

Special Select Standing Committee on Members' Services

Friday, November 7, 1980

Chairman: Mr. Amerongen

8:15 a.m.

MR CHAIRMAN: . . . with the estimates in the way they're set up, in other words, in the ordinary routine.

MR STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, the first tab is Legislative Assembly, and while it's first in the book, it should perhaps be considered finally, because that is the summary of all the departments within the Legislative Assembly. At the bottom of the first page, under the first tab, you have the proposed global figure for the Legislative Assembly, \$7,649,889. As I say, that's one which I respectfully recommend be addressed after the detailed departmental estimates are gone through.

MR PURDY: How do you arrive, at the bottom of the second page, at the \$7,600,000 figure and at the bottom of the first page you have \$7,979,000?

MR STEFANIUK: No. I have two identical figures in mine.

MR PURDY: Well, I don't.

MR STEFANIUK: At the bottom, opposite the heading Total Expenditure, I show \$7,649,889.

MR PURDY: Well, I don't. This is the paper I got yesterday and put back in the binder.

MR STEFANIUK: I'm sorry. That's a revision. I'm going on the original book. I apologize. I've erred. This is the revised sheet. So you should be looking at the package of documents you got yesterday, the global figure. That's \$7,979,948. The figure you see on the second sheet is merely a repeat of that; it's the way the forms are set up. Would you agree that we can come back to the global figure, because it is a summary?

Then perhaps we can go to the second tab, which is General Administration. Again, I would ask you to refer not to the sheets that were in the book but to the package you were given yesterday. The second and third sheets of computer printout that you were given yesterday -- and they're headed at the top, General Administration -- are the ones which should be considered now. Along with that, immediately behind those sheets you were given yesterday, are letter-sized sheets which provide the explanation in detail. We can go through that, item by item.

The first item, which deals with salaries for permanent and non-permanent positions, wages, payments to contract employees, employer contributions, allowances and supplementary benefits -- the total of that is referred to as the Manpower Control Group. The explanations for that item are on pages 11a, 11b, on the short sheets in your book. You did not get 11a and 11b with your package yesterday; they were in your books because that remained unchanged. So there you have a summary, on those short sheets, on page 11a, salaries for permanent positions. That's the total of \$259,162.

What you have provision for there is two positions -- a purchasing clerk and a second secretary to committees. The purchasing clerk is a position we have on a temporary basis at the moment. We've found that that additional manpower was necessary with the institution of constituency offices and the large amount of administrative detail to be handled there. The committee load has become so extremely heavy that we are hard-pressed at the moment to handle it with one secretary.

MRS OSTERMAN: Especially when we have special standing committees, like the Surface Rights Committee.

MR STEFANIUK: That's right. There are the standing committees as well as the special committees. We're finding that one secretary is attending as many as three meetings a day, attempting to provide minutes from three meetings a day. I think that's more than can be expected of any individual. The amount of overtime we've found over a period of time that we've analysed on that position, was becoming equivalent to 1.7 man-years. That's why we feel we're justified in eliminating the overtime and creating the extra position. That is the explanation on the logic there.

MR APPLEBY: Is that secretary to committees classified?

MR STEFANIUK: The salary level that is shown is a Clerk Typist III, which would be junior to the classification we have at the moment for the senior committee secretary, which is a Clerk Steno IV.

MRS OSTERMAN: On the logistics of it, how are we for space in the office?

MR STEFANIUK: Well, you know how we are in 220. We have put five people into that office; they're sitting on top of each other. We have two people in the general office area in 313. We feel we can put one more desk in there. It's going to be tight, but that's the situation we're living in until something is done to provide space in a remote location.

MR PURDY: A question regarding the salary increases or the total increase of Code 100. I see you've come up with a 12 per cent figure. Where did you derive that from?

MR STEFANIUK: The 12 per cent is from the forecast input from this year. That's arrived at as a result of creating these new positions. That does not provide for increases during the year. We do not budget that. Treasury budgets for a salary contingency fund. As settlements occur with employees represented by AUPE and general increases are awarded, we draw on that fund to provide for those increases. All we can do at the moment is budget for salaries based on existing scales and classifications.

MR PURDY: So we're seeing a 12 per cent increase in the office?

MR STEFANIUK: That's right.

MR APPLEBY: This is an expanded A budget essentially; it's not a new item.

MR STEFANIUK: Then for wages you have all the explanations there. Wages cover our part-time employees, primarily those people who are brought in when the House is in session and for short periods before and after the House rises. You have the mail clerk, the pages, a messenger. We also provide there for a Clerk Steno IV on a temporary basis to cover vacation periods. We have a

scroll clerk. That's the person who looks after the controls for all those scrolls which members provide to their constituents on anniversaries and birthdays and so on. The committee should be aware that that is a net figure, simply because we have hired this person on wages -- we do the work for the Premier's office as well, and for the Lieutenant-Governor, but we charge those back. So this is the net cost you see here to the Legislative Assembly; in other words, that is the cost of providing scrolls for members.

MR PURDY: The 13 hours per week -- the person is actually working a 40-hour week or . . .

MR STEFANIUK: That's right, but we charge back to Executive Council and . . . Rather than having three people in this building who are going to be twiddling their thumbs two-thirds of the time, we felt it made good sense if we provided the facility and sold the service, if you like, to organizations.

On page 11b, we have contract employees. That covers the Sergeant-at Arms, who is a contractor at the moment. There is a change there, in that the Sergeant-at-Arms we currently have is now retired. So we pay his entire salary. There was a time when he was a member of the tour staff in the building, when the Department of Government Services provided his salary and we merely subsidized it with a small honorarium. Now we have to cover the entire cost.

MR APPLEBY: When you say he's retired, he's retired . . .

MR STEFANIUK: He's retired from the Public Service of Alberta.

MR APPLEBY: Is he going to remain the Sergeant-at-Arms for a while yet?

MR STEFANIUK: We don't know. His contract expires at the end of the current year. The Speaker then has to give consideration to whether or not that contract will be renewed or whether a new Sergeant-at-Arms will be sought out.

Code 140 on page 11b is the employee contributions to unemployment insurance, Canada Pension Plan. You see what the total figure there is.

Allowances and supplementary benefits -- that covers staff training, conference fees, and professional memberships. Each membership, as you can see, is specified -- the Clerks' Society, the Bar Association, and the Law Society.

MR APPLEBY: There's nothing new there.

MR STEFANIUK: Nothing new at all, other than a reflection of increased costs in maintaining what we have provided in the past.

MR CHAIRMAN: The Law Clerk is the member of the Law Society, and it's customary for employed lawyers to have their membership fees paid by their employers.

MR STEFANIUK: Any questions on the Manpower Control group? Can we consider that approved, Mr. Chairman?

MR CHAIRMAN: Motion?

MR PURDY: I'll move that.

MR STEFANIUK: Perhaps you would want to hold a motion for the entire department.

MR PURDY: That's far better.

MR CHAIRMAN: All right, if we finish it. We'll see how far we get.

MR STEFANIUK: The next item, start dealing with pages 11c to 11e which were enclosed with the package of materials which you received yesterday. We start out with Travel, Public Service and Non-Public Service. The total figure -- let's take it by item.

MR GOGO: Maybe we can agree on the total.

MR STEFANIUK: If you wish. You have it in front of you. This reflects, on pages 11c and d, the changes which the committee directed be included at the committee's last meeting; in other words, the provision for travel of spouses on CPA business and provision for the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, the one which is held annually in some country of the Commonwealth. I believe we have everything outlined there. Perhaps you could just look at them, and if there are any specific questions, I could answer those.

MR GOGO: One question, Mr. Chairman. There's a fair degree of air travel involved, and I recognize you've probably projected this as best you could. It appears there are going to be substantial increases in air fares. Would these estimates include those 'guesstimates'?

MR STEFANIUK: No, they don't, because our experience has been that we have difficulty with getting by Treasury estimates that take into consideration anticipated increases. I recall that we attempted to do that in a previous year, when we considered our posting project. The post office had in fact made an official announcement, but the increase had not been implemented. Treasury preferred that those amounts not be considered. In the case of airline travel, the amount of increase has not been announced yet. These are 1980 dollars.

MR GOGO: Thank you.

MR APPLEBY: Mr. Chairman, I would suggest we consider the total.

MR CHAIRMAN: Agreed?

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR STEFANIUK: Page 11e covers advertising. That is outlined for you on page 11e, the advertising that is required of us by statute and by Standing Order 74, and advertising relative to personnel work.

MR CHAIRMAN: Some of the Private Bills advertising comes back, but it goes into General Revenue.

MR STEFANIUK: The next one is insurance. Four vehicles are now assigned to the Legislative Assembly. Under the government's insurance plan there is a \$500 deductible, which becomes the responsibility of the department. We have not had provision for that deductible item before. We think it's only good business to budget it.

MR GOGO: It may not be used anyway.

MR STEFANIUK: It may not be used. The amount is minimal, none the less we know that we have it in the event there is a need for it.

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR STEFANIUK: Freight and postage are self-explanatory.

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR CHAIRMAN: Rental of property and goods.

MR STEFANIUK: You see the amounts budgeted there.

MR PURDY: How many constituency offices are you now paying for?

MR STEFANIUK: I believe we have about 45.

MR PURDY: Myself. I have an office, but it's not being billed to the government. All that is being paid for is telephones.

MR STEFANIUK: For budgeting purposes, we feel we have to anticipate that every member has the right, the statutory right to establish an office. Therefore, that must be reflected in the budget.

MR GOGO: On that point, Mr. Chairman. Say we have 40 in existence, and there is a potential for 79. We budgeted here as though we had all 79.

MR STEFANIUK: That's right.

MR CHAIRMAN: It's a statutory obligation. Under the statute we're obliged to provide that if it's requested.

MR STEFANIUK: You recognize as well that the statute, at least with the way it stands at the moment, is very tight. The money cannot be transferred for any other use. If there are only 45 offices, the figure will be reduced accordingly, because we can't transfer that money.

MR CHAIRMAN: There is a ceiling per office.

MR APPLEBY: It's the same with the postage. If you don't mail the postage, you don't get it.

MR STEFANIUK: That's right.

MR APPLEBY: What else is included under rentals?

MR STEFANIUK: Typewriters for the press, as you see specified, and photocopiers.

MR PURDY: Do we need to give them typewriters? I saw some spelling in the Journal the other day that wasn't very good.

MR CHAIRMAN: Are you blaming that on the typewriters?

MR PURDY: It could be the typewriters; I don't think the press staff would make a mistake.

MRS OSTERMAN: They obviously didn't have spelling bees when they went to school.

MR APPLEBY: What about photocopiers? This is for different sizes, is it?

MR STEFANIUK: No. These are the photocopiers that are in the jurisdiction of the Legislative Assembly.

MR APPLEBY: Is this what we call xerox?

MR STEFANIUK: Yes. We prefer not to give them a trade name.

MR APPLEBY: No, I know.

MR STEFANIUK: That's like calling paper tissues Kleenex.

MRS OSTERMAN: Or Skidoos.

MR APPLEBY: There are two different sizes of machines?

MR STEFANIUK: Yes, two different machines.

MR CHAIRMAN: This is where the extra machine would come in?

MR STEFANIUK: No. The extra machine would come in under government members' budget, if they are in fact looking at it.

MR CHAIRMAN: Oh, right.

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR STEFANIUK: If you'll go back to the books for a moment, please, to page 11f, and glance at Telephone and Communication. You see the charges outlined there.

MR PURDY: I had one question on that, Mr. Chairman. In studying this last night, I notice one place in the estimates where you indicated the RITE system in there. Do they expect us also to be using the RITE system to its fullest extent or not?

MR STEFANIUK: To the extent that it's practical to do so, I would suggest members should be using the RITE system. I would also suggest that members should not be using credit cards when originating calls from their constituency offices, because after all, the credit card call is billed at the highest rate, whereas a direct dial call is billed at considerably less money. I suggest there is a practical aspect to that, and we can audit one just as well as we can audit the other because records are maintained.

MR PURDY: I was under the impression that in the constituency office you had to use your credit card.

MR STEFANIUK: No.

MR PURDY: I was told by your office that they would pay \$35 and something a month for my telephone.

MR STEFANIUK: Yes, that's for the basic service.

MR PURDY: That's all you've been getting the bill for.

MR CHAIRMAN: That doesn't cover your long-distance calls.

MR STEFANIUK: You see, to use the credit card, and I know some members are using it even in the building to originate long-distance calls.

MR PURDY: We can't get out.

MR STEFANIUK: You can't get out on the WATS line, but you can get out on direct dial.

MR PURDY: No, you can't. Our No. 1 is plugged out.

MR GOGO: I think Mrs. Pratt has something to say on this.

MRS PRATT: (Inaudible)

MR CHAIRMAN: I wonder how much extra that costs us.

MR STEFANIUK: I would suggest it's costing a heck of a lot extra.

MRS OSTERMAN: I have often wondered about that.

MR PURDY: I have questioned that before.

MR CHAIRMAN: Are you in that situation in your caucus, Fred?

MR MANDEVILLE: Yes, we use credit cards out of our office.

MR CHAIRMAN: Could we leave it on this basis, that the Clerk or the Clerk Assistant will take it up with the two caucuses and the NDP member, and try to get around this? Then I think we should send a memo to all members, explaining this as far as this building is concerned and as far as their offices are concerned.

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I think the only explanation needed is about the offices to direct dial out, because there is absolutely nothing we can do with the system that's in place. If that can be improved upon, by all means do it. It's just a matter of doing it. There's no discussion necessary.

MR CHAIRMAN: What about the members' offices?

MR PURDY: That's what I'm concerned about.

MR STEFANIUK: I think we should have a look at the installations, if the committee would agree to leave that with us.

MRS OSTERMAN: I would be very pleased.

MR STEFANIUK: As I say, the telephone company maintains the same kind of record for direct dial calls as it does for credit card calls, the only difference being that what you have is the telephone company's record for an individual's charges. I respectfully suggest that can be controlled in caucus, by having secretaries maintain records of even direct dial calls.

MR GOGO: It may sound like a minor point, Mr. Chairman, but my secretary makes travel arrangements for me on an 800 number, which is toll-free, but that cannot be done from my office. I have to go to a pay station, and that's a little bit ridiculous.

MR CHAIRMAN: It surely is.

MRS OSTERMAN: The time factor is something else too. I couldn't even estimate how many long-distance calls I make -- I'm sure it's about every other call. When you have to stop and wait to give your credit card number, that's . . .

MR STEFANIUK: Or, on the other hand, if you're going to ask for time and charges, the operator has to make a note of those and call you back, and so on.

MR APPLEBY: Maybe we could leave the problem with the administration.

MR CHAIRMAN: Okay?

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR STEFANIUK: Further, you have the Repair and Maintenance budget, some of which is contracts. There is required -- I'm sorry, I'll come back to that, Mr. Chairman.

MR CHAIRMAN: We're agreed on Code 400, Telephone and Communications, subject of course to going into the matter further?

MR APPLEBY: It's not really subject to that; that's another thing.

MR CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR CHAIRMAN: Agreed on 410?

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR CHAIRMAN: 430?

MR STEFANIUK: Professional, Technical, and Labour Services. The most expensive item there, as you can see, is the provision of secretaries to constituency offices, and that is a statutory provision. We're merely reflecting what is provided for in the statutes.

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR PURDY: The commissioners -- how are they paid the rest of the year? I see you have the commissioners, and then . . .

MR STEFANIUK: We only worry about the commissioners in our budget who serve the House during the session. The other commissioners you see around the building are assigned to the security staff and is a government expenditure.

Page 11g is a continuation of Professional, Technical, and Labour Services. The very significant figure there is the Revised Statutes of Alberta 1980. The work on those has been commenced, and some of the expense has been incurred already. However, we have reached agreement with the parties concerned that invoicing will not be received by the Legislative Assembly until the '81-82 budget year, so it will not have to be reflected by special

warrant this year, rather will become a full budgetary item next year. As you can see, that's in excess of a half million dollars.

MR CHAIRMAN: There is something there that may or may not be of any concern to you; that is, this is still an area which is charged to us. We're a mere pipeline for this, because this is not an activity of our department. This is not an activity of the staff or office of the Legislative Assembly. It's being done by the Attorney General's Department, but the cost is included in our budget.

MRS OSTERMAN: Are we the main beneficiaries of the product?

MR STEFANIUK: I think it's parliamentary tradition, really.

MR CHAIRMAN: All the law offices buy the Revised Statutes, and all the libraries. All the MLAs, and other people, get them. I'm going to check it with the Auditor General, but it seems to me it is a bit of an anomaly to have us passing on something over which we have neither say nor control, nor direction of any kind.

MR APPLEBY: Except all the content is ours.

MR CHAIRMAN: Well yes, as far as that goes. But here we have a budget item and these figures are totally out of the A.G.'s Department. They are the ones who have gone into it; they are the ones who are doing the revision. I think it is a proper expense for the Assembly, but I would like to see what the Auditor General has to say about it.

MR STEFANIUK: That's the end, then, of Professional, Technical, and Labour Services.

MR CHAIRMAN: Agreed?

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR STEFANIUK: Page 11h in the books, Hospitality.

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR STEFANIUK: Page 11i, Materials and Supplies.

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR STEFANIUK: 11j, Grants.

MR CHAIRMAN: Now there's something you may want to consider. When we came into office, those bursaries for the young parliamentarians were \$200. Do you think \$400 is still an adequate amount, or do you think it ought to be increased?

MR PURDY: Where does that go? The Tuxis parliament, or . . .

MR CHAIRMAN: Remember at the CPA dinner? It goes to one person chosen by Tuxis and one person chosen by the All Girls. In view of inflation, I'm wondering whether we shouldn't consider going to \$500 or \$600.

MR APPLEBY: What's your recommendation, Mr. Chairman?

MR CHAIRMAN: I'd recommend that we go to \$600, because when we bring these people here and their families to present them with a so-called bursary, and you consider what tuition fees and things like that are like, it's rather a skimpy bursary.

MR GOGO: Kind of consistent, though, with the way we pay members.

MR CHAIRMAN: Bitterness will get you nowhere, John.

MRS OSTERMAN: He feels better.

MR PURDY: He gets it off his chest that way.

MR APPLEBY: I would agree with the Chairman's recommendation.

MR CHAIRMAN: I don't think it will represent much more than covering the inflation of the past few years.

MRS OSTERMAN: How long has it been at this amount?

MR CHAIRMAN: It was \$200 in 1971 and before that -- I've forgotten.

MRS OSTERMAN: You've made your point, Mr. Chairman.

MR CHAIRMAN: I think it went to \$400 around 1975.

MR STEFANIUK: Spring '77.

MR APPLEBY: I would suggest it should go to \$500; then the next raise will be \$250; then \$1,000 -- even it out and make nice round figures.

MR CHAIRMAN: Is there a motion?

MR APPLEBY: I move we raise it to \$500.

MR CHAIRMAN: So that will make that item \$1,000 instead of \$800.

MR STEFANIUK: Could I just tell the secretary to note under Code 790 -- Grants, increase CPA scholarships from \$800 to \$1,000.

MR CHAIRMAN: Now have we included in the CPA the payment to the working capital fund of the CPA?

MR STEFANIUK: No, sir.

MR CHAIRMAN: Shouldn't that be?

MR STEFANIUK: No. I assumed you were going to raise that through special warrant.

MR CHAIRMAN: Oh, that's right.

MR STEFANIUK: If you would look at page 11k with the batch of papers that was given to you yesterday. We have a new page 11k, Purchase of Office Equipment. There is a major item for consideration under Code 850, Purchase of Office Equipment. There was a covering memorandum with information provided for the September 29 meeting of the Members' Services Committee relative to dictaphone

equipment for constituency offices. The committee has not reached that item in the course of its normal considerations, and I believe that the provision was for \$800 per office for less than the 79 offices. I believe it was on the basis of about 50 offices. If we are to provide that type of equipment within the next budget year, that should be considered at this time. On the other hand, if the committee feels that that equipment should be provided before the next budget year, then obviously it is not to be considered here but rather the funds raised through special warrant.

MR CHAIRMAN: On the recommendation of this committee.

MR PURDY: I know we haven't come to a conclusion on it, Mr. Chairman. One thing that comes to my mind is: is that over and above the 5 and 5, 5 for secretarial services and 5 for rental?

MR CHAIRMAN: Yes, it is.

MR GOGO: It's an extension of this office.

MR CHAIRMAN: Right.

MR PURDY: It's an extension of our office here, then.

MR STEFANIUK: So is the telephone you're receiving now, and the stationery you're using, and so on.

MR CHAIRMAN: For years members have occasionally taken their portable dictating machines from upstairs to their homes to work at their home; there was nothing improper about it.

MR APPLEBY: No problem with the pocket dictaphones we all have.

MR CHAIRMAN: That's what I say. If they're not used in the office here . . .

MR STEFANIUK: This is recording equipment to be used in connection with telephones, Frank.

MR APPLEBY: Oh. But we also have other equipment in there -- typewriters, dictaphones, and transcribers.

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I think whatever is necessary for the efficient functioning of an office should be done. Otherwise, the money isn't well spent in the first place.

MR STEFANIUK: The question is: when do you want it done? If you want it done in the next budget year, then this proposal has to be amended. If you want it done before the next budget year, that is, until the estimates go through the House -- and we anticipate that won't be until about May, 1981 -- then we need a special warrant. Which way do you want us to proceed?

MRS OSTERMAN: Both. It goes in the budget, but we should also proceed as quickly as possible.

MR STEFANIUK: If it goes in the budget, you can't proceed until the budget is approved by the House. If you purchase them this year, through special warrant, you don't need the funds.

MRS OSTERMAN: Oh, I see what you mean. We're not talking about renting; we're talking about purchase. I opt for special warrant.

MR STEFANIUK: Then that would come up for consideration at another meeting with the committee, Mr. Chairman, and need not be considered here.

MR CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR APPLEBY: So that means the constituency offices -- the typewriters, dictaphones, telephones and all that . . .

MR STEFANIUK: This is the normal routine of replacement of equipment that's growing old.

MR APPLEBY: Okay. Then the telephone answering service is the only item that wouldn't be included?

MR STEFANIUK: That's right.

MR CHAIRMAN: So that under Code 850, the 45 telephone answering services item, is over for consideration at a future meeting.

MR GOGO: Mr. Chairman, the government members have to attend a caucus in a very short time.

MR CHAIRMAN: Right. Can we finish this item? Are we agreed that we take out this answering devices item? So that will be an amendment to Code 850. As so amended, are you agreed?

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR STEFANIUK: Could I just tell the secretary to delete under Code 850, \$27,000 for telephone answering devices.

MR CHAIRMAN: In view of the distance we still have to go, and especially we have to deal with the caucus and independent member's estimates, I think we should be looking at an early date. How about next Wednesday?

MR PURDY: Before we do that, I'd like to move the motion that the General Administration budget be accepted with the amendments.

MR CHAIRMAN: We're at the end of it, are we?

MR STEFANIUK: This is the end.

MR CHAIRMAN: Okay. Agreed?

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MRS OSTERMAN: On Wednesday, if we could do it over supper hour, Mr. Chairman, starting as early as possible after the House.

MR CHAIRMAN: Okay. Wednesday, the 12th, 5:30 for supper?

MR SINDLINGER: Excuse me. There is a chiropractic dinner on Wednesday for Members of the Legislative Assembly.

MR CHAIRMAN: We kind of think that this is pretty urgent, Tom.

MR SINDLINGER: I'm sorry. I just wanted to put out . . .

MR PURDY: We realize it.

MR CHAIRMAN: Yes. I mean, I'm not suggesting it's a -- you know, the comment is perfectly in order.

MRS OSTERMAN: Those of us who have made commitments . . .

MR MANDEVILLE: In light of the time, Mr. Chairman -- I know Connie and I have to go to another meeting. Possibly we could just have Tom present his budget here to the committee.

SOME HON MEMBERS: We haven't got time.

MR CHAIRMAN: We can't take five for that?

MRS OSTERMAN: No, I'm sorry.

MR STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, may I ask a single question before the members depart? With regard to piloting the estimates through the House, it has been customary for various members of this committee to undertake to pilot certain portions of the estimates. Do members consider that the explanatory sheets which we provided this year are sufficient to enable them to pilot them through the House and provide any explanations necessary?

MR APPLEBY: We can deal with that next spring, can't we?

MR STEFANIUK: We'd like to work them up.

MR PURDY: I think they're good.

MRS OSTERMAN: They're detailed enough.

MR WOLSTENHOLME: They're very well done.

MR APPLEBY: Just before these two members leave, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the Clerk of the House for those MLA parking passes. It's appreciated very much by members.

MRS OSTERMAN: Yes.

MR CHAIRMAN: Great.

MR SINDLINGER: Could we take the five minutes on this so I would have an idea . . .

MR CHAIRMAN: Please do.

MR STEFANIUK: If we're going to look at that, Mr. Chairman, the proposal by Mr. Sindlinger has been circulated with the batch of papers which went yesterday to the members. It's the last letter-sized sheet.

MR SINDLINGER: Would you like me to speak to this, Mr. Chairman?

MR CHAIRMAN: Please do.

MR SINDLINGER: Members: it is still my wish to represent the constituents of Calgary Buffalo as effectively and efficiently as I can. To do so I believe I need the common support services that all other Members of the Legislative Assembly have. So as a guideline, what I did was go to the other budgets and break them down on a per-MLA basis. I have done the same thing here. I've tried to adhere to the categories that were in those budgets and in your books, so there would be consistency. The budget I've come up with is relative to the other two major caucus budgets on a per-MLA basis. It falls in between one; it's a little higher than one and lower than the other. That's all I have to say.

MR WOLSTENHOLME: You said the two major caucuses.

MR SINDLINGER: I should have said the Social Credit caucus and the NDP caucus.

MR WOLSTENHOLME: I'm not being nit-picky, but when you said two major caucus, I didn't know whether you meant to identify them . . .

MR APPLEBY: Is it in order to ask some questions, Mr. Chairman?

MR CHAIRMAN: Please do.

MR GOGO: I understand the one hundred and one twenty, because that would be secretarial staff, presumably. And one twenty would be maybe for holidays and so on. It's the one thirty, Tom, contract employees -- \$25,000.

MR SINDLINGER: I understand that category provides for research assistance. When you look at this budget, the major proportion to be spent is for research or information gathering. I believe we're here to make decisions, and I believe it's difficult to make decisions in a vacuum and that information is necessary to make those responsible decisions. That's where the major allocation is in the budget.

MR CHAIRMAN: What do you think, Tom? You know the space situation in this building is horribly tight. I don't know how soon we're going to be able to find appropriate accommodation so that you have more than one room at your disposal. I hope that will happen reasonably soon. Suppose these items are approved. Do think space limitations may prevent you from spending money?

MR SINDLINGER: No. Regardless of space, I think it's important to spend money on research capability. If I have to improvise one way or another, I would do that. If that would mean renting office space outside this building, perhaps we'd have to do that.

MR CHAIRMAN: Well, of course, actually this budget won't take effect until April 1, 1981. Hopefully before that time we'll have that solved. Perhaps what I've said is more relevant to the interval between then and now.

MR SINDLINGER: Is there an opportunity to get some of the funds on an interim basis between now and then so that research services can be acquired?

MR CHAIRMAN: As you know, we haven't got as far with this as we wanted. You already have kindly provided us with this, as you say, so we don't have to deal with the thing in a vacuum. Suppose you were to develop an interim proposal so that we could have that for next Wednesday -- hopefully before

next Wednesday, so that we can consider it. Then we'll deal with it next Wednesday. That might need a special warrant.

MR WOLSTENHOLME: One question. Professional, Technical, and Labour Services -- \$18,500.

MR SINDLINGER: Again, this whole budget is broken down on a per-MLA basis. I've tied it here strictly to the budgets presented by the NDP and Social Credit. I don't have the experience of these expenditures before. But I understand that section to refer mainly to information gathering and research services and associated activities.

MR APPLEBY: Can I ask a couple of questions? One just for information: on Code 200, and I'm naive. What does PS and NPS stand for?

MR SINDLINGER: Public Service and Non-Public Service.

MR STEFANIUK: That is the terminology that's employed by Treasury and we of course utilize.

MR APPLEBY: Okay. Now, do we have any information available as to the budget the last time we had a member sitting as an independent? Could we have that for next Wednesday?

MR STEFANIUK: No problem.

MR CHAIRMAN: Oh sure. That was Gordon Taylor. His last budget would be for the year . . .

MR STEFANIUK: '78-79.

MR CHAIRMAN: Right.

MR STEFANIUK: That was the last budget that was drawn up. Is that the budget you wish, or do you wish to go farther back?

MR APPLEBY: If we could have it from the time he moved. If I recollect correctly, he moved and sat as an independent before the 1975 election, if we could go back to there. Then what it was in the last year: those two items for comparison.

MR STEFANIUK: All right.

MR GOGO: The question of principle in my mind, Mr. Chairman, that I want to think about between now and Wednesday is (a) do we treat every member of the Assembly equally . . .

MR CHAIRMAN: Well, we certainly don't treat the government members equally to the opposition members right now. The funding is about 8:1.

MR GOGO: I think the funding is about \$10,000 per member.

MR CHAIRMAN: It's about \$10,000 per government member and a little over \$80,000 per opposition member. As a matter of fact, I think Tom is quite close to it here, with \$86,000.

MR GOGO: If we look on the other hand and say, okay, government members would be X and opposition would be Y, then opposition in my mind, thinking in principle, would be total opposition; then members within that opposition would be a fraction of that total. That's something I have to sort out in my mind. In other words, I can't help but think what if we have three other members suddenly become independent and be faced with \$80,000 requests from those people? I have to sort this out in my mind, and I'll hope to do it before Wednesday night.

MR APPLEBY: Perhaps if we get that other information before Wednesday, it will help.

MR GOGO: As I understand the budgetary process, we go with an expanded A budget to the priorities committee for the approval process. I would hate to see, quite frankly, any member presently sitting suffer as a result of having to shrink the total per person within an expanded A budget of 8 or 10 per cent. It's those kinds of things that are in my mind.

MR CHAIRMAN: Yes. Are there any other questions of Tom?

MR GOGO: I'm due at -- well, I guess we're all due at caucus at 9 o'clock.

MR CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. It's agreed, is it, that we're adjourned until Wednesday, 5:30 supper; then we'll have the meeting right after.

*The meeting adjourned at 9 a.m.*