

## Standing Committee on Legislative Offices

10:04 a.m.

[Chairman: Mr. Bogle]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll officially begin our meeting, and let the record show we welcome Harley Johnson as the Ombudsman for Alberta and Dixie Watson from his office. This is our third review of the budget of the Ombudsman's office. It's our intention to finalize it today. Harley has the budget, and it's under tab 8 in the book, showing the 1992-93 estimate, the '91-92 estimate in the second column, the 1991-92 forecast in the third column, and in the fourth column we have the 1990-91 actuals. So we've got those comparisons.

I'm not sure; I think we've gone through the overviews, Harley, but if there are any other points you'd want to make -- otherwise we will just go through it section by section in each of the three groups.

MR. JOHNSON: Mr. Chairman, the only overview I would give at this point is that the total for Manpower is a 3.2 percent increase. Much of it is uncontrollable without an actual staff reduction. In group 2, Supplies and Services, it's a 6 percent increase. The total increase is 3.7 percent, or \$47,300.

Now, in terms of line items, Mr. Chairman, if you'd like me to start . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, please, unless there are any overall questions members have. No? Go ahead.

MR. JOHNSON: Having presented this now two times previously, we go through a number of machinations in attempting to keep it as low as possible. As this committee remembers, we have done a transfer out of Manpower into Supplies and Services and Fixed Assets in order to reduce our requests for the next year, keeping in mind the fiscal restraint that we're all facing.

I will apologize to the committee for the tone of my voice. It's a little low today. I'm struggling with a good one, so if I'm not speaking up loud enough, please just ask me to repeat it.

In terms of Salaries, 711A, our estimate shows a decrease from 1991-92, but this is a paper decrease. As I explained to this committee previously, we moved positions from salary to contract and back again, depending on the needs of the office and the desire and requests of the people coming into the office when we do hire. They have a choice of coming in under salary or under contract. It makes no major impact in terms of total financial dollars; it's just a movement between 711A and 711D.

In terms of 711C, Wages, that's for the summer employee, and as described to this committee last time, we're not asking for a summer student this particular year. There are a couple of reasons for it. Number one is the desire to keep the budget as low as possible, given the fiscal restraint, and secondly, I will be hiring a new solicitor in the very near future. The interviews are next week, and that new solicitor, I believe, should not be in a position of supervising legal research at this time when that solicitor will still be on an upscale understanding of the office, and it will take some time for that person to be completely familiar with the role of the office, not just the legal principles. To ask that person to supervise another person this year would be inappropriate, so there will be no requests.

Payment to Contract Employees is up from \$297,400 in the 1991-92 estimate to \$386,000, but as previously described, that's just a paper transfer.

Employer Contributions, which is 711E, is an increase of \$103,000 to \$119,300. The employer contributions are calculated at 12.2 percent of payroll. There's an increase in employer costs due to increases in unemployment insurance, Workers' Compensation Board benefits, Canada pension plan, Blue Cross, and the group dental plan. There's also in this particular area a \$6,500 employer share of prior pensionable service for two employees that becomes due this fiscal year. So that's where the increase is in 711E.

In Allowances and Benefits, which is 711F, the increase is \$700. Courses themselves are in this particular component, and they are becoming more expensive. What we've attempted to do, even in budget restraint, is to allow some training to continue to ensure that we don't get behind the scale and have a major increase somewhere down the path in terms of our training. There's also new employee training in terms of computer training, and we're allowing \$250 per employee on average throughout the year. This also covers the IOI registrations, so it's only a \$700 increase.

Those, Mr. Chairman, are our group 1, Manpower, recommendations.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

So we see the proposed budget for manpower go from \$1,014,500 to \$1,048,100, a slight increase. Any questions on manpower?

Okay. We go on to group 2, then, please, Supplies and Services.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On 712A, Travel Expenses, you'll notice an increase from \$84,000 to \$98,600. There is an increase of \$800 per year for an auto lease, and there is in this particular year the 1992 International Ombudsman Institute Conference, which is to be held in Europe later this year. That is the reason for the increases in the travel expenses.

We are also looking at reducing my personal travel around the province to try and keep it as low as possible, and that's based on the tours I'm doing around the province. We have cut at the end of this particular fiscal year 43 percent of actual cost expenditures, which is over the 25 percent recommended by the Premier in his announcement. So we've cut 43 percent of my travel costs in terms of touring the province, and we are exploring other ways to get the same message out without looking at the specific travel, trying to reduce and doing it on day trips rather than five and six days at a time. But I still plan and I'm still on track with meeting the objective I've set with the committee and the selection committee to ensure that I do make public presentations in every electoral boundaries area once during my term of office, so we're still on track and will still be able to achieve that objective even though we've reduced the way we've done our travel. I'm actually very pleased to report on that.

In terms of 712C, Advertising, we are actually going to be showing a \$2,000 decrease from \$13,000 to \$11,000. We have, as I pointed out to this committee before, asked different groups around the province to pick up some of the advertising costs, and they have done so. I do have some concerns with some of the advertising that has gone out by these different groups because they have not achieved the objective I'm attempting to accomplish, so I have increased some of it but am still reducing it. At the present time, actual to December 31, 1991, there's only \$3,843, so we've been quite pleased with being able to keep it down.

On 712D there is no change to the actual request. Basically, it still looks at the insurance losses, repairs, replacements, and damages to goods incurred through way travel or that type of thing, but it's a straight insurance cost. It would be inappropriate to cut it any further.

On 712E, which is Freight and Postage: a nominal increase of \$500 in this particular area. There is going to be an increased

number of annual reports in the mailings. There was a postage increase January 1 of 1 cent for everything sent and 2 cents for everything sent as of January 1, 1992.

On 712G we are asking for a \$1,000 increase, \$7,000 to \$8,000, under Rentals. However, I am also pleased to report that our actuals to December 31, 1991, are only \$2,832. This includes rentals of office equipment and postage meter rentals. There are going to be some increased costs in terms of contracts we've got for xeroxing, and there's also an increased cost now going to be charged for parking stalls for the Ombudsman in Calgary. In my Calgary office there is an increase, and that's a governmental increase in that the parking lot is below the government buildings in Calgary.

10:14

MRS. GAGNON: You'd think they'd give you a break.

MR. HYLAND: You keep on telling us we've got to have cost recovery: the Liberals' fiscal responsibility.

MRS. GAGNON: Yeah, but he works for us.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I thought he worked for the people.

MR. JOHNSON: Telephone and Communications, 712H: we're asking for no increase over last year. Of course, this includes our rentals, our long-distance telephone calls, fax transmissions, telephone installations, additional listings in white pages in telephone books where the RITE line is not necessarily available to people in Alberta. There are still some areas that the RITE line does not reach. We're asking for no increase in this area.

Under 712J, Repairs and Maintenance, we're asking for a decrease of \$100 in this area, not a significant decrease, but again we made some decisions inside the office. We very seldom use our typewriters anymore, and therefore we've decreased the amount of servicing they require. That type of thing comes under this particular portion. It includes labour and materials for equipment and machinery, furnishings, and some of the contract on data processing equipment.

In terms of 712K, again we're asking for a decrease in our estimate, from \$30,000 to \$28,600, and reporting that our actual to December 31, 1991, was \$15,957. These include payments for labour or professional services that are not subject to the employer/employee agreements. It identifies services that involve a combination of people and material which include business services for clerical help, accounting, auditing, managing, consulting, but it excludes data processing services. Where this has really impacted on us is not having a solicitor for the first two months of this particular year. We've had to go outside for contract.

There's also a potential that is coming up. I should inform this committee of two lawsuit areas, and these will be dealt with as they arise. As it gets closer to whether or not we're going to be going this route, I'll be conferring with the chairman of this committee, who can share with the remainder of the committee as we get into the specific details of it. I just make that comment at this point, indicating that there are things that can happen in this contract services area. Even if we get a lawyer on staff, we will still require some outside help on this area.

In 712L we're asking for an increase from \$35,500 to \$37,400. This is Data Processing Services. There is some additional video equipment, the LAN administration, PWSS charging for storage, data entry, and reports. We are now going back to PWSS on this particular area because we are being charged for some reports we are receiving in duplicate that we don't need. We are told we have no choice but to take them and pay for them, and I have a little

difficulty with that, so I am going back to PWSS through the deputy minister on that particular issue. A recent directive to our office is that we go on-line payroll as opposed to the way we were doing it before, which was hand done, supplying it to some other department, which was Treasury, and they were in fact doing the implementation of this particular area. We're now told that that can no longer be appropriate. Therefore, we are on-line, and we'll have to be charged for that service, but that's back to another government department.

On 712M, last year you will recall that I asked for a reduction from \$3,500 to \$3,000, and now this particular year we're going from \$3,000 back to the \$3,500, and the reason I'm doing it is that I would like to have a special event regarding the 25th anniversary of the inception of the office of Ombudsman in North America. Alberta's, as we all know, was the first office in North America, and it would be appropriate to have some form of recognition, and that will cost approximately \$500. I'm not going to go all out and make it extravagant, but I think there should be some recognizable ceremony for that particular event; 1992 for the office of the Ombudsman is a very significant year in Alberta.

Under 712N, which is Other Purchased Services, there is an increase of \$100, and this \$100 is really a transfer from one other area. I have reported to this committee that I was a member of the Arbitration and Mediation Society, but that only allowed us to get a decrease in their training costs for me, not for the remainder of my office. If I transferred that from the Ombudsman's chair to the office of the Ombudsman, all of my investigators get access to a cheaper training cost at no increased cost to us. So that's a \$100 increase, and that's the reason why. This particular Other Purchased Services includes International Ombudsman Institute fees and registration fees, not for conferences, licences, permits, and moving costs for staff relocation, which at the present time I'm not anticipating during the 1992-93 fiscal year.

Materials and Supplies, 712N: I'm requesting a decrease from last year from \$37,800 to \$36,400. Improved computer technology will now allow us to do a bunch of the work in our office which can be automatically transferred to a tape and taken to the printer, which will reduce the costs that we have to pay outside. That's the reason for the decrease in this particular area. Likewise, in our brochures we can now do it all in-house, take it to the printer on a disk. It can be done without having to go where they typeset it and then it comes back for proofreading, a back and forward type of thing. So the reason for this particular decrease is because of the computers.

MR. TANNAS: That's a clear indication of saving by computers.

MR. JOHNSON: It is.

MR. HYLAND: Hang on, Stan.

MR. NELSON: No comment.

MR. JOHNSON: Previous questions, Mr. Tannas, in terms of your comment: I have other information later because this committee's asked me to come back, but I thought I would also include it in the budget presentation.

Mr. Chairman, those are the comments that I have on group 2.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Questions on group 2? Yolande.

MRS. GAGNON: Yes. For 712C, Advertising, what was the actual? You're forecasting a possible actual of \$8,900, so why do you ask for \$11,000? Is it just in case emergencies, ad hoc sorts of things come up?

MR. JOHNSON: I have to make some assumptions that there's potential loss of staff somewhere along in the year. If, in fact, that does happen, we have to advertise. Each time we advertise, that's approximately \$4,000.

MRS. GAGNON: Oh, of course, that type of advertising. I'm thinking of advertising your office and its services, but you're talking about advertising for employees if necessary.

MR. JOHNSON: It's actually both, Mrs. Gagnon. It's both for employees and for the advertising of the tours. Our tour costs are going to be down because I'm going to be reducing the style of the tours, the amount of tours. But I still have to keep in mind that people can leave and I will need that money.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Stan.

MR. NELSON: Yeah, I'd like to dwell a little on this Travel Expenses, Harley. The issuance of this 25 percent, of course, for 1991-92 has the possibility of expanding through into '92-93. If we were to take 25 percent off your budget of travel, what in fact would that do to your office?

MR. JOHNSON: I would have to look at the tours that I do plan to take. That would, in fact, be a concern. If I am still aiming towards the objective of meeting the public and explaining the roles throughout the province, that is one area I can look at. There is an alternative that I'm exploring, and I'll dwell a little bit on the future, if you wish, at this point.

10:24

MR. NELSON: Well, we might want to talk about the IOI, because that appears to be a fairly heavy ticket.

MR. JOHNSON: It's a fairly heavy ticket; there is no question about it.

MR. NELSON: Are there a number going?

MR. JOHNSON: No, there's only the minimum number going. There's myself and my spouse and there is Dixie, who will be making a presentation to the international community on how we've developed the computer. As Dixie is our LAN administrator, more the hands-on experience rather than the policy, which is my area, it would be more appropriate that she give that presentation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If I may interject, it's unfortunate that we can't separate out of Travel Expenses the extraordinary expenses for this onetime trip to the international conference from your normal expenses. Can you give us those figures so that we can jot them down, even though they're not in our book?

MR. JOHNSON: Certainly. There'll be airfare. We've got the cheapest rate possible right now. We've gone after the super apex rates. By the airline definition there are 2,000 points per person for \$6,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MR. JOHNSON: We are estimating \$175 per night for hotel times 14 nights times two for \$5,000. Meals and per diem expenses, \$26.70 per day for meals, \$9.70 per diems: \$36.40 times 15 days times three for a total of \$1,700.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would suggest you're a little tight on those estimates for meals. I don't think you'll cover your costs.

MR. NELSON: It's expensive over there.

MR. JOHNSON: That may be expensive, but that's what we're allotted, and we plan to only be assigned what's allotted. If it comes a little bit out of our pocket . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: And it should be for three people. Your spouse should be included in that.

MR. JOHNSON: We did.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And Dixie?

MR. JOHNSON: That's times three.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, it is times three. I thought I heard you say times two.

MR. JOHNSON: No. I'm sorry, sir, if I did. It comes to \$36.40 times 15 days times three people.

MR. NELSON: Is that conference for 15 days, 14 days?

MR. JOHNSON: There are two conferences in this particular component. To make it more worth while, there's going to be a second conference in Salzburg following Vienna.

MR. TANNAS: The IOC?

MR. JOHNSON: Not the IOC; the IOS.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Louise has just reminded me, Harley, that if you keep your receipts for your meals, when you do come back, as long as you can demonstrate that the meals cost more than the prescribed amount, you may be reimbursed for the difference.

MR. NELSON: You won't eat for that much over there.

MR. JOHNSON: We're very small eaters. I accept the comments.

MR. NELSON: I was in Vienna four years ago, and I'll tell you, it ain't cheap.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that it under travel for the conference?

MR. JOHNSON: There will be a \$500 expense, we believe, for taxis and transportation. There is a bus from Vienna to Salzburg. We are hoping, but we have not been informed, that the Austrian government will be supplying that particular cost, but we've built it in as an unforeseen. There will also be \$600 for unforeseen expenses: for instance, country taxes, hotel taxes, and exchange rate costs. Those are all, but they add up very quickly, those expenses.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So it'd be approximately \$16,000?

MR. JOHNSON: The way I have it is \$13,800, sir: \$6,000, \$5,000, \$1,700, \$500 . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, \$1,700. All right.

MR. ADY: What was the last one?

MR. JOHNSON: Six hundred for unforeseen: country taxes, hotel taxes, and exchange rate costs.

MRS. GAGNON: So it's still \$84,000 for other travel.

MR. JOHNSON: Yes.

MRS. GAGNON: Right. Within the province to fulfill your mandate.

MR. JOHNSON: That's correct. Also, that includes the costs for my investigators' travel on actual. That's not discretionary travel; those are absolute travels.

MRS. GAGNON: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So if we're clear then, in the 1991-92 estimate the only out-of-province travel -- am I correct? -- would have been the Ombudsman Conference. Was it in Toronto this year? Where was the Ombudsman Conference this past year?

MR. JOHNSON: It was in Winnipeg this year. There was also an investigators' conference in Toronto which I had two people attend. There is no out-of-province travel foreseen at this particular point.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So if we're trying to come down to travel within Alberta, what figure would we be using for 1991-92?

MR. JOHNSON: It's \$98,600, sir, minus the \$13,800.

AN HON. MEMBER: For '92-93?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, '91-92. I was trying to get the figure for the current fiscal year.

MR. JOHNSON: We are at an actual at the present time of \$41,121, remembering that the year is not over.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's right.

MR. NELSON: That's as of what? December?

MR. JOHNSON: We're in shape, and we'll be within budget at the end of the year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, what I'm trying to come to is: if there's an actual cut of 43 percent in travel in Alberta, how does that equate from 1991-92 estimate to 1992-93 estimate?

MR. JOHNSON: Sir, there's a 43 percent decrease in discretionary travel in Alberta, not total travel. Discretionary, as I understand it, is basically . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Where you're promoting the office.

MR. JOHNSON: Where I'm promoting the office, that is discretionary travel. Where the investigators have gone out, we have not had any discretion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's correct.  
Okay. Anyone else?

MR. HYLAND: I think what Bob was trying to get at: in the total travel, if we can pull this portion out, this special portion, the onetime, what is the difference? It should be a decrease in your total travel in the province.

MR. JOHNSON: It's approximately the same, \$84,800 as opposed to \$84,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, then, Alan, that's in part because in the current fiscal year we had the two conferences: one the Ombudsman attended, one his investigators attended.

MR. JOHNSON: I did have the investigators attend the Winnipeg conference as well.

MR. NELSON: We should remember, I guess, that a lot of the travel the Ombudsman's office does is nondiscretionary.

MR. JOHNSON: Mine is pretty well the only discretionary travel there is with the exception of conferences.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

Anyone else? Are we ready to move on? Jack.

MR. ADY: I'm not sure that this is the time to bring this up, but maybe it is. It impacts on your discretionary travel. Harley, do you find that by doing these tours and presentations in constituencies -- and I'm not saying you shouldn't be doing them -- that people are sort of gaining the impression that the Ombudsman can solve every woe in the world and that your office is being inundated with things that are really beyond your mandate?

MR. JOHNSON: No. On the contrary, what I'm finding, sir, is that the number of complaints is not increasing but the education of the complainants is, so when people come to the meetings or discuss it with me or see it in the press in the different areas during the tour, they have more understanding of what the Ombudsman can and cannot do. There are limitations to my office. Many complaints come in dealing with federal issues, local issues, local school boards. Once it's explained in the public meetings, the ones we are getting are more understanding. They know that they have to go through the appeal mechanism, and they've usually gone through the appeal mechanisms before they then come to my office.

MR. ADY: I guess I asked that question because from the people I talk to from time to time, it seems to me that I'm getting more of that "Where when all else fails the Ombudsman can solve it," regardless of what the issue is, and I just wondered if that same impression was coming through.

MR. JOHNSON: That's not the impression that is coming through on the complaints that we are getting. I have had one complaint given to me on that very issue, and it was from a specific area in the province. A number of complainants came out as a result of the public meeting and made a complaint, and I was unable to support any of those particular complaints. They said, "You've done us no good at all." What I've done is stated: "What I promise is an independent investigation. If I support you, I become your advocate. If I don't support you, I'm honest and up front and tell you." One area in the province did come back and make that comment to me, but only one area so far, sir. If you're hearing differently, I would appreciate knowing it, because that's certainly not the message that is going out.

MR. ADY: I suppose I'm speaking in general terms, and I wanted to bounce it off you and see if the same thing was coming back to you. Certainly it's important that people understand what your office can and can't do for them as a public, and that's what you're doing. So I don't have any problem with that; it's just the reaction.

10:34

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah. A number of complainants come to my office and expect that because they bring a complaint to my office, they are finding an advocate right away quick. I attempt to explain to them, but some people will not listen, that I cannot be their advocate until the completion of an independent investigation. That issue is the same whether I'm making public presentations or people come to the front door.

MR. HYLAND: Two comments. One, I guess, would be under Contract Services where Treasury has put everybody on a different payroll system. It should be interesting to see Treasury lead the way in a massive reduction in their department in what they've unloaded onto all aspects of the Legislature. So that will be interesting when we see the Treasurer's budget and see his reduction, supposedly accordingly, that they've unloaded onto all other departments.

But back onto this travel one. I wonder if there's a way, Mr. Chairman. We got into this last year with Leg. Assembly because of conference locations, how it can vary so much from year to year. The international conference was in India. The other conferences were closer to home, in Winnipeg and wherever else the parliamentary conferences were last year. Then you get the movement to -- isn't one of them in Fredericton this year or something? Would there be a way to distinguish that? That can vary so much from year to year. One year you can be down 50 percent and nobody says anything, but the next year when you go up 50 percent, bang, it's centred right on that as a massive increase. I wonder if a way could be found that these could be maybe even in a separate item in themselves because of their variance in location. For example, whatever the amount on that conference was, that isn't going to appear for -- what? -- two more years. It's every third year, that international conference?

MR. JOHNSON: Every fourth year, sir.

MR. HYLAND: Fourth year. So it's not going to appear in a budget for three more years. It's not going to be realized next year; it could be down more than half that amount, you know, even including conferences in Canada, and the next time it goes up in four years it'll be, "Why is it increasing so much?"

MRS. GAGNON: Although it would be a new process, I would suggest that it would be good to show the discretionary travel, travel which is not discretionary -- it's part of the job -- and then travel to conferences and so on. That would give a much clearer picture of what this is all about. For anyone examining the budget, you know, it looks as if, "Oh, travel is up," but it doesn't indicate all of the other things they've tried to do. I know you can't change line items just nilly-willy, but there might be some recommendation there.

[Mr. Nelson in the Chair]

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Well, that's why we're here: to get an explanation of these lines. That part is done, so I don't know that you need to break it down line by line like that any further. That's why we ask the questions.

Anybody else?

Okay; we'll go down to Fixed Assets, which is basically the same.

MR. JOHNSON: Under control group 3, Purchase of Data Processing Equipment: \$7,000, 1991-92. I'm showing no increase. We are continually doing our upgrades at a regular interval. One of the things we're finding is that upgrades come out from these different computer companies, and if we don't go with the upgrades, they don't supply the service to their old. For instance, under WordPerfect 5.0, which was a system of office networking, if we didn't go to 5.1, they would not provide the contract servicing for it. So we still need moneys in there for this particular thing.

I've made a decision -- and this is in justification towards maintaining it the same -- that rather than repair dysfunctional hard drives, this is what's in the actual computer terminal itself, for security reasons I am in the processing of actually buying new ones. What happens is that for repairs we have to send them to a company away from our office, to actually have them reground and redone, if you will, and then they do come back. Now I am suggesting for security reasons that when our hard drives become dysfunctional, they be destroyed so that there's no data left around that anybody could get access to. That's for security reasons. That's just a little elongated explanation in terms of where we're going, but it's really showing no increase in my request.

MR. HYLAND: Is doing it that way any more costly than having them repaired?

MR. JOHNSON: It is probably cheaper going the repair route, but we are at risk of our information being made public on confidential issues, and that would cause complainants quite a bit of concern. It would cause me quite a bit of concern.

MR. TANNAS: You mean there's no way to eliminate the data on a hard drive? Is that what you're saying?

MR. JOHNSON: Well, that's basically it.

MR. TANNAS: No way within your office. It has to go outside?

MR. JOHNSON: No way within our office. Now, we can certainly destroy a hard drive, but in terms of repairing, no, we don't have that capability. That would be a very expensive acquisition.

MR. TANNAS: It's the information that's on the hard drive that you're afraid will fall into the wrong hands.

MR. JOHNSON: That's right.

MR. TANNAS: Is there no way within your office that you can wipe that out to zero, to clean the slate?

MR. JOHNSON: We are informed through our contract services that no, that once it's on the hard drive it's very, very difficult for anybody other than to just destroy it, and that it's possible that a hacker or somebody with a lot of experience could pull that information back up.

MR. TANNAS: Yes. Okay.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: All I'll say is: read yesterday's *Hansard*.

MR. FOX: I'm wondering, Mr. Chairman, if your apparent computer phobia has something to do with the shares you might hold in the Underwood company.

AN HON. MEMBER: Or Royal typewriters.

MR. FOX: God bless the old manual typewriter, eh?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry I don't have any shares in these.

Okay.

MR. JOHNSON: In terms of 724F, Purchase of Office Equipment, \$1,000, I'm asking for no increase. This is basically for unforeseen fixed assets: telephone stands, the minor equipment that does come up every once in a while throughout the year. It's only a thousand dollars.

That, Mr. Chairman, is the group 3 request: no change.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Any other questions?

MR. HYLAND: Harley, I asked this question yesterday. Was it your department that was going to look at purchasing some stuff out of money that hadn't been used in this year's budget?

MR. JOHNSON: That is correct, sir.

MR. HYLAND: Okay. And that's coming yet?

MR. JOHNSON: That has been completed.

MR. HYLAND: That's completed. Oh, okay.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I think you'll see under the estimate that there are some asterisks, and I think that's where those moneys have been transferred.

MR. JOHNSON: That's exactly what that means, sir. We have already had approval from this committee to transfer funds. That has been accomplished, so there's nothing hidden coming up in the very next little while.

MR. HYLAND: Okay.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Any other questions? Can I have a motion?

Derek.

MR. FOX: Mr. Chairman, is it your intention that we would deal with the approval of the budget submitted and then go on to questions outstanding from a previous meeting that Harley was going to . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Well, I think we probably should go on to those questions first. They relate to the budget items. There were four outstanding questions, I believe.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Three.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Well, there were four. We already had one answered.

MR. JOHNSON: The first issue, if I may, Mr. Chairman, is the breakdown of the manpower element that you requested. In dealing with the graphics capable on our particular system, this is the breakdown of our manpower element, staff mix. I'll just wait till everybody gets a copy.

As you can see, our office is very small, very simplistic. We have eight support staff, eight investigators, and four management positions. All our support staff are permanent salary. Our investigators: we have three permanent and five under contract which is renewable yearly, and under management we have three permanent salary and one contract, which is me. That's the staff breakdown: a very simplistic office staff. We are very small.

10:44

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay. Any questions?

MR. JOHNSON: In terms of the breakdown on Hosting, I was asked to come back with examples over the past couple of years of last-minute Hosting elements, specifically on the conferences. One of the things that I initiated once coming into office was that I have an informal dinner meeting with all attendees from Alberta. That includes members of my staff and members of this committee, so that we all have an understanding of what the conference is going to be attempting to achieve and that we know each other going into the conference, thereby understanding a little bit more what each person requires out of that. We've had two such dinners, one in Halifax and one in Winnipeg.

A second unforeseen Hosting example is with out-of-country visitors. Probably Alberta has a larger component of unannounced or short-announced visitors, the reason being -- and I think it's very much a positive for Alberta -- that the International Ombudsman Institute is situated at the University of Alberta. Therefore, if a number of ombudsmen or ombudspersons traveling from around the world wish to see an operation, they come to the International Ombudsman Institute, and we are co-ordinating with that so that they see an operational Ombudsman's office. Many of you will remember just this last month we had the Russian human rights delegate, Sergei Sirotkin, who in fact is charged with the implementation of the legislation of setting up an Ombudsman's office in Russia. Myself and a member of this committee met with him over lunch. That was an unforeseen Hosting cost, and I did host that lunch. The International Ombudsman Institute also hosted a dinner on his behalf where we invited senior members of the IOI, and I attended that.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You should have stuck Tom with that.

MR. FOX: Yeah. He told us yesterday he paid the bill.

MR. JOHNSON: Well, I'll let you deal with your own internal . . .

MR. TANNAS: As soon as we get the Ethics Commissioner appointed.

MR. SIGURDSON: There's another expense I have to account for. Now that's in *Hansard* forever.

MR. JOHNSON: We have had over the last year and a half or two years a New Zealand environmental Ombudsman delegate, who is the solicitor to the New Zealand environmental Ombudsman. We had a Japanese contingent. One area in Japan is looking at the introduction of an Ombudsman structure. Papua, New Guinea: the Ombudsman, his wife, and a staff member attended here on their way to another conference to go through the IOI, and I hosted a luncheon on their behalf. The United Kingdom select committee on parliamentary issues, an Ombudsman for local government, arrived. That was prior to my attendance. There was a dinner with the Tasmanian Ombudsman in Canberra that my predecessor, in fact,

did. So these types of hosting conferences come up fairly irregularly, but I do need some moneys in the budget to look after those.

MR. HYLAND: My question's on this Hosting thing. Harley, the comments you made on the hosting at a conference: I guess my concern is the way that amount of money is being put against your Hosting budget. In reality, if that was a dinner, expense accounts for the number of people who were there would have shown no supper for that night because you were picking it up, and I think it's unfair the way that's being charged against your Hosting budget. I know it happens in other areas too. It's something that seems like a logical thing to do once auditors get ahold of it, but when bookkeepers get ahold of it, they turn it around and use it against your Hosting budget. It seems to make sense that one bill is picked up by one person rather than four or five people putting expenses on their individual accounts, yet it comes back and is being charged against your Hosting versus being charged against living costs for those people when they're away from home.

MR. JOHNSON: It's going to show up in the budget under travel for everybody or under Hosting for one. You're absolutely correct.

MR. HYLAND: But it makes your Hosting budget look extraordinarily large when, in reality, you were picking up for five people.

MR. JOHNSON: From the hosting perspective I don't believe that my Hosting budget is large anyway. I'm really not a big host.

MR. HYLAND: No, I know, but I'm just saying that one like that, at six people, can take out two or three small ones that you may want to do with people outside.

MR. JOHNSON: We could go the other route and go Dutch for the same dinner. It affects the same people in the long run.

MR. HYLAND: There's no difference in cost. It's a paper thing.

MRS. GAGNON: But then the travel budget looks higher.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yeah. It doesn't matter which way you go, it's going to . . .

MRS. GAGNON: But it's out of our own individual one.

MR. HYLAND: Where it actually occurs versus . . . It really isn't what you think is hosting.

MRS. GAGNON: We could go Dutch, so to speak.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay. Any other?  
The next item is Advertising, I guess.

MR. JOHNSON: The breakdown for Advertising, Mr. Chairman, is on the position advertisements that we've had this year. The Calgary investigator cost us \$3,600 in advertising. A solicitor/investigator was \$2,600. That particular advertisement we only advertised in the four major papers in the province and on the internal government circulation in *The Bulletin* for a total of \$6,200. In terms of the tour advertising, at the present time I'm sitting at \$1,700, which is \$5,100 for advertising, which is quite a bit lower than the \$13,000 that we requested. That's where we're sitting at the present time.

[Mr. Bogle in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Alan.

MR. HYLAND: What do you call the four major papers? There are other papers that think they're major in the province, too, in cities other than Calgary and Edmonton.

MR. JOHNSON: I accept that, and under the investigator's position, that's where we advertised in more newspapers. For the solicitor/investigator, those with administrative law experience are probably going to be found in the bigger centres because administrative law is very much a specialty. The smaller centres have solicitors who have a broader range of services they provide, but they're not specialized in terms of. So that was a decision that I made: to go with the two major Calgary papers and the two major Edmonton papers.

I should also say in response to that question that we did have a number of applications from people not just in the major centres, people who were solicitors in the smaller areas and are deciding that they are looking elsewhere. So they are searching the classified ads and did respond.

MR. HYLAND: Then when you did investigators, was that advertisement just in the dailies or in the weeklies in the province too?

10:54

MR. JOHNSON: I didn't break it down that specifically. I believe it was in all the dailies in the province and a native newspaper as well. I could find that specific answer out for you, sir. I don't have that right now. [interjection] Okay. Thank goodness for Dixie. She wonders why I keep her on staff.

In terms of the investigator specific, it was in the two Calgary, the two Edmonton dailies, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Red Deer, Grande Prairie, Fort McMurray, and a native newspaper. That was for the investigator and not the solicitor's position.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Anyone else?

MR. HYLAND: Well, again I know it costs, but for the price of one advertisement in a daily you can probably advertise in most of the weekly papers through their association, and there might be some good investigators out there that don't always hear it.

MR. JOHNSON: There are some excellent investigators out there. I think I mentioned to this committee last time that we advertised for one position in the Calgary office and we had 603 applications, of which approximately 500 qualified. I read every one of them. This committee, I'm sure, is well aware of reading résumés.

MR. HYLAND: We're just getting used to it again.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Other questions? Are there any final general questions before we go to a vote on the three units for the Ombudsman's budget?

MR. JOHNSON: Mr. Chairman, there is one other issue that I thought was requested by this committee, and that was whether the data processing system had resulted in a saving. While I made comments during some portions of the budget relating to it . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I thought you had dealt with that while I was out, but go ahead.

MR. JOHNSON: Very briefly, sir, the 1992-93 budget, the cost savings that we went back to. The decision to convert to the LAN, the local area network, that was actually started by my predecessor, that I brought back to this committee, was based on the fact that the NBI equipment -- which is a system that had been in use by the Ombudsman's office for quite some time -- was shown to be two to three times more expensive than the competition. The NBI system that was being used was becoming archaic compared to what was available under WordPerfect in the local area network. The NBI equipment was not reliable; it was getting to the point where repairs were more costly than changing the system itself. NBI was not capable of handling the workload, the level of work, in a satisfactory manner. For instance, my predecessor dealt with the Principal investigation, as you're all aware. The NBI equipment that we had at that time couldn't handle that amount of work. NBI itself as a company was downsizing and has since gone out of business, which would have meant, had we not changed -- and that was what we'd forecasted was going to happen -- that we would be in a position right now of having equipment that was totally unserviceable and would be more costly at the present time to implement rather than to change over in a step process.

In terms of manpower, in 1980 the number of staff at the Ombudsman's office was 18. The total number of complaints dealt with was 2,395. In 1990 the number of staff was 20, an increase of two, but the number of complaints was 6,597 as of the 1990 year. So in the past 10 years staff has only increased 1.1 percent per year on average but the number of complaints has increased 17.5 percent. Without the assistance of the computer technology there would have been a significant increase in manpower requested. For instance, in 1980 each investigator handled approximately 300 oral and written complaints. To continue at that pace in the way it was handled in 1980, without computer assistance, an additional five investigators would have been required, when our office has shown an increase of only one over that time period in the investigative staff. So that's a savings of four positions.

Additionally, as I mentioned in the budget presentation, the realization of cost savings for our 1991 annual report because of compatibility of our system with the printer's system, will save between \$1,000 and \$1,500.

We now are in a budget process that, as this committee realizes -- we've been here three times discussing our budget to this committee -- the programs that we have right now will allow the automatic calculation of changes to a budget. For instance, if we change one line item, the bottom line dollars are changed within the program. So we change one item: the computer will do the calculations for us, and the bottom line will come out without sitting and having my staff with computers doing checks and cross-checks. We do one check, but we don't have staff cross-check every line item that changes. That's a significant increase in the amount of work that we can generate without increasing staff.

Finally, investigative files are not transferred between the two offices, Edmonton and Calgary, which eliminates a three-day delay in terms of getting the files down there, and secondly, increases the sophistication of security of the confidentiality of the information. That to me was one of the major issues when I first came into the office, because we do know that there was an accident on Highway 2 where a number of the Ombudsman's files were strewn over the highway. That was a very serious case. As it was, there were no major breaches, but a number of people on the highway did have access to some of our files at that point, which is now not happening.

MR. TANNAS: There's a countervailing risk, though, that once you're connected by phone line, a hacker can get in. Do you leave them on 24 hours, or do you shut it down?

MR. JOHNSON: We shut them down every night, and there is a backup. We have no modem access at this particular time, which is a major . . .

MR. TANNAS: It's a direct line?

MR. JOHNSON: It's no modem access. What we have is a bridge through PWSS that allows the transfer of the information in a packet form, and that is more secure than using the modem. When I came back to this committee we did explore the option of a dedicated line, but that would have been too expensive at that particular time, and I think I explained to the committee that that was one way to reduce the cost quite significantly. With the hackers there's still potential, but most levels of security want at least three steps before somebody can break a system. We've got more than three steps at the present time, increasing the security component.

MR. TANNAS: And if you only have it on when staff are there, you'd know when somebody else is on.

MR. JOHNSON: The chances of anybody breaking in are almost minimal, and there is no phone-back system, which is the way modems get broken quite a bit. We are in the process right now of having another security analysis done by our staff with assistance from outside.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There were two other questions raised at the November 25 meeting, and I thought they had been dealt with while I was out: the list of communities visited by the Ombudsman in the 1991-92 fiscal year and breakdown of registration and membership fees.

MR. JOHNSON: In terms of the list of communities that I attended to, one thing I didn't do was run off copies for everybody, and I can supply that. In my annual report I will be putting a map showing the communities where I've done public presentations, not private presentations. Public presentations are where members of the public are invited to come in and discuss issues.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think that was the intent, was it not, was where there was a public presentation?

MR. ADY: Yes.

MR. JOHNSON: Okay. I didn't run it off, to be quite honest, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It'll be in your annual report.

MR. JOHNSON: It will be in my annual report, showing the public presentations. I do notify the MLA for that area that I am going into the particular areas and making a public presentation should any of their constituents want to come forward, or to be of any help to their constituents.

The breakdown of registration and membership fees: the International Ombudsman Institute is one membership fee that we're involved in. It's \$1,000 U.S. per year. There is a Law Society of Alberta membership section in the Canadian Bar Association which is paid to solicitors assigned with the government. There's the Alberta Arbitration and Mediation Society which in fact is a \$100 cost, a very minimal cost. We do get some good training, because my investigators require that type of skill level. There is a Community Connections membership director so that we have a



reference to what resources are available to complainants that come forward to us.

11:04

MR. CHAIRMAN: Questions on registration and membership fees? Any other matters that need to be addressed before we seek a motion to approve the budget?

MR. FOX: I'd just like to say in reference to a couple of comments Harley made that this is the 25th anniversary of the founding of the office. I think he's presented a proposal to us that is prudent and supportive. It is an important occasion. We have an obligation to the taxpayers to be careful with money we spend, but as well it's important that we recognize the role of the office in Alberta in both the North American and international context. This is the city where the International Ombudsman Institute is located. I appreciate your plans to make some modest recognition of the 25th anniversary, and as a committee member I certainly look forward to whatever assistance our committee can give to your office in terms of co-ordinating or organizing or working towards the 25th anniversary.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thanks, Derek.  
Anyone else?

Is there a mover for the budget? Tom moves approval of the budget as presented for a total of \$1,298,100. Further discussion on the motion?

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question's been called. All in favour? It's carried unanimously.

I'd like to express on behalf of the committee to you, Harley, and to Dixie and your staff our appreciation for the way you've presented your budget. We've been working with the three offices to find a way to bring them together in terms of format so it will be easier for the committee to follow. We're very appreciative of the suggestions made in our previous meetings in areas where you've either refined the budget or further explained what it is you intend to do, and I just pass on to your staff our thanks.

[The committee adjourned from 11:07 a.m. to 11:17 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let the record show that we welcome Brian Fjeldheim, the Deputy Chief Electoral Officer for the province of Alberta, and Bill Sage from the office. As I think all members of the committee are aware, Pat Ledgerwood is away at this time, so Brian, with Bill's assistance, is here in his new capacity as Deputy Chief Electoral Officer.

I'm going to suggest that in Pat's absence we go through the budget today. If there are any areas of real concern, we may wish to hold those and tuck in that portion in a week or so after Pat has returned. I'm not suggesting for a moment we may run into any difficulties, but if there is an area where there is that kind of concern, in light of the fact that we're meeting so often in the next few weeks regarding the selection of a new Ethics Commissioner and the senior administrator's position for that office, it would not be inconvenient for the committee to tag on a 15- or 20-minute or half-hour section with the Chief Electoral Officer if indeed that's necessary. Now, that may not be necessary. We may go very smoothly today and everything will be just fine.

With those opening comments, Brian, I'll turn it over to you for any opening remarks you'd like to make. The process we normally

follow at these meetings is to be very informal. If a question is asked or we get into an area where you would rather not have the tape running, if indeed you believe it's sensitive and should not be on the record at this time, you can make a request and we will then have a motion to go in camera and deal with the matter. As long as we're not in that area, as you know, there's a transcript of our proceedings, and that's available to the public. So with those comments, I'll turn it over to you.

MR. FJELDHEIM: I'd like to thank you very much for the opportunity to come here today to meet with you and go over our budget. You have copies of it. By way of opening, I would like to mention that, as you can see, our budget is divided into three elements: the Administration area, Election, and Enumeration. In some cases you will see the same control group in two or all three of these elements. For example, Contract Services is in all three elements, and travel is another area. When you see something that's recorded more than once, it is done for a reason. That's because these expenses arise in each of these areas, and we want to ensure that costs are kept down and also that they are recorded accordingly.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I'm looking at the information you have. First of all, if you like, we can go through each of the elements. I'm not sure what type of detail you wish to get into.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah, let's do that. Let's spend some time on Administration first. You can go through that page. We'll then stop and see what questions there are either with the estimates for 1992-93 or going back to the forecast or estimates for 1991-92 or the actual for 1991. Once we've completed Administration, we'll move on to the elements on Election and Enumeration.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Good. Thank you.

First of all, then, in Administration, under Manpower we have Salaries-Permanent Positions: our budgeted amount there, \$381,219. That's made up of four full-time management positions and four nonmanagement positions. The nonmanagement is based on salaries at July 31, 1991, and management salaries are based on the revised salaries as at June 1, 1991. There has been a zero percent salary increase budgeted for managers and only an incremental increase for nonmanagement positions. That's a reduction, as you can see, from the 1991-92 estimate, and that is mostly because of the change in the deputy's position.

Wages, \$13,230, is based on a mid-range salary for administrative support plus the holiday pay. If there are amendments and changes, we suggest there will be a great deal of administrative support required to look after that.

Employer Contributions, \$60,760, is based on the above salary and wage calculations, and that's based on guidelines by payroll and pensions. In a lot of those things we don't have any control over the rate increases, and also include that as based on proposed pension changes.

Finally, in Manpower, Allowance and Benefits, that includes tuition and conference fees, professional development, professional memberships and so on. As you can see, \$1,800 has been budgeted there for a total in Manpower of \$457,009. That is a decrease from the 1991-92 estimate.

I wonder, Mr. Chairman, has anyone any questions on the Manpower section?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any questions there? All right.  
We can go on to Supplies and Services.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Supplies and Services: Travel Expenses. As I mentioned earlier, travel is broken into three categories. It is an

increase from the previous 1991-92 estimate. However, we feel we have appropriate justification for that. Travel by our office under this element involves things such as liaison with other jurisdictions, annual conferences. The annual conference in Canada is attended by all jurisdictions, all provinces, and the federal government attends as well as the territories. These jurisdictions send at least two people to that conference on an annual basis. Our courier function is included in this area as well. As I believe you are aware, we have 300-plus constituency associations. We feel it's important to keep in touch and be available to assist those associations. We're dealing with a lot of volunteers, and we want to make sure we have the support available to assist them. Our office certainly will attend any meeting or conference by any party, formal or informal, to assist parties and constituency associations with their requirements under the legislation. I guess particularly that would be under the Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act. So we have \$15,910 budgeted there, and you can see it is broken out on your sheet for your information.

Freight and Postage: \$2,800. I guess I should mention that we don't expect any advertising under this administrative element, but you can see there was some in '91-92, and that was for the Deputy Chief Electoral Officer's position. There's no change from the estimate used for the previous fiscal year. Postage meter, courier service: we get a lot of requests for maps; we get requests for information from other jurisdictions. I think that about covers that.

Rentals: no change from the previous year. The cost of the photocopier may vary, depending on its use. We find it's cheaper to rent. The office machines we do have -- the fax, the postage meter, and so on -- we do rent, and a service contract is in there as well. So there's \$5,725 for Rentals.

## II:27

Telephone and Communications: a lot of that is long-distance charges. We accept long-distance charges, of course. We encourage people to use the RITE system, and of course in our office we do, but in some areas of the province that isn't available. So we do accept collect calls from people.

Repair and Maintenance: once again, that's maintenance contracts on our equipment. The returning officers have typewriters. We have typewriters in our office as well. Although it is getting to be the age of the computer, some of our forms need to be typed, and we have to have servicing available for those machines.

Contract Services: this involves legal fees, temporary employment agencies to get someone to help us in an emergency situation, and printing forms. The printed forms are for the Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act. We don't have a separate element for the election finances and contributions disclosure legislation as we do with the Election Act, broken into two parts. We have that included in our administrative area.

MR. SAGE: Just one thing, if I may interrupt for just a second. Printed forms: what we're looking at there is more the CEO's annual report on the election finances Act versus a form as such. We'll see later in the budget that the forms are allowed for, but this would be the printing of his annual report that's prepared in August of each year.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Data Processing service is charges by Public Works, Supply and Services for printing, training, and analysis. It's a system they have incorporated, and we are required to be on that system. It's charged back by public works, whom we have to pay whenever we use their system.

Hosting is \$1,200. That's \$100 a month. We feel that's appropriate. When the office opened in 1978-79, the budget was

\$2,000. From 1979 to 1992 it has remained at \$1,200 for the year. In '81-82, it recalls here, we hosted the national chief electoral officers' conference and at that time it was \$8,650, but every other year it's been \$1,200.

Hosting: that's visits from other jurisdictions across Canada. When there is an election or even when there isn't an election, if people want some information they will come and visit us and we can explain our system and how we do things. Returning officers and spouses drop in to the office unannounced once in a while, and if appropriate, we like to take them out for lunch; the same with political party officials and so on. The federal commission visited our office when they were here, and I believe some funds were spent on hosting there. Also, we get foreign visitors once in a while. I understand there have been Americans, Australians, and people from Germany who have come to our office to have a look and see how we do things. So we feel \$1,200 is certainly an appropriate amount for that. As I say, it has not really increased since 1979. I guess with inflation the amount is decreasing.

Materials and Supplies: miscellaneous supplies, government forms, newspapers, periodicals. We feel it's important to keep up on what is going on. Also, our payroll, purchase orders, and standard government forms are budgeted in this area as well.

That concludes the Supplies and Services control group.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thanks. Could we go back to Travel Expenses first?

Stan, I think you indicated there was a question you had on travel.

MR. NELSON: Yeah, I'd like to know what is discretionary and what is nondiscretionary. Do you have any breakdown?

MR. FJELDHEIM: Well, we looked at this, and I interpret discretionary as something that's nice to go to and so on. My feeling is that in effect we do not have just discretionary travel. My opinion is that the annual conference, for example -- I believe it's essential that Alberta attends that.

MR. NELSON: Where is it this year?

MR. FJELDHEIM: It's in Whitehorse.

MR. FOX: The COGEL Conference is in Toronto, isn't it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah.

MR. FJELDHEIM: I'm not sure where.

MR. SIGURDSON: The COGEL's in Toronto.

MR. FJELDHEIM: I appreciate that it's maybe not quite the answer -- or is it the answer you had in mind?

MR. NELSON: No, I wanted to determine what was discretionary travel and nondiscretionary. There are certain things, I guess, that have to be done on an annual basis within the province that require the Chief Electoral Officer and/or his staff to attend, and there are times when other travel is really nondiscretionary.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Nice to go to sort of thing.

MR. NELSON: Yeah. For example, how many people will be traveling to a conference? Is it necessary for three people or two people or whatever to go to a conference? In these times of restraint we have to consider these kinds of things, and if we were to say to

you, "Well, we want 25 percent of that travel out of your budget," what does that do to the office of the Chief Electoral Officer?

MR. FJELDHEIM: Well, as you can see by the information that you have, some of the items on there -- the vehicle and vehicle operating costs I understand are part of the office. So some of those items, in my opinion, are givens. Then you've got what's left to take out, and that doesn't leave very much. As far as how it would affect us, I think it would affect us very much.

MR. NELSON: We're talking about three items there, basically: the \$3,850, the \$1,000 and \$4,250, which is about \$9,000. That's what we're talking as possible discretion and nondiscretion.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Uh huh.

MR. NELSON: That may be one we may hold over just to talk to the Chief Electoral Officer and get his concerns about them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Anyone else on that? So we'll hold that. Going down the list . . .

MR. NELSON: Well, I had two other ones. I have a question. When you were talking about Freight and Postage, you talked about the courier function. I wrote down "courier function." What was that all about?

MR. FJELDHEIM: Yeah. We do use a courier at times if we do get a call that someone needs something in a hurry. We also, of course, use the government courier system when possible. Am I at the right one?

MR. SAGE: Yeah, Brian mentioned it in two places, under travel and then again under postage. The travel portion would be: our warehouseman acts as our office courier, making trips to and from the Legislature or Atria buildings for mapping, that type of thing. That would be the courier function there, and he's paid the per diem rate of 26.5 percent. The courier function under the postage would be Canada Post, Loomis, that type of courier, even more courier functions outside of the city.

MR. NELSON: Okay.

The other one, of course, is the Hosting area. I can't imagine buying lunch for political party people, but regardless of that, we're looking at ways and means of lopping 25 percent off those areas also. I appreciate the fact that \$1,200 isn't very much, but what's going to happen if we chop 25 percent off that too? You're back down to \$900, which was your forecast in '91-92.

MR. FJELDHEIM: I was just going to say that that was our forecast, and I believe, Bill, we're still very close to that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, let's leave that as a second item, then, and continue later with Pat.  
Tom.

MR. SIGURDSON: Two items. First, under code 712G Rentals, I realize that there's a wide-ranging cost for fax machines, but a rental of \$1,200 . . . I don't know what kind of capacity your fax machine has, but I know that purchasing a fax machine -- some fax machines, anyway -- is somewhat cheaper than \$1,200 for a rental. Have you examined the contract that you have with the rental company to find out whether or not the price can be reduced? I just

find it, I guess, a little bit odd that we would pay more in rental than the cost of a purchase.

11:37

MR. SAGE: Certainly the fax machine that we have has a big capacity for memory, and that's where a lot of your costs go, your \$600 machine versus a \$3,000 machine, which is likely the cost of the one that we have. Some of that capacity is built into the memory and some of the features that it has. In terms of renewing the contract, it would be from \$100 a month down to \$95 a month, but that was something that's come up since we prepared this budget estimate. I'm not sure it's a Cadillac fax machine, but it would certainly be in the upper end of it. We have looked at buying it once the lease expires, and that's something that we may pursue. I guess with the leasing of the machines or the renting of the machines, you're kind of up with the state of the art at all times. It's certainly one of the aspects that we looked at. We decided that was the machine to go with when we went to it in the '89 election period, and we're prepared to stay with it.

MR. SIGURDSON: So you've had that machine since the '89 election period?

MR. SAGE: Yeah.

MR. SIGURDSON: How much time is left in the lease, and what's the buy-out?

MR. SAGE: The lease is finished at the end of March or sometime in April of this year, of '92.

MR. SIGURDSON: End of March or in April. Then you wouldn't be renting it in fiscal year 1991-92.

MR. SAGE: Well, if we renew a rental on a different machine, we would. That's what this is based on, that we would renew.

MR. SIGURDSON: A renewed rental on a different machine.

MR. SAGE: Right.

MR. SIGURDSON: Do you know what your buy-out would be on the existing machine?

MR. SAGE: It's very minimal. I'd have to check the contract on it, but it's really quite a low amount.

MR. SIGURDSON: I'm just wondering if you could bring that information back on the cost of the buy-out and, I suppose, if you're not going to buy it out and use the machine that you've had in your office, why you would anticipate increased capacity needs for a new machine.

MR. SAGE: The machine that I mentioned with the slightly reduced cost is a comparable machine to what we have now. I think they've changed the model numbers on it, but that's about all. The fax machine, as I say, has the memory to program.

MR. SIGURDSON: And transmit to 83 constituencies.

MR. SAGE: Exactly; 83 returning officers versus constituencies.

MR. SIGURDSON: I can well appreciate the need for that kind of memory, but if we can buy it out and just go with a service contract, we may be able to save a few dollars.

Mr. Chairman, could we address this issue?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Under Contract Services?

MR. SIGURDSON: Under Contract Services. We just have a letter from the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly to the Chief Electoral Officer advising that given the need for overall efficiency and "more effective use of resources in the operations of the Legislative Assembly," the Clerk advises the Chief Electoral Officer that they are able "to provide legal services to your office." The \$15,000 that you have in legal fee contract services: have you a fixed contract for a period of time, and if you have that, what's the specified period?

MR. FJELDHEIM: No. I'm looking at Bill here to confirm this, but at this time we don't have a fixed contract with anyone, and yes, we are aware of that letter. Mr. Ledgerwood, however, is not aware of it. This budget, of course, was put together before we received this, so that is why the \$15,000 is still in there under Legal Fees. We're not aware also, in looking at that, whether or not there will be a charge-back for the use of those services.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think that's another area, then, that can be held and reviewed. If the services are provided by the Legislative Assembly to the Chief Electoral Officer's office, I'm assuming it would be on the same basis it was earlier when we had two full-time legal counsel. There was no fee for service. The service was withdrawn only when the Speaker reduced legal counsel from two full-time to one and a half. Now he's back to two, as I understand it, so the service is now available again to the office. I think those matters need to be clarified between your office and the Clerk's office prior to our meeting with Pat.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Okay; thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions on this section?

Just to recap: we're coming back to examine Travel Expenses, Contract Services, and Hosting. Now, have I missed anything about those three areas to be reviewed further? Okay.

Let's move on to Elections and Enumerations, recognizing that we will not be making decisions on those matters today. That again will be referred to a future meeting, but you can quickly go through the numbers that are there, Brian.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Okay. The next one maybe you have is the Election Element. In there we have Travel Expenses of \$22,750 and Contract Services of \$225,375, for a total of \$248,125.

First of all, Travel Expenses is broken out into two areas: travel by the staff of the Chief Electoral Officer's office is \$2,000, and travel by returning officers is \$20,750. The initial training we do with the returning officers is generally done in Edmonton. We feel that it's important to bring our returning officers to Edmonton so they can become familiar with the environment that we work in and have the opportunity to meet the staff at the Chief Electoral Officer's office. Any follow-up or emergency training that may need to be done is generally done in the RO's electoral division, and that is why there's travel there for the Chief Electoral Officer's staff. After the initial training has been done, we divide the province roughly in half and hold training sessions in Edmonton and in Calgary. That's a cost saving because then, of course, people from southern Alberta don't have to travel all the way to Edmonton. So that's the justification for the travel expenses you see.

Contract Services is broken out. The election training session fees to returning officers: they're paid \$125 for attending a day of training, multiplied by 83 is where we get that number from. The printing and resupply of election forms and miscellaneous supplies,

the \$200,000, is to resupply the forms and the guides and the pamphlets and the brochures and all those items and also to resupply the returning officer training aids. We have flip charts that they use for training their deputy returning officers. These things, of course, have to be designed and printed.

Nothing has been ordered since the last general election. We have enough supplies now for a couple of by-elections, in our opinion. It is critical that we have enough time to get these supplies. We have 58 different forms we use for an election, some on NCR paper -- they're all special orders -- and we have an oath booklet that has to be collated and stapled. As I say, they're all special orders and, of course, in very large quantities. All of these things must be contracted out. There are no sort of in-house public works government forms that we can use in this area. We're looking at approximately 5,000 polls, and every deputy returning officer has to have sufficient quantities. We feel that that is critical. The resupply of Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act forms and guides: as I mentioned before, some of this is done in legislation, and Bill clarified the report printing. Here once again quantities have reached minimum levels, and we're looking at \$15,000 to bring those materials up to required quantities.

Bill, do you have anything to add on the finances, forms, and stuff?

11:47

MR. SAGE: No. As Brian has mentioned, nothing has been ordered on those since prior to the '89 election, so we will in the near future have to resupply.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

Derek, then Yolande, and Tom.

MR. FOX: I'm just wondering, Mr. Chairman. There has been some discussion about the need for or the possibility that changes will be made to the various elections Acts, the Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act or the Election Act. Do we have any insight as to whether or not there are changes proposed that would have an impact on the forms and guides that are being ordered?

MR. FJELDHEIM: There has been talk for quite a while now on possible changes to the Election Act, and yes, that would impact on some of these items.

MR. FOX: But we don't know. We don't have any information yet from the Attorney General whether or not there's legislation pending or planned for introduction.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think it's fair to say, both from past remarks made by the Chief Electoral Officer here and my own involvement, that the Chief Electoral Officer is actively working with Fred Bradley, the MLA for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest, on proposed amendments. The timing, of course, rests with the Attorney General.

MR. FOX: Right. I'm wondering. It's obvious that there is a need to have forms on hand and be ready to go. We're now almost three years into the current mandate, and one of the things that the office has prided itself on is the ability to respond when required. So these forms need to be ordered, and they need to be on hand. If changes are pending, it gets to be a difficult decision. Do you have any indication how many -- maybe this is too speculative -- of the forms that you need to order that could possibly be affected by change? There may be some that you can just go ahead and order and you

know they're not going to be affected by change because they're outside the things being examined.

MR. FJELDHEIM: We do have a listing of those that we feel are pretty safe. I guess an example might be the ballot. I don't foresee any changes in the ballot, but that doesn't mean there may not be. We have an idea of those that may be changed and may not be changed, and of course we don't want to get in a position where we order a bunch of things and then we have to destroy them because there's been a change.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah. Well, the key is, if I heard Bill correctly, that you have enough supplies now to handle about four by-elections?

MR. FJELDHEIM: I think four would be pushing it. I've got a couple down.

MR. SAGE: Four would certainly be a maximum, I would think.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay; two to four. Well, I've heard both numbers now. We're in the middle of a redistribution process, which hopefully will be completed by the end of our spring sitting, and we will know whether or not amendments are made to the legislation. Surely if we find in the middle of the upcoming fiscal year, the estimates for the fiscal year which we are now debating, that the Chief Electoral Officer comes back to the committee with a request for a special warrant, that's something the committee would look very favourably upon. In other words, we've tried over time to go on the adage not to speculate but to be supportive, and if the amendments are made, then there's no reason that the supply should not be ordered. Then the Chief Electoral Officer's office is ready for any election, whenever that might come.

MR. FOX: There's one follow-up question that I think needs to be asked just because in this committee we all operate with limited knowledge about some of the things that may or may not happen. If you put in the order tomorrow for all of the forms you require, how long does it take for the forms to be in your possession and ready for distribution?

MR. FJELDHEIM: I would say that would be six weeks to two months.

MR. FOX: It would take six weeks to two months to provide election forms. If the Premier decided that he wanted to call an election in April or May -- it's possible, and only he knows those things. We don't know those things. Maybe Stan does, but we don't.

MRS. GAGNON: I've just been asked that question by the media this very minute. So don't say they're not speculating.

MR. FOX: There are a lot of people in the business of speculating, and we have to think about that. If there was a delay in ordering election forms until such time as we know the impact of the changes, whether they occur or not, to the two pieces of legislation or what happens with redistribution, we would not have the material to conduct an election.

MR. FJELDHEIM: I don't wish to speculate on whether or not we would be ready. Six to eight weeks would be the routine time. I suppose like most things you can hurry a little faster and so on, but as far as me picking a particular date or a particular time frame, we would run the election whenever it was called.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah. Just before Yolande speaks, it's important for the committee to go back to a year ago. If the committee had been spooked, we would have invested \$4 million of taxpayers' money on enumeration, which would have been wasted.

MR. FOX: Unless an election is called within the next six months.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The election wasn't called, and I'll give you my assurance that it will not be called in the next few months. All right? Yolande, and then Tom.

MR. SIGURDSON: How many months?

AN HON. MEMBER: The next few months.

MRS. GAGNON: You heard it here first, eh?

MR. CHAIRMAN: You heard it here first.

MRS. GAGNON: I was going to ask basically the same question but dealing more with redistribution than new regulations or legislation. Would any of these guides and forms, for instance, include names of constituencies, things like that? Do they or not?

MR. FJELDHEIM: No, they don't.

MRS. GAGNON: None of that matters; this is all irrelevant to where the boundaries are or what the names are.

MR. FJELDHEIM: As far as the election, yes.

MRS. GAGNON: So you can go ahead.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But a key, as you recall, is that the amendments which are proposed to the two pieces of legislation have a dramatic impact on it.

MRS. GAGNON: But not boundaries per se or names per se.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Not on boundaries per se.

MRS. GAGNON: Okay. That was my question.

MR. SIGURDSON: Just with respect to the travel for returning officers and the returning officers' fees for attending election training sessions. Because we have possible boundary redistribution and we probably won't know if we have it until June at the earliest I should think, have you these training sessions planned for calendar year 1992?

MR. FJELDHEIM: Not as yet.

MR. SIGURDSON: Would you be waiting for the Legislature to respond with a legislative package prior to scheduling these training sessions?

MR. FJELDHEIM: You're referring to the legislative package on the boundaries?

MR. SIGURDSON: Being the boundaries, yes.

MR. FJELDHEIM: I think I would defer that to Mr. Ledgerwood.

MR. SIGURDSON: Okay. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions?

MRS. GAGNON: I just have to make a comment, Bob, if I might, on your comment about being stuck with new enumeration numbers which would have been unreasonable or whatever.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sure.

MRS. GAGNON: I've got to say that maybe the new, proposed boundaries would be more reasonable if they were based on 1990 figures rather than 1986.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The ideal would be if they were based on 1991 census figures.

MRS. GAGNON: Oh, I know.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But how do you use 1990 figures when they're not available for all municipalities?  
All right.

MR. TANNAS: Can I ask a question?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Go ahead. Yes, Don, and then Derek.

MR. TANNAS: If we're going to carry on with the speculation as to whether or not there are going to be two moons in the sky or an election in the next little while, would you be now attempting to line up buildings and so on for an election to be held within the next six to nine months? Would you be doing that now? Is there an ongoing process in place as we speak?

MR. FJELDHEIM: The returning officers receive a \$75 a month honorarium, and one of the tasks they are to perform for that is to keep an eye on their electoral division for any new construction, a new building. Maybe a new apartment building goes up, or maybe an apartment building is torn down. In doing that, I would ensure that they're also keeping in mind what it takes. If we have a poll in this area because of this new apartment building, this is where we should hold it. So that's an ongoing thing. It's not a directive that we give; it's an ongoing commitment.

MR. TANNAS: That's part of the duties of a returning officer in a district. In the office that you hold, are you in the process of doing this kind of thing across the province at all?

**11:57**

MR. FJELDHEIM: That is the responsibility of the returning officer. We are not involved in selecting polling places.

MR. TANNAS: Okay. Good.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So the short answer is that the Chief Electoral Officer does not get involved in selecting sites. That's done at the local level by the returning officer.

MR. FOX: In terms of an election being held, the space that you have there is sufficient to do all the work you need to do. You've got storage space for forms; you move stuff out. I mean, you don't need additional physical space to conduct enumerations or elections in terms of the office of the Chief Electoral Officer.

MR. FJELDHEIM: No; we have sufficient space to do that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You had another point, Derek?

MR. FOX: Yeah. When we review budget submissions and stuff, we compare one year to the next. The Chief Electoral Officer's budget is unique in that certain elements can't fairly be compared one year to the next because their expenses are high in election years or years in which enumerations are held and very low in the intervening years. Now, I'm just wondering, in terms of the \$248,125 estimate for the Election element of the '92-93 budget, how that would compare to the budget estimate for the last year in which there was similar activity.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Bill, would we have that information or not? Maybe that's something we'll have to get out to you.

MR. FOX: In terms of us being able to compare apples with apples, I'm just wondering.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Just generally speaking, the year after an election it drops right off, and then as the years go by, it increases again.

MR. FOX: The cost of resupply hasn't gone up appreciably?

MR. SAGE: We have obviously built an inflation factor into this amount that we're asking for here.

One of the other things, getting back to your earlier question or comment, the resupply might not have happened all in that year. The last election was in March of '89. It might have been over the two previous fiscal years. To just be looking at the '88-89 fiscal year might not give you the same answer that you're looking for, as you say, with the apples and the oranges. I think we could make a stab at it. If you're interested in that information, we could certainly prepare something for you.

MR. FOX: I think it would be useful just to get some sense of what relative costs of preparing for elections are.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions on the Election element?

All right, let's take a break, have lunch, and then come back and finish the Enumeration element.

[The committee adjourned from 11:59 a.m. to 12:29 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll reconvene, and could we move on then, please, to the Enumeration element.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Okay. The Enumeration element was once again divided into Manpower and Supplies and Services, and also in this section we have Fixed Assets, which is our capital expenditure.

First of all, in Manpower the wages of \$25,020 are for a three-quarter, full-time equivalent position for use in resupplying, restocking, and packaging to get stuff ready to send out to the returning officers. Also, after an enumeration period we process between 10,000 and 12,000 claims and invoices, and we want to do that as quickly as possible so that people get paid and businesses get their invoices paid in a hurry. We also hire support staff to assist with that. So that's where those dollars come from.

Our contributions on that are based on the above wages. Since these are not full-time positions, the benefits are reduced significantly. However, it does include Workers' Compensation Board premiums on the returning officers' monthly honoraria, and in this we're also proposing accidental death and dismemberment insurance coverage for election officials this year. This has been

recommended by the risk management section of Treasury: people that are employed even on a casual basis and paid for by government should come under this accidental death and dismemberment insurance coverage. So that is included in that area as well.

That concludes Manpower.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Any questions on Manpower?  
Okay. We'll move on then.

MR. ADY: I just have one question. Explain a little bit further on the three-quarter, full-time person. Full-time means what in that case?

MR. FJELDHEIM: A full-time person is one person for one year.

MR. ADY: I understand that.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Three-quarters of a person is what we budgeted for. I'm sorry; one person for eight months is a better way to look at it. But we likely won't have one person for eight months; we will have eight people for one month.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is this the new position we approved last year? [interjection] That's in a different element? We did approve a part of a position.

MR. SAGE: It's in the same element, yes.

MR. FJELDHEIM: But we would bring that forward yearly because it's not a full-time, permanent position.

MR. ADY: So this is an equivalent, and actually it's more people than that for fewer months.

MR. FJELDHEIM: That's right.

MR. ADY: My question is: then when this is over, those people go back into full-time work somewhere else?

MR. FJELDHEIM: Wherever they came from. That is correct, yes.

MR. ADY: I'm talking about within the department.

MR. FJELDHEIM: No.

MR. ADY: These are outside people, and at the end of that time they're gone?

MR. FJELDHEIM: Exactly, yes.

MR. ADY: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.  
Supplies and Services.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Okay, first of all in Supplies and Services is Travel Expenses totaling \$183,450. Of that, \$2,000 is for office staff of the Chief Electoral Officer, as mentioned before, to attend training sessions in Calgary and other electoral divisions as required. Travel for returning officers to attend training sessions -- I can break that out a little further if you like -- is \$41,500.

We also have budgeted in here returning officers who resigned from the position. We have a turnover of around 20 to 25 percent for returning officers. At the present time we're short six returning

officers. When these vacancies occur and the individual has been trained, then we have to turn around and train the new appointment.

We also have budgeted \$3,150 here for travel during enumeration by urban returning officers and \$12,300 for travel by rural returning officers. As I mentioned before, this is an ongoing thing, but of course it increases during the enumeration period. Also, they must get out and train the enumerators. They generally don't call all the enumerators into one area in the rural constituencies but rather maybe have two or three sessions throughout the electoral division.

We also have included in there travel by enumerators and support staff, and this is based on the last enumeration figures. It was \$112,000, and that's based on travel of 400,000 kilometres. That's where we get the total.

Advertising includes the various advertising done by our office and the returning officers and extra dollars for additional advertising as a result of possible changes to the electoral division boundaries. In this section, as you can see, we have \$150,000 for the office of the Chief Electoral Officer to alert people that an enumeration is coming and for returning officers, who will be publishing maps in their local papers advising people of the boundaries. We feel it's important to let the public know what is happening and to let them know what electoral division they are in. We try to use press releases as much as possible, but still there is a requirement for advertising. I could mention that at this time we do not use electronic media, strictly the print media.

Freight and Postage, \$16,000: this includes the cost of transporting the materials to the returning officers and the postage incurred by the Chief Electoral Officer's office in conducting the enumeration. Of course, there are supplies. We're talking an awful lot of boxes that need to go out across the province carrying forms and other materials.

Rentals: this includes rental of office space, space for training enumerators, and vehicle and equipment rental. The returning officers doing the enumeration often use their residence for an office, and for that we allow them \$300 a month for a maximum of two months. We find that's economical for us, and also it's beneficial for them during an enumeration. You don't have the traffic you have during an election, so it works well during an enumeration. So we've budgeted an amount in there for that. Equipment rental: of course, office furnishings that they require, should they require any. Space for training enumerators: as I mentioned earlier, they may have to go throughout the electoral division, generally to two or three spots, to train enumerators. Rental of vehicle for courier function: this is used for the transportation of supplies. That total in Rentals is \$64,265.

MR. TANNAS: Can I ask a question? It says, "For use by Chief Electoral Officer staff." They already have a car over in an earlier one.

MR. NELSON: This is staff. The Chief Electoral Officer has a car.

MR. TANNAS: Oh, and it isn't used for electoral office business?

MR. FJELDHEIM: At times it is, yes, but generally when we're looking at a vehicle here, we're looking at a van. But at times, yes, we do use the Chief Electoral Officer's vehicle. In this situation it's a van.

MR. TANNAS: Okay.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Telephone and Communications. This includes telephone installationst times returning officers: yes, this is my phone right in my residence, and if I'm going to have my office here,

I want a separate phone. So rental and toll charges for returning officers and toll charges for the Chief Electoral Officer's office. Once again \$1,000 for the Chief Electoral Officer's office: as I mentioned, of course the calls increase, the inquiries increase, an awful lot of people phone wanting to know where they can get work to help enumerate. Returning officers' telephones: as I mentioned, they may have a phone installed.

Contract Services: this is a very large amount, as you can see, \$3,714,125. These are the fees paid to returning officers, enumerators, and support staff, and also the printing of forms and the lists of electors and the preparation of maps.

12:39

First of all, I'll go through this. Returning officers: the monthly honorarium they receive on an ongoing basis is included here. That honorarium is \$75 per month, and of course there are 83 returning officers -- we have to budget for a full contingent even though, as I mentioned before, we have some vacancies right now -- and of course 12 months. So that's \$74,700. For an enumeration they receive a basic fee of \$1,000, so that's \$83,000. The list of electors we base on 1,637,300 electors in the province. That calculation comes from Alberta Bureau of Statistics' total population, and historically we've been able to see that about 65 percent of the population are electors. So that's \$163,730; the returning officers get 10 cents for each name on their list. The revision to the list of electors: the returning officers spend three days revising the list, and they are paid \$125 per day, so that's \$125 once again times the 83 and the three days, as I mentioned. That's \$31,125. Attend training sessions: as I mentioned earlier under the Election element, they're paid \$125 a day to attend a training session. That's a couple of days, and that's \$20,750. As I mentioned before, we have returning officers that do resign. At that time we have to train the new ones, so we have budgeted in there \$6,250 to do that. Training of enumerators: returning officers in their wage scale receive \$250 for doing that. That's \$20,750. The revision to the maps, reviewing their electoral division: they receive \$200 for doing that, and that totals up to \$416,905.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay; we had a couple of questions.  
Tom, and then Jack, and then Alan.

MR. SIGURDSON: No, that's fine. The explanation's complete, thank you.

MR. ADY: About how many electors do you anticipate at the next election?

MR. FJELDHEIM: We're budgeting for 1,637,300.

MR. ADY: Okay.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Would you like some information on where we get that?

MR. ADY: No, 1.6 million, about. For my purposes the question I wanted to relate: what do you pay for an enumerator per name?

MR. FJELDHEIM: An enumerator receives 50 cents for each name they collect. That will show up in our enumerator fees, but it's 50 cents per name.

MR. ADY: So you spend about \$320,000 on enumerators' fees out of \$3 million. I'm just trying to figure out where the other money goes.

MR. FOX: It's \$800,000: 50 cents on 1.6 million.

MR. ADY: Yeah, I'm sorry. You're right, \$800,000. So the rest of the money in there: I'm just trying to figure out where all that goes. We haven't gone through that.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Under the Election Act each returning officer may appoint two enumerators for each subdivision, so it's required that we multiply your ballpark \$800,000 by two, so now we're at \$1.6 million.

MR. NELSON: There are always two enumerators go together anyway.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Not in the rural areas, if I may. You have the option of one or two in rural areas, but in urban areas you're quite right; it's always two. Of course, because the returning officer has that option of hiring two enumerators, we budget for two.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No direction is given to the returning officers whether they should hire one or two. It's up to their discretion.

MR. FJELDHEIM: That's right. It's their discretion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Regardless of where they are in the province.

MR. FJELDHEIM: In a rural area there's the option, one or two.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But it's the returning officer who makes up the . . .

MR. FJELDHEIM: In the rural area, right. In the city there is no option. It's two.

MR. ADY: So you're up to a dollar each.

MR. FJELDHEIM: That is correct.

MR. ADY: Now, that's \$1.6 million out of \$3 million.

MR. NELSON: What's the difference in the city against the rural, as far as the option is concerned?

MR. ADY: Danger pay.

MR. SAGE: The member is quite right. When the Act was changed back in 1980 or '81, there was some difficulty hiring enumerators, and they felt part of the reasoning was the danger pay. In certain areas of the city obviously that was part of it, but they did give the rural ROs the option of one or two, because it was a bit more difficult to find two enumerators in some of the rural areas.

MR. NELSON: In my area there's no danger.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Alan, or Jack.

MR. ADY: I didn't get an answer about the other \$1.4 million.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Okay. If I may, I'll continue on with the Enumerators section, and maybe that will answer it. The basic fee for enumerators is \$100. In effect, if you're going to be an enumerator, you get \$100. We're looking at 4,715 subdivisions. I mentioned earlier about 5,000. Well it's 4,715, and then we budget once again two for each, so that's \$943,000 to hire enumerators. I



mentioned earlier about 5,000. Well, it's 4,715, and then we budget once again two for each, so that's \$943,000 to hire enumerators.

Then the training fee: they get \$50 to attend a training session, so that works out to \$471,500. Then, as we discussed in our list of electors, 50 cents per name per enumerator. So where you've got two, in effect it works out across the province, as we have it budgeted, at \$1. So there we have \$1,637,300. From that we get our total of \$3,051,800.

MR. ADY: So what ratio would have two, versus one? Can't tell yet?

MR. SAGE: It's very difficult. Some of the returning officers as they change feel that they should be using two enumerators in a rural area. Certainly in all of the urban areas there isn't the option. You do have the two enumerators. So you're probably talking something in excess of 60 percent right there just in Edmonton, Calgary, Red Deer, Lethbridge, and Medicine Hat.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The key is you budget for two across the province.

MR. FJELDHEIM: That's right.

MR. SAGE: It's sort of the worst case scenario.

MR. ADY: Okay.

MR. FOX: Can I just explain something about that process that may be useful to Jack?

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Go ahead, and then I've got Alan and Yolande on this.

MR. FOX: When the enumerators are being selected, it's up to the governing party constituency association to submit a list. So in your riding there'd be a list submitted from your constituency association for possible use as enumerators. Whichever party finished second would submit a list too, but it may be difficult for that second place party to submit a list that contained 50 names of people willing to act as enumerators. So the returning officer in your riding may have names that he or she recognizes as qualified enumerators, but it may be difficult to come up with two in every case. Conversely, in the Vegreville constituency it may be difficult for the Conservatives to come up with 50 people who want to act as enumerators. It works both ways.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dream on.

MR. FOX: You've got relatively fewer people to choose from and more area to cover. So that's the difference there.

MRS. GAGNON: And here I thought people just went and applied for a job. Gee whiz; you just disillusioned me.

MR. SIGURDSON: That's what happens when you're third.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Alan, and then Yolande.

MR. HYLAND: The percentage increase is big; from \$76,000 and change to \$4 million: 189,000. Again, I know there's nothing you can do with it, but it probably makes a great story that here we're spending how many percent increase, but nobody would bother to

put the line on. It's been three years since we've done an enumeration, hasn't it?

MR. FOX: September '88.

MR. HYLAND: So three and a half years. On a per year basis it's a lot slimmer compared to what you're hit with, and you're only hit with it two years in a row, and then you miss a year the year after an election.

MR. FJELDHEIM: You do not enumerate in the year of an election and the year following, but you enumerate every other year, except when there's a boundary commission, and then there'd be another delay. So yes, you're quite right. The percentage . . .

MR. HYLAND: . . . is astronomical.

MR. FJELDHEIM: In fact, we did look and decided it might be best not to bring that forward. I can't even imagine what that would be; some thousands, I guess.

MRS. GAGNON: By law how often would you have to enumerate if there were no election? I know there has to be a boundaries commission, so it depends on that -- right? -- because that law comes first.

MR. HYLAND: The election law comes first.

MRS. GAGNON: Does it?

MR. HYLAND: Because the boundaries is every two elections.

MRS. GAGNON: You must enumerate . . .

MR. ADY: The second year after an election.

MRS. GAGNON: The second year after every election. There's no choice; you've got to do it this year.

MR. FOX: And every subsequent year until an election is called.

MRS. GAGNON: It's in the budget.

12:49

MR. CHAIRMAN: Last year we did not vote the dollars for it, and we still have to make a decision this year on what to do because of redistribution.

MRS. GAGNON: So we don't have to do it this year because of redistribution, but normally we would have to do it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's the Chief Electoral Officer who makes the decision, but we approve the dollars. So if the dollars aren't approved, he can't do it.

MR. FOX: The Act requires that an enumeration be held every year except an election year and the year immediately following an election year, and then there's some provision about the year in which an Electoral Boundaries Commission reports or something like that.

MR. FJELDHEIM: If I may, Mr. Chairman?

If a Commission is appointed, the Chief Electoral Officer may, at his discretion, not proceed with an enumeration in the calendar year in

which the Commission is established or the calendar year following the calendar year in which the Commission is established.

My understanding is, if I may, that the commission was established in 1990. So that was the year it was established, and '91, of course, has just passed.

MRS. GAGNON: The point I'm trying to get at is that the accurate comparison would be between September '88, the cost of that enumeration -- right? -- and the costs that we're facing now. Some of that would be based on increases in staff benefits and all kinds of stuff, but is a lot of it population increases?

MR. SAGE: Yes. There is certainly some population increase in there. I don't have the figures for what we used in September of '88, but there would be some population increase in there. There hasn't been any change in the fee, so that's constant, but there are some inflationary factors for some of the other areas.

MRS. GAGNON: Do you remember how many voters there were last time, total? There are 1.6 million now.

MR. SAGE: It was 1.5 million and change. We could certainly get that for you.

MRS. GAGNON: No, I don't need to know it, but just in general.

MR. FJELDHEIM: The list of electors for March 20, 1989, included 1,550,867 names.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Regarding the establishment of the commission, I'll ask Louise to check with Legislative Counsel. It's true that the Act was passed in December of 1990. The actual commission members were appointed in January of 1991. So we'll get clarification on that matter.

MR. HYLAND: As he said, the fees paid to people -- because that's part of the question people always ask -- I think were set in the legislation in 1980 or '85.

MR. FJELDHEIM: I believe '85. Is that the last time the fees were looked at, Bill?

MR. SAGE: The enumerators' fees were established in '81. There was a minor change in '85, but it didn't affect the enumerators.

MR. HYLAND: So that was established in the Act?

MR. SAGE: It's by regulation, expenses regulation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think it would be appropriate when this matter does come back when Pat is present that some consideration be given to these fees. Alan's on the same point I was on, whether an adjustment is warranted, recognizing that the adjustment takes place through regulation. I think we should know so if there is to be an adjustment, it's something that can be considered by the Attorney General and cabinet.

MR. SAGE: You're asking if we're proposing an adjustment at this time?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, I'm asking you to ensure that when Pat Ledgerwood comes back to our table, that's a matter he addresses.

MR. ADY: One other question on that. Is there a mileage fee paid to enumerators?

MR. FJELDHEIM: Yes, there is.

MR. ADY: Did I miss it somewhere in your explanation?

MR. FJELDHEIM: That's under the travel section, the \$183,450. Once again, that's based on 400,000 kilometres.

MR. ADY: Oh, I remember that now. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So what does the rate work out to?

MR. FJELDHEIM: The rate?

MR. ADY: Per kilometre.

MR. FJELDHEIM: We are looking at 28 cents a kilometre there.

MRS. GAGNON: I'm probably pre-empting the meeting with Pat, but is it his decision, and is his decision based on whether we pass this budget or not, to go ahead and enumerate in the year '92?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MRS. GAGNON: He can do it, but if we don't give him the money, his hands are tied, right?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yolande, we had that discussion last year.

MRS. GAGNON: I know. But I mean, does he have to do it this year by law?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, we need clarification on whether it's when the Act was passed in the Assembly or when the commission members were appointed as to which calendar year you're in. My position all along has been that when we're in the middle of redistribution, it would be folly to have an enumeration on old boundaries when we're about to accept new boundaries, because they'll be meaningless. The polls will be different; the boundaries will be different. You'll have to go back and do it again. So there's \$4 million wasted.

The three groups that would dearly love to get their hands on enumeration lists, of course, are the party officials in the three parties. Our party -- the Conservatives -- yours, the NDs would all like to have updated lists, no question. The issue is whether or not you're prepared to spend \$4 million to do that.

MRS. GAGNON: I guess the point is that if you find out that by law it doesn't have to be this year but it's Pat's judgment then whether he should do it . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, then it's up to this committee to decide whether we provide the dollars for it.

MRS. GAGNON: But if we say no and then, of course, as he said last year, he's trapped with an election, then he's up against it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Then he can point the finger at this committee. [interjection] Well, we can get a special warrant then.

Yes, Derek.

MR. FOX: Just to refresh memories of committee members, we did discuss this at some length and, I believe, passed a motion that was looking at an enumeration sometime in the first six months of 1993. The point has to be made that three of those months are in the 1992-93 fiscal year, the budget for which we're considering now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What that relates to, Derek, is that we passed a motion that we advise the Attorney General that the next enumeration should take place. That was based on the advice given to us by the Chief Electoral Officer as to how soon he could gear up to do the enumeration, assuming that legislation is passed by June, July of this year, bringing into effect the new boundaries, then the lead time to appoint returning officers to do the training. To do all the things necessary, we were backed into the early part of 1993. So our motion was that there be flexibility. In fact, I believe it stated that the Chief Electoral Officer would pick the time within the first six months. So then we got into that situation, because half of the six months would be in the old fiscal year and half in the new fiscal year, as to how we would deal with it.

MR. FOX: My understanding is that if we pass this budget, then the fiscal resources are there to facilitate the enumeration sometime in the next 12 months, and depending on how the redistribution process goes, if it takes a little longer than that, it may be in the first three months of 1993. It may need to be in the next fiscal year, the first three months of that fiscal year. Or, alternatively, if it somehow goes much faster than we imagine and everything is done, the dollars are provided for this fiscal year, then it's not inconceivable that it could occur sometime late in 1992.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll come back and address it.  
All right; anything else on the Enumeration element? Yes, Derek.

MR. FOX: I'd like to compliment the people involved for preparing the document. I think it's very clear to us exactly how it's all broken down. Most of the expenses are fixed based on legislation or regulation other than some of the matters that members want clarification from the Chief Electoral Officer on and things that we may want to discuss with Pat in some detail. I think you've all done a good job of preparing and presenting a budget for us today.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.  
Follow-up question, Stan.

MR. NELSON: Yeah. Given the previous consideration and the motion, it may be useful to examine this budget where the enumeration isn't particularly involved to split that out into two fiscal years. In other words, assuming, as per the discussion with Mr. Ledgerwood some time ago, that he was to commence an enumeration, as an example, in January of 1993, how many dollars would it mean from January to the end of March and then from April 1 into June, for that period of time? You may have to split that apart because you can't carry over a budget into the following year. If we decided we do want to pass this right now, and we may need a special warrant for that three-month period, it may not be for \$4 million. He may only need \$3 million or \$2 million. I think we'd better examine that, because that may sit on top of an agenda.

12:59

MR. CHAIRMAN: Alan, on this point.

MR. HYLAND: Stan, are you asking: what if the time period is X and what if the time period is Y, and have the two options?

MR. NELSON: I'm speculating.

MR. HYLAND: You wouldn't have both. You'd have one or the other.

MR. NELSON: Well, I think there have to be two options, because assuming -- and here again we're assuming a lot of things -- the report from the boundaries commission is going to be in on time, by the end of June, the House will have to deal with it, whether it's dealt with in the summer or whether it's dealt with in the fall or whenever. But given all the discussion with Pat two months ago, it's conceivable that an enumeration may not even be commenced until the first part of 1993, which allows for a three-month period in this fiscal year. I'm not sure you'd need all that money for that three-month period.

MRS. GAGNON: You mean in the fiscal year '92-93.

MR. NELSON: In '92-93. So you take '93-94. It's conceivable we may not pass this. We may just say, "Look, when the event happens, we'll ask for a special warrant to provide for the actual dollars that may be required to commence that enumeration in '93." When we deal with the budget for '93-94, we can do the balance of that. It makes more sense.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Derek, on this point.

MR. FOX: I think I appreciate what Stan is trying to get at, but I don't think it's very practical. I think we have to recognize that we're dealing with an experienced officer, an experienced office with a track record for spending cautiously. If we approved the budget request for an enumeration element for the '92-93 fiscal year and if, because of delays in the redistribution process, it seemed unlikely an enumeration would be held in that fiscal year, then I think it's safe to assume the Chief Electoral Officer wouldn't spend the money and our committee would approve that element for the subsequent fiscal year. We're trying to budget in a responsible way, and special warrants should be saved for those unforeseen circumstances. My sense is that if it ain't going to happen, the money ain't going to get spent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Tom.

MR. SIGURDSON: My point exactly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Are there other questions for information? We're on a philosophical point, which we will deal with at a subsequent meeting. Any questions? All right. That deals with the budget. You know the things we want further information on, particularly relative to fees for enumerators and so on.

We'll go to the requests for special warrants. There are two requests for special warrants, one which I propose we deal with today and one which I propose we hold at today's meeting. The first warrant is for funds required to conduct a special enumeration in the electoral division of Little Bow; it's for \$26,075. Anything you want to add to that, Brian or Bill?

MR. FJELDHEIM: I don't believe so. I think it's pretty straightforward.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Alan.

MR. HYLAND: Yolande asked a question, or if Yolande didn't, somebody asked a question yesterday about -- I know the time's short between the passing of the Member for Calgary-Buffalo . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Can I address that?

MR. NELSON: We can deal with that next week.

MR. HYLAND: Next week? I'm just wondering if it could all be in one.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No.

MR. HYLAND: No? Okay. There's a need to go with this one quickly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It will come back next week. Okay?  
Yes.

MR. FOX: I'm just wondering if perhaps you can tell us a little bit about the timing with respect to Little Bow. If we approve this budget request today, presumably it goes to Executive Council for their decision based on our recommendation. Then you initiate the enumeration process. How long does that take? What do you see being required in terms of conducting a special enumeration in the Little Bow constituency?

MR. FJELDHEIM: Well, a number of items have been initiated already for us to be prepared.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah, and that's appropriate.

MR. FOX: But I'm just wondering how long you think it would take for an enumeration to be complete in the Little Bow constituency.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Well, it wouldn't take that long, because, as I say, we've got a number of things in place already. It really depends on how things go, but it won't take that long to get it completed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Stan.

MR. NELSON: I just have a question on these numbers you have here. Notwithstanding the fact that I don't want to go through them particularly line by line, these numbers are based on historical numbers for a by-election, are they?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Wait a minute. Are we dealing with enumeration or by-election?

MR. NELSON: I was dealing with both of them, actually.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, don't, please. Let's deal with the enumeration.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Yeah, that's based on numbers we had before, numbers similar to those that were in our main budget.

MR. NELSON: Okay. Good.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Could we have a motion to approve? Stan, thank you. Motion to approve \$26,075 for a special enumeration in the electoral division of Little Bow. Any further discussion? All in favour? Carried unanimously.

The second request, one which I would request we hold today, would be to approve funds to conduct a by-election in the electoral division of Little Bow. Again, because we'll be meeting so regularly in the next while, we can approve that at an appropriate time.

Yes, Tom.

MR. SIGURDSON: Can I just ask for a rationale, please?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah. We do not as a committee determine when a by-election is to be held. I think it would be most inappropriate for a wrong signal to go out from this meeting that there will be a by-election next week or next month or whenever. That's the Premier's prerogative, not our committee's.

MR. FOX: So it would be your intention that we not approve the request until such time as it's called.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would like to get some clarification on the procedure, and I'll go through the Speaker. I have not yet done that. The enumeration to me is very straightforward and needs to be done in any event. We know that by-elections must be held within a six-month period following the vacancy of a seat. You remember the difficulty we had with the by-election in Edmonton-Strathcona by some rather innocent comments made by the assistant Chief Electoral Officer. The media picked them up as a signal the by-election would be called then, and it was unfortunate.

MR. FOX: Yeah. I appreciate your caution, Mr. Chairman. I think there are some elements of the budget that require spending in advance of the election being called.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And I believe there's sufficient latitude in the current budget of the office that they can do what needs to be done and then reimburse those elements with a special warrant, but always with "when approved." Okay?

MR. FOX: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Anything else?

All right. We'll come back next week and deal with the issue. When is Pat back?

MR. FJELDHEIM: He'll be back next week.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But then he's involved in electoral boundaries hearings.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would you and Louise co-ordinate when he might meet with the committee so we can finalize the budget?

MR. FJELDHEIM: Certainly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Great. To you and Bill, thank you very much.

MR. FJELDHEIM: Thank you.

1:09

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. If we could move on then to item 11.

We're pleased to have Bill Mahon with us today from Kingston Ross Pasnak. Please join us, Bill.

MR. MAHON: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. You will note under tab 11 we have the various auditing firms and the fees approved by the committee as well as increases -- and there were increases -- for the said fees. We have a request today from the firm for a 5 percent increase.

I'll pause at that moment and turn it over to you, Bill.

MR. MAHON: Thank you very much. The increase was based upon an estimate of additional work that would have to be done in the current year. By way of background, at the time of our audit the previous year the office of the Auditor General was changing the system to put their payroll system on line. The auditor's responsibility is to test the controls on an on-line system. You can do that in a number of ways. We found that the least expensive way would be to have the office of the controller review the system, prepare the necessary working papers, and as the external auditor we would review those working papers. This review would take place at a senior level. We estimated the review would take somewhere between four and six hours at a partner rate of \$140 an hour. That's the basis of the increase.

Subsequent to that I had a meeting with Mr. Lineker at the office, and he has advised me that the on-line payroll system may not be implemented prior to March 31 of 1992. So when we did the estimate, we had assumed it would be in place, that those would be the tests that would be required. As of a meeting late last week, it's still not in place; it may not be in place. If it isn't, the additional time will not be required.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any questions?

MR. HYLAND: So the price, if it isn't in place, would be \$12,500.

MR. MAHON: The price, if it isn't in place, should be \$12,750. The reason for a slight increase is that wage costs for our office have gone up approximately 5 percent in the past year. Wage costs represent 40 percent of an audit fee, so what I've done is taken 40 percent times 5 percent and multiplied it by last year's fee; \$12,750 is the range.

MR. HYLAND: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Anyone else? No other questions of Bill? Okay.

Thank you. I guess that's it.

MR. MAHON: It's been a slice.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, you're not home free yet.

MR. MAHON: I can't leave yet?

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can leave, but we haven't passed anything.

MR. MAHON: Oh, I see. Thank you very much. Good day.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thanks, Bill.

Okay. Any discussion?

MR. SIGURDSON: It's straightforward by his explanation. I guess the only thing to check would be to ask the Auditor General, because we are close to March, if the system is on line, if they're going to have to expend that extra -- what would it work out to? -- \$375.

MR. FOX: I think we're dealing with peanuts, really.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We've come a long way in that we now have a firm figure, and we will exchange letters as we did last year so that they cannot go above the figure. We're no longer in that open-ended, blank cheque approach.

MR. HYLAND: How about if I make a motion with the maximum in it rather than the minimum?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. HYLAND: I would move that we accept the estimate from Kingston Ross Pasnak at a maximum of \$13,125 for the audit of the Auditor General.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Can we take out the word "estimate" in that? It's an offer.

MR. HYLAND: The offer. Okay; yeah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. So it's clear with everyone that we have a maximum figure of \$13,125.

Any further discussion? All in favour? Carried unanimously. Thank you.

MR. HYLAND: That's the right figure they gave?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well . . .

Do you want to take these other small items, or would you like a five-minute break?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Let's deal with them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right. Good.

Oh, let's now go back. We need a motion to complete all the committee estimates. We completed them yesterday, save the section on the auditing fees for the Auditor General.

MR. NELSON: So moved.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Stan has moved. Further discussion? All in favour? [interjection] Is everyone with me?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

MR. NELSON: We're going back to discuss . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're going back to our committee estimates, tab 5. We had agreed to everything yesterday except the auditing fees for the Auditor General. We've now done that. We can now have a motion to approve the budget for the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices.

MR. SIGURDSON: I'll move.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think Stan had already moved.

MR. NELSON: No, I moved to bring it back.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Then Tom is moving to accept. Further questions? All in favour? Carried unanimously. Thank you.

Now we're down to dates for our next meetings. We went through the proposed dates yesterday. We've proposed to meet next Monday from 1 to 4 p.m.. On Tuesday, the 11th, from 10 to noon; we will

have lunch and then from 1 to 3. Then on the 12th we don't know how much time we'll need, but if we reserve from 10 to noon and again from 1 to 3 . . .

MR. TANNAS: That's lunch again, right?

MR. CHAIRMAN: And lunch again.

MRS. GAGNON: My problem on the Wednesday is caucus. We're interviewing?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No; we're going through the preliminary list that Executive Search has done so that we can pick out of that a final list.

MRS. GAGNON: So we're not interviewing yet next week. Okay.

MR. HYLAND: Do you meet in the mornings or the afternoons?

MRS. GAGNON: Usually 10 to 3.

MR. FOX: Mr. Chairman, I understood that we may be doing some interviewing with respect to the administrative officer. Is that what you understand?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have to fit that in at some point. I'm not sure how it will be. Stan and I are meeting today with the two officials from PAO. Can we leave it, and if indeed that is to happen, I'll notify your offices and we would work it in probably on the Wednesday?

MR. FOX: Okay. I think we've got sufficient time in the meetings allotted to review the résumés and the list presented for the Ethics Commissioner.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Anything else?  
Are we ready for a motion to adjourn?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Oh, no. We haven't finished yet.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What have we got left? Oh, pardon me. We do have a report by Louise, and it had to do with the section on allowances and benefits. Go ahead, Louise.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Members had raised their concern that the conference fees appeared under allowances and benefits, and that's a Treasury Board directive. I have copies of that here, if you're interested.

Members had also asked about the advertising cost for the Ombudsman Search Committee. It was \$22,166 for a national advertising campaign, but in the dailies only across Canada, none of the weekly newspapers.

I think that's it for now.

MR. NELSON: That was across Canada. The *Globe and Mail* alone was \$6,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other matter to be raised before we adjourn?

Do I have a motion to adjourn? Don. All in favour? Carried. Thank you.

[The committee adjourned at 1:18 p.m.]