR. MILLER: You're locked into a September enumeration then, are you?

MR. WARK: The Act locks us in. It could be changed, I suppose. Although the best thing would be to change that one simple date, we can live with June 1, because I'm going to plan and, per se, spend some money. I hope we don't get hung out on the clothesline in the act of doing it. We're going to spend some money training for the 83 electoral division enumeration. I've been assured orally that that should be all right.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What section was that? Section 12(2) of the Election Act?

MR. WARK: Yes, section 12(2) of the Election Act. I noticed Ray Martin brought it up in the Legislature the other day. We discussed it in the boundary commission many times. One of the reasons we wanted to get the report in was so it could be on the shelf for the fall session. I think you'd agree it would be a waste of anything like \$3.3 million or \$3.5 million to . . . I have a list of electors for the current 79 electoral divisions, but I would have to do another one, because the Act says there shall be an enumeration every year except the year of an election and the calendar year following an election, except for boundary commission year.

I'm waiting for changes to the Act, if that answers it, Bud.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Chairman, first of all I think the Chief Electoral Officer and staff should be congratulated in keeping the administrative costs to their level. It's obviously important at this time that that be done in all areas, and I'm glad to see that it is here.

You alluded, through the chairman, to the fact that the former enumerations were less costly than anticipated, and that resulted in your paring down the estimates for this enumeration. Are you able to be a bit more specific on what those costs were, just by comparison? Do you recall?

MR. WARK: Enumerators, really. The amount we're showing this time — and it's approximately \$500,000 less — would be from the experience that rural ROs are only going to use one enumerator, and each

enumerator gets the whole fee. A rural enumerator gets somewhere around \$400 for doing a subdivision. If you add 2,000 — or you could add 3,000 of them — it makes a difference in the budget. That was the complete difference. The fee schedule hasn't changed since the '81 election. Returning officers get the same.

MR. MILLER: Ken, what are those numbers? Have you got them handy?

MR. WARK: A city returning officer looking after, say, 20,000 electors will get a cheque for about \$5,500. Breaking it down: if I'm the returning officer, say, in the doctor's riding in Calgary, I get \$1,000 for managing the enumeration. I get 10 cents for every name on the list; if I have 20,000 that gets me \$2,000. I get \$125 a day for every training session I attend or run, and I have to run several to train my enumerators. I get \$200 for doing my map; that is, taking the electoral division and breaking it down into the numbered subdivisions. I get \$250 for conducting training for enumerators; that's just to swear them in. Pat, am I missing anything?

MR. LEDGERWOOD: No, you got them all.

MR. WARK: That would add up to about \$5,500 for a city. A rural having from 10,000 to 13,000 would get about \$3,500. They get the same basic fee, but where they lose, of course, is that they're only dealing with 10,000 names instead of 20,000, so they get \$1,000 instead of \$2,000.

MR. LEDGERWOOD: I'm sorry. We missed the \$125 for three days of revision, so there's another \$375.

MR. WARK: Yes. The revision to the list that's done in the first week of October, where the RO has to announce in the paper where he or she will be, nets them \$125 a day; in effect \$375.

MR. MILLER: They get a monthly statement too, don't they?

MR. WARK: Yes. A \$75 honorarium that is ongoing from appointment, whether they're doing anything or not. It's really what we call being available at the end of the phone. We don't have to find a returning officer for Spirit River-Fairview when the by-election is called; he's there. This is the only jurisdiction in Canada that pays returning officers an ongoing honorarium. Federal pay them for six months after the election, and then they're dropped and picked up at the next election. Does that answer it?

MR. MILLER: Yes.

MR. HIEBERT: Mr. Chairman, if we are showing a 451 percent increase over the past estimates, what was the comparative increase in a similar situation. If we went back to the same circumstance where we're shifting from a non-enumeration year to an enumeration year? Do you have any of those figures?

MR. WARK: It would be just about the same; I can't give you the exact figure. But say we were looking at '81, because that was the first year we enumerated

after the election in '79 — we didn't enumerate in '79 or in '80; the Act says we don't — and came to you with the budget, the percentage increase from the '80 budget would have been even greater than this. I was mentioning before you arrived that we cut this one down about \$500,000 because of experience gained in how many enumerators returning officers will take. So going back to 1980, I suspect that our figure was fairly high there.

At that time we were doing it by special warrant. For instance, when we came to the committee for the enumeration for 1981, the special warrant was just under \$4 million — \$3.9 million; higher than it is now. Then when we came in '82 for '82-83, it went to \$4.389 million. This time we're going back to \$3.8 million, and it's really based on the experience we've found; that the rural returning officers are not hiring two enumerators. They started out hiring two, and the Act gives them the variable: they can or not, depending on what they like. And the enumerator is the cost here.

MR. HIEBERT: Okay. The reason I'm asking the question is that when you see a quadrupling or plus budget figure, it has an impact on you. I'm just trying to establish whether that is comparable to other years, so there are no other hidden things coming forth with that percentage increase.

MR. WARK: It's probably a smaller percentage increase than either of those were, because we've taken the \$500,000 out of there; not very much smaller, but quite a jump in costs.

MR. HIEBERT: My second question is: how do we compare to the federal enumerators in terms of what we pay them, and is the system the same? I had the viewpoint expressed to me during the last election that maybe enumerators were being rewarded very, very generously. When you're talking to people, that has as many pluses and minuses. How do we compare to the federal enumerators, and have you had any feedback on that very matter with regard to how we pay our provincial enumerators?

MR. WARK: We take a great deal of kidding at the annual chief electoral officers' meeting where all the electoral officers get together, because ours is most generous. Quebec might be a little close to ours. The federal is still under ours. For instance, if I'm an enumerator in this province I get \$100 — correct me, Pat, if I make some mistakes here — \$50 for attending the session where I take my oath of office and get briefed, and then 50 cents a name for every name recorded on the list of electors I bring back to you, the returning officer. For enumerating a normal electoral division, that's good for about \$400. Each enumerator gets that.

Federal gets . . .

MR. LEDGERWOOD: This is based on 250 electors.

MR. WARK: Yes, 250. In effect, for doing it for a city riding, it shows here they would get \$185.90. But the problem with the federal system, if I can say it, is that you need five accountants to look after every two enumerators. For instance, you get 49 cents for every name up to 200, 73 cents for every name over 200, \$18.21 for attending the course of

instruction — I won't go on. It's all in broken decimals and you need an adding machine and an accountant to make sure that the Auditor General doesn't crawl all over you afterwards. We don't have anything like that. Ours is all rounded out.

But just generalizing, we're well ahead of the federal. It was put up in 1980. The fees were last done by an order in council in March '81, and we're about to put up another one, but, as I said, we're not going to recommend any changes to the fees. Ours are very generous. The federal is 49. Across the country: Ontario is 35 cents a name, Quebec is 30, Nova Scotia is 40, New Brunswick is 33, Manitoba is 30, B.C. is 45, P.E.I. is 30, Saskatchewan is 27, ours is 50, and Newfoundland is 50 cents for every one over 50 and \$1 for every page under 50. Ours are quite generous, and we don't have anybody turning it down if they have the time to do it. They're quite happy to do it.

MR. HIEBERT: My last question is more of a comment, and I'm sure as Chief Electoral Officer you get some of the feedback. Apparently the federal enumeration turned out to be a schemozzle in many areas. We had some enumerators who participated in both, and their comment was how well prepared our returning officers were in terms of orienting their people, and how badly and poorly the federal scheme worked, even to the point where they registered some complaints with me to take it to the federal member. I don't know if this is commonplace or if it's just a unique thing in Edmonton. On the one hand, I think it's a word of commendation to you in terms of the time spent in orienting the people and how they in turn orient the workers at the local level, because anything that would parallel what we saw in the federal election should not be duplicated here. Therefore I'm giving you a backhanded word of commendation.

MR. WARK: Thank you. Training is important. Perhaps to excuse the federal people, I think one of the mistakes is that it's all done from Ottawa. It's easy to criticize. There used to be a provincial coordinator on behalf of the Chief Electoral Officer in every province. For some reason it isn't there, and we get hundreds of calls saying: "I've got a problem. Who do I talk to?" We put them onto the most knowledgeable federal returning officer we know. When you run things from a distance like that, you can't keep in touch. It's much easier for us. Secondly, of course, time pressure was pretty tough this time. Instead of having 61 days to conduct the election, it was cut down to 54. I know that doesn't seem like much, but the seven days came out of the front end, the enumeration period.

I think the Chief Electoral Officer was ready, and everything like that, but somebody got the smart notion that it might be a good idea to try putting five provinces on a computer as they did it. Edmonton was one of the places that was selected. We had a whiz kid come in from a local computer firm and say to Pat: "If you give me your old provincial list, I'll know how I can now set up my program to in effect have the format to hold the federal list in the machine." We're not allowed to give the list of electors to anybody, so we talked to Ottawa and they said: "No, these fellows have got to start on their own. They're trying to prove to us that they can do

it." I guess that probably compounded this one this time. Enumerators weren't too sure what they were collecting for. Were they collecting to put it on a typewritten list of electors, which has always been the thing, or was it going to be machine-fed? It was changing quite often. I guess if I were the returning officer out on the street I'd be saying, "I wish somebody would tell me what the end product is going to be."

Those are excuses rather than reasons, but those were the sorts of things that maybe gave the folks, who were well-intentioned, a bit of a problem.

MR. ANDERSON: You indicated that there was some money in here for by-elections. How many by-elections could one hold with this budget? Obviously we'll have one. If for some reason we have two or three, would that be a problem?

MR. WARK: With two we could get by. Barrhead cost less than \$20,000, and I think Olds-Didsbury was up in the high 20s; maybe just in the low 30s. They would have gone up again. We say that a by-election in a riding will cost about \$40,000. We've left \$100,000 in that election account, bearing in mind there's training for returning officers and some travel. We could do two by-elections. But I'm not too concerned, because there's enough money in the enumeration vote that if we had six by-elections I could just write a transfer of money across, and report it, of course.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: A case in point: the by-election in Spirit River-Fairview comes out of the '84-85 budget if it's held by March 31.

MR. WARK: Yes. We had \$240,000 in that vote last year.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: From an economic point of view it would be good to get it done before the end of the current fiscal year, because you can't retrieve that money.

MR. WARK: We have money in all the pots after last year because we didn't have a by-election, and we put in enough for two. So I'm quite sure we're in good shape. It certainly would be a good idea, if we can.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Spirit River-Fairview by-election will be run on the basis of the present enumeration.

MR. WARK: We'll use the list of electors from the '82 election. I've talked to the returning officer, and he has confirmed. Since he knows the area, I asked his opinion, and he said there hadn't been enough changes to warrant the cost of an enumeration, which would be \$20,000. So we're not going to do one. We'll simply use that list and use the 11-day revision period to update it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: This morning when we met with the Ombudsman we were presented with an interesting little statement from his financial officer that some members of their staff are still gaining merit increases. Is that happening with your staff?

MR. WARK: No. It's my understanding . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Everybody's to the top of the level?

MR. WARK: Within their levels, we have everyone at the top and one lady on the long-service increment. I don't think we have any movement for anyone.

MR. LEDGERWOOD: Not the clerical. The management staff are not at the top.

MR. WARK: Yes. We have two of the management staff, the director of election operations and the comptroller, who are SO-IAs. But merit increases for management, to my understanding, are not allowed.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry; I was wrong. It wasn't merit increments, it was — what is the right phrase?

MR. WARK: The annual incremental increase inside the range.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. WARK: All our nonmanagement employees are right at the top. Everybody seems to be fairly happy; at least they haven't told me otherwise.

MR. MILLER: Just on that point, Mr. Chairman. When you have a clerk or stenographer in the bottom classification, how do they get to the next classification?

MR. WARK: Just taking my own department, for instance, if you don't have a position you can't do anything. They then have to compete. If they're a Clerk III or a Clerk Steno III, they have to compete for a Clerk IV or a Clerk Steno IV position.

MR. MILLER: If a person has reached the top of their category, if it's I, and if they've shown enough initiative and ability to be reclassified higher, can you do that in your own shop?

MR. WARK: If I had a position to reclassify them into. You have to have a vacancy. I can't take an established position for a Clerk Steno III — and we have two of those — unless I have a Clerk Steno IV position to reclassify that person into. Because there's no establishment authorization to pay that person as a Clerk Steno IV, I can't take the Clerk Steno III and say, "You're now a Clerk Steno IV, because you warrant it." You can't go outside the authorization, which, as I understand it, is ruled by the establishment. All that person can do is read The Bulletin and attempt to improve themselves by transferring to a department that has a vacancy.

From where we started and with a lot of changes — we've reduced staff a couple of times — I think we've managed to get all our positions at about the extent of the classification allowance. We worked fairly hard with Personnel. We don't have anyone below Clerk Steno III level. We only have one of those. We had a little difficulty with our storesman, because it was a lower paying position, but we have it now as a Storesman II. It pays quite well, and the gent is happy. We were going through a Storesman every two months because it was a \$7,000 job lifting things, that nobody wanted. We don't have that

problem, but I know of no way to get promoted beyond the establishment. If the position doesn't allow the person to be paid for the next highest level, then you can't pay them. They have to go somewhere else.

MR. MILLER: Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay. That's the end of any questions relating to the budget. Have we had any new political parties get themselves accredited?

MR. WARK: We have 19 files. I should have brought them over, because it's a source of amusement to the press or the other folks. There's been a lot of activity. We have 19 files where folks are in one of three stages: they've asked me to reserve a name, they're doing their petition, or they're thinking about doing one of those two things.

There are three active petitions. There's the one for Mr. R. Speaker's movement, which is active now. Folks have been calling us, saying, "Is this an acceptable name?" The Green Party is perhaps halfway through. They've been at it for a year and more. The Libertarian Party is somewhere along the line. I think those are about the only three that are at the petition stage. We deregistered one of the nine parties we had: the Unparty. Really they forced the issue themselves. They decided they were going to go out of business and turned over their cash to us. We've sent that to — no, I guess we've got it in trust. We have to hold it in trust for a year and then we turn it over to [inaudible].

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What was this name?

MR. WARK: It's called the Unparty. It's an Ontario offshoot of the Libertarian Party. The Libertarian Party would do away with most government. This outfit would do away with all government, I guess. We don't get into policies, but they gave us a little brochure.

MR. ANDERSON: They weren't selling 7-Up.

MR. WARK: I don't think it had anything to do with effervescence.

There's a proliferation of parties, if they ever got to be registered. We've got a 12-place ballot. Ballot paper is very expensive, but we have to be very careful that we get enough spaces so that if you call an election we've got room to put all the candidates that might get nominated. So we've been guessing as we go. We're up to 12. Most ballots have to be cut after the fourth name, and that's a fair waste. But I can't take a chance on ordering six-place ballot paper, because if there are seven candidates, somebody would have to go on the back.

MR. LEDGERWOOD: You might brief the committee on ARM.

MR. WARK: We deregistered ARM, Mr. Sindlinger's party, because they didn't submit a financial statement. They have since fixed that up and applied for reregistration. But with deregistration of a party, the Act requires that we automatically deregister all the constituency associations. We then got a letter from ARM requesting that we deregister

all their constituency associations, with some indications that they hadn't been properly founded anyway. In future, if any ARM people came in for registration as a constituency association, the party leader would have to rule on whether or not they got registered. Because it says that when we deregister something we immediately must go and seize all the funds and hold them in trust for a year, one of the constituency associations has sent in its money. If they don't apply for reregistration in that year, we turn the money over to the Provincial Treasurer. So we now have one of the ARM constituency association's bank accounts in our clutches, in a trust fund. I don't know what the other couple of dozen are doing.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Is the registered leader of ARM still Mr. Sindlinger?

MR. WARK: Yes.

MR. MILLER: The Rhinoceros Party came out of nowhere, and is going nowhere. What does it cost to register a party? What's involved with getting a party registered so that you can . . .

MR. WARK: The cost would be the administration and the petition right now, Bud. If you wanted to register one, you'd have to send us a fair amount of information: the name of the party, the acronym, where the records are held, who the chief financial officer is, who can sign to take money in and put it out. You have to form a trust or a foundation, but it's very simple. You can form it with your own members at no cost. Some of the parties form it with a trust company, but most of them are quite simple. You have to send us a financial statement as to how much money you have at that time in the bank account you've put on the front of the form. The cost would be getting volunteers, if you had to pay them, to go around and get the 4,300 names. Other than that, if everybody volunteered to do it, it would be just several cents in stamps and a bit of shoeleather and delivering the papers to us in a bundle after you got the petition.

MR. MILLER: There's no deposit?

MR. WARK: No. It's something I've pondered a few times. For instance, if the 18 files became active, I think I'd be doing a recommendation that we really would need some sort of registration deposit. If I went through the names with you, we've got people doing a petition for something called the "fluid movement party of Alberta". They're a resurrection of Aberhart policies. Pat, you and I have chuckled at these. There are dozens of them. There's the unity party of Canada, a Canada for unity in Alberta — I won't bore you with them. If it kept going this way, it's something you folks as legislators might have to take a look at sometime and say: "Goodness gracious, something should be done."

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Just as there is a deposit for candidates, and you can lose that, it would seem to make some sense to have a deposit of some amount which might strain out some of them.

MR. ANDERSON: Just further to Bud's question, is

there a substantial or identifiable cost to your office of registering a party and looking after the petition?

MR. WARK: No. It's simply a matter of entering another page in what the Act calls a register of registered parties. There's another page, a typist to type out the line, and opening a public file to put all the documents in so the public can come and see who these people are who are running it. It's just another chink in the normal day's work.

MR. LEDGERWOOD: There could be some costs for phone calls in that we do a random selection of the names to call them up to see if they actually signed the petition. Of course, the RITE line doesn't go to every place, depending on . . .

MR. WARK: Yes, there could be a little there. We validate the petition. We pick so many names out of various pages and try to cover the province. The deputy does that, and then we just pass it out to 10 of the staff who each phone 50, 70, or 80. Statistics tell us how many we have to phone, and as long as we don't get a rejection of over a certain number, I can sign it and say it's a valid petition.

MR. ANDERSON: Just out of curiosity, could you by memory tell us which parties are now fully registered?

MR. WARK: There's your own — I'll use my figures here so I can keep track — the Liberals, the NDP, the Social Credit, and Communist Party. So we're at five. We need eight. ARM is six, Western Canada Concept is seven, and COR, the Confederation of Regions Party, is eight.

MR. ANDERSON: Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Nothing for Triple E, Dennis.

MR. WARK: I think the Green Party is very close with its petition. They've called. There's a fellow in Edmonton doing it, and I think he's visiting the Northlands arena. That's a good place to get. There's a co-ordinator in Calgary and a co-ordinator here — very active. I think they're not far off, and I suppose Mr. Speaker's petition is probably going to be reasonably easy to get. So we'll be faced with it.

We could have 10 facing an election. We've got a 12-place ballot, so we'll hope. I'll do a lot of foot-dragging on any more between now and the next election.

MR. ANDERSON: Just to be clear on ARM . . .

MR. WARK: It's registered.

MR. ANDERSON: It is registered.

MR. LEDGERWOOD: No constituency associations are registered.

MR. WARK: I see. I misinterpreted that. I thought they had. They were deregistered and then fixed up their financial statement and applied for reregistration.

MR. ANDERSON: They didn't have to go back and get the names again.

MR. WARK: No.

MR. HIEBERT: Mr. Chairman, my question or concern doesn't relate directly to you, but it takes me back to the Speaker situation with regard to the status of a party and the recognition of that party in the Assembly when he's dealing with the question of Official Opposition. Is it correct, then, that the two Independents have no official status at this point?

MR. WARK: Not under the Act, although the Act recognizes the right of an Independent MLA to have a registered Independent constituency association. It didn't used to. It was an amendment I put up about two years ago, and it's been adopted. Mr. R. Speaker, for instance, has an Independent constituency association. Dr. Buck doesn't. But the Speaker used the 1982 report of the election — he got a formal copy from me — to take the totals and who ran as what.

MR. HIEBERT: Okay. Let's just carry the thing to the next step. Just suppose Spirit River-Fairview went another way than NDP, and R. Speaker and Buck combined and got status as a party. Is there retroactivity involved here, that they then would have a party of two members, the other party would have one, and they could make claims to that effect? I know it's not your problem. I'm just asking. Is there anything in the Act that would cover such a thing?

MR. WARK: Not in the Election Act. The Election Act and the reports that flow from it would show that Mr. R. Speaker was elected as an Independent and that Dr. Buck was elected as an Independent. That's all they're recognized as under the Election Act. I don't mean "all". That's what they're recognized as.

I'm not reflecting on what the Speaker might do, but the fact that they became a registered party would not alter the fact that they were not elected as that in the 1982 election report. They were elected as Mr. So-and-so and Mr. So-and-so.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Does one have to wait until after one is registered before one can gain the purposes of the party? For example, I assume the Green Party makes some brief statement on their petition about the purpose of their party. Or do they just say, "Sign here and become a member of the Green Party"?

MR. WARK: We don't get into the policy of the party; I think you'd agree I shouldn't. We do the petition format, and in the top right-hand corner there are some words like "we request your signature in support of the right of the Green Party of Alberta to be registered under the Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act", with no statement of policy. What the folks at the door do, of course, is not my business. But we don't put any policy anywhere in the public records or anything we do.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay. What's the minimum number for registration under the Act?

MR. WARK: Forty-three hundred and seven.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That's a function of the population of the province?

MR. WARK: No, it's a percentage calculation that's in the Act, based on the list of electors from the most recent general election. Three-tenths of 1 percent, I think. It's based on registered electors.

MR. MILLER: Was this established years ago, Ken?

MR. WARK: It was written in the Act as the percentage. When the Act came into effect in January '78, it had four subsections to allow parties that had been in existence not to go the petition format. Any party that held six seats — I haven't got the Act with me. So that took care of the Conservatives. Any party that had run candidates in at least 50 percent of the ridings at the most recent election: that took care of the Liberals, Social Credit, and the NDP. They could automatically be registered under those subsections in the Act. The first petition we had to deal with was from the Communist Party. But every party since then, of course, has had to.

There is an out for a party, although we don't broadcast it too much. It came up at the last election. If I endorse 50 nominated candidates for my party at an election, I can be registered without a petition. At the last election, the Independents attempted to do this. Luckily they fell four short of the number. I say "luckily" because I wasn't against registering something if it had a name, but I wouldn't register anything called "the Independent Party".

The timing is bad, because in effect I wouldn't know until after 2 o'clock in the afternoon, 14 days before polling day, whether or not they'd met the required figure, and there isn't very much time then to get all the paperwork done and give them all the receipts, in effect, to go out to start collecting money. But we were at the brink of having to register something that encompassed 50 Independent candidates. They needed 38. They would have needed 50 percent of 79, so I suppose it came close to 40. They got 34. They were calling daily with "here's two more", and "here's four more", and the total was creeping up. It's almost an unfortunate thing in the Act, because if we had to do it, we would be doing it the day following nomination day, and there are 13 days left to polling day. It's really not my business. We can do it, but administratively it's not a sound thing to do. A good manager wouldn't do it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Any other questions, gentlemen?

Thank you very much for coming. The chairman is also hopeful that he will be able to join other members of the committee and that sometime during the course of the winter we can come back over and visit with you on your turf.

MR. WARK: Just dandy; we'd appreciate it. We're in the act of changing all the guides and putting out a lot more information to enumerators, maybe. We're going to give enumerators all sorts of sheets. They make some rather bad mistakes. We're not doing it on our own. Pat's going to Calgary to talk to about five ROs from Calgary and south. We talked to the

RO in Barrhead yesterday. We're just trying all the paperwork on the folks who have to use it before we go out with a clump that thick, saying, "Here's what you have to do in '85".

Thanks very much.

MR. THOMPSON: Just one more thing on that point. I know it's a pretty complicated process, but it's been my experience over the years that no matter how clear it is, the thicker the document, the more apt mistakes are to be made. You couldn't get that down to three pages, could you?

MR. WARK: It's not very thick. None of them are very thick, and they've all got pictures. They all have an example. In effect, if we want you to fill out the form this way, here's how it should be filled out if it's being filled out for Mrs. Smith who lives in Vegreville. We haven't just given them a pile of blank forms and about five sheets of wall-to-wall typing. If you read that, you'll do it right. We know from experience.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Perhaps we could stretch for half a minute.

Just a reminder, Dennis, that we've got that meeting with the Auditor General next Wednesday afternoon at 1:30 in 312. Are you going to be back next week — I hope?

MR. ANDERSON: I think so.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Good. Hopefully you now all have a copy of this Auditor General budget projection. Did you get one, Bud?

MR. MILLER: I imagine it's over in my office.

MR. THOMPSON: No, it's in that pile of books I threw down beside you.

MR. MILLER: Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: In addition, next week we'll have to spend a little time discussing our favourite topic of irrigation districts. We have some information which we'll get xeroxed and shipped over to you before the next meeting.

In addition to that, we have requests for audits and one for the ACCESS Charitable Foundation of Alberta, which falls under the ACCESS board. I don't see much problem with that one. The second is the Centre for Frontier Engineering Research Institute, which is a combination of federal government, provincial government, University of Alberta Devonian Foundation, and five representatives of industry. If we do grant them the privilege of having the Auditor General do the audit, it would be charged for at the full rate. That's my understanding. But we'll have information xeroxed for the next meeting.

Other than that, I would entertain a motion for adjournment, unless . . .

MRS. EMPSON: Did you want to approve his budget?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Oh, yes. That's good.

MR. ANDERSON: I move that we approve the budget of the Chief Electoral Officer for 1985-86.

MR. MILLER: I second that.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: All those in favour? Carried. Thank you, Louise. I'd sure hate to have to come back to another meeting just to pass that.

MR. MILLER: Do you anticipate that our meeting next Wednesday will be all afternoon, or can it be done in a couple of hours or so?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I don't see any reason why we can't be done in an hour and a half at the worst. Okay?

MR. MILLER: Good.

MR. THOMPSON: I think we may be here a little longer than that. I'm looking over some irrigation districts. Here's the Raymond Irrigation District. It's a very small and uncomplex operation. We've got them down for \$10,000, and they've got the University of Lethbridge at \$46,000. I don't understand how . . . You're looking at an operation that's got about six or eight people working in it versus a university. I don't know the rhyme or reason, or what they go on, but I'm sure I'll find the answer next time around.

MR. HIEBERT: Ten cents a pail of water.

MR. THOMPSON: The variations are terrific. I know these places, and the Raymond Irrigation District is really a one-horse operation. Compared to the University of Calgary's \$152,000 versus \$10,000 — anyway, that's beside the point.

MR. MILLER: I'm sure you'll speak eloquently, and probably long.

MR. THOMPSON: Not so long. But I need justification, because I've got to go to my people and say . . .

MR. HIEBERT: I notice the University of Alberta has a blank for '84-85.

MR. THOMPSON: That's because they get it done free.

MR. MILLER: Maybe we'd better state it. If we can't do it in an hour and a half, we'd better make it two hours.

MR. THOMPSON: I've got to stay for the Bighorn dinner.

MR. MILLER: That's right. That's that night.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Louise has a list of committee follow-up items. If you'd like to take one of those, you can check to see whether you have anything to follow up on, or any other questions you want to raise. I think we'll deal with this at our next meeting on Wednesday the 21st. Okay?

Now I'm ready to entertain a motion to adjourn. I think you were making that motion, Dennis.

MR. ANDERSON: That's exactly what I was going to do.

[The committee adjourned at 3:13 p.m.]