

Special Select Standing Committee on Members' Services

Monday, October 19, 1981

Chairman: Mr. Amerongen  
6 p.m.

MR CHAIRMAN: We have the minutes of the meeting of October 7. Is there a motion? Moved by Mr. Mandeville that they be adopted and circulated.

MRS OSTERMAN: Just a small thing, Mr. Chairman. I thought that on item 5, when we talked about the next meeting we agreed it would be right after the House adjourned. It says 6 o'clock.

MR PURDY: My motion said 5:30.

MR CHAIRMAN: Oh. How did we get that changed?

SECRETARY: I made it fit the note you gave to me.

MR CHAIRMAN: So it was my fault. I'm sorry.

MR GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I guess I was wrong. I thought we had only dealt with general administration in terms of motions. I didn't realize we'd dealt with [inaudible] before your budget. I guess we did, according to this. Is that accurate? Did we pass the Speaker's budget? Bo says we did. Connie, do you remember?

MRS OSTERMAN: I look here, and I made the motion.

MR GOGO: I don't want to make an issue of it.

MRS OSTERMAN: We were sort of hussling along. I can't recall, to tell you the truth.

MR GOGO: I thought we had just done the general administration. But it's there, so it's probably on the tape.

MR CHAIRMAN: I remember Connie making that motion.

MR GOGO: Okay.

MR CHAIRMAN: Does anybody want to have the tape checked?

MR GOGO: Oh, heavens no. I thought we had only dealt with general administration.

MR PURDY: No. We had gone that far.

MR CHAIRMAN: We still have a motion for the adoption of the minutes, and we have one amendment, in the time for the next meeting, which is today; changed from 6 to 5:30.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR CHAIRMAN: Okay. The minutes of the October 7 meeting are adopted. Do you want to go into business arising from the minutes, or do you want to go straight into the estimates?

MR GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I don't know that we should go into the estimates until the invited people arrive. Could we not deal with some other matters until they arrive?

MR CHAIRMAN: Okay. Then we had promotional items. We dealt with those.

MR PURDY: That was a motion by me.

MR CHAIRMAN: So the second item on the minutes of October 7 has been attended to. The next item was airport parking. The Clerk was going to work out a procedure and report back, but I don't know whether he's had a chance to do that.

MR STEFANIUK: I haven't had an opportunity to do that as yet.

MRS OSTERMAN: What? No 26-hour days? For shame.

MR STEFANIUK: Thirty-hour days.

MR CHAIRMAN: Is it agreed that airport parking may go over to the agenda for the next meeting?

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR GOGO: I think in all fairness to the Clerk of the House, Mr. Speaker . . .

MR CHAIRMAN: Who wants to be fair to him?

MR GOGO: With all the attendant problems of opening this establishment for the fall sittings, he's more than had his hands full.

MR CHAIRMAN: That's for sure. Then we have continuing other business, brought forward from preceding meetings. We have the item, lapel pins.

MR STEFANIUK: Written information was circulated to members of the committee, Mr. Chairman, immediately following the meeting, with a promise that samples of the metals would be brought to this meeting. I have them here.

MR GOGO: It confirms, Mr. Chairman, what we always felt. The Legislative Assembly is really Edmonton, Alberta.

MR STEFANIUK: Drumheller is in there, too, John.

MRS OSTERMAN: What? No Three Hills?

MR CHAIRMAN: While that's passing around, not directly related to this item does anyone recall our having discussed quite a few meetings ago the possibility of getting permanent name tags for members?

MR PURDY: That was discussed at the last meeting, Mr. Chairman, and I think the recommendation was that the Clerk come back with a sample.

MR STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, name tags are on the second set of minutes that was given to me with today's agenda -- meeting of June 3, Minute 81-214 says the committee discussed a clip-on tag, Mr. Woo's suggestion. This item was deferred until the committee has had a chance to consider the concept.

MR CHAIRMAN: Has it had time to consider the concept?

MRS OSTERMAN: Was that metal?

MR APPLEBY: No, sort of plasticized.

MR CHAIRMAN: Some decent appearance anyway. Twice now I've seen that some senior government staff seem to have permanent name tags that they can wear at various functions.

MRS OSTERMAN: I'm absolutely lukewarm about it.

MR APPLEBY: I'm all for it.

MR GOGO: Well, we'll give Frank Connie's.

MR CHAIRMAN: Bill, what do you say?

MR PURDY: I'm lukewarm. It's immaterial to me. I already have one for a couple of other things I've been on. It's in my briefcase, so I don't have it.

MR CHAIRMAN: Well, if there is no . . .

MR GOGO: Frank spoke strongly.

MR APPLEBY: You go to a lot of functions, and you could take this with you and clip it on; you've got it. You go to these things and you slap a sticker tag on or something like that. First thing you know, it falls off. Also, it stands out among all the other junky ones you get.

MR GOGO: Further to that, Frank. Last week, I was at the HUDAC here in Edmonton. Those who had said they were going, they had typed out neat cards in plastic folders. Those who just showed up got the stick-on things. You're right on: that would be the ideal time to have that first-class one to pin on.

MR PURDY: Well, let's go for them, then.

MR APPLEBY: They're not expensive.

MR CHAIRMAN: Yes, they can come up to around \$14 or so.

MR APPLEBY: Oh no. Henry Woo says \$1.50.

MR CHAIRMAN: All right. I saw some government staff with them and asked them, and they were fairly costly.

MR APPLEBY: We'll want to check that.

MR CHAIRMAN: Do you want us to look into it?

MR APPLEBY: We'd better find out about the price.

MR STEFANIUK: We can bring up some samples and some prices.

MR CHAIRMAN: So it's agreed that we'll ask the Clerk in due course to bring to a future meeting some samples of permanent name tags, with prices.

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR CHAIRMAN: Should we get back to the agenda now. We've passed the lapel pins around. Are you ready for discussion?

MR STEFANIUK: In the memorandum I circulated, Mr. Chairman, I suggested that several decisions had to be made in connection with the acquisition of distinctive lapel pins for members, if they were desired.

MR CHAIRMAN: Do you want to refresh our memories?

MR STEFANIUK: I provided the pricing. I think Mr. Appleby has one right in front of him.

MR APPLEBY: The memorandum describes the metals which can be used, production costs, delivery times, and alternative uses. The committee should be enabled at a future meeting to arrive at the following decisions: selection of design, appropriate metal, cost, distribution policy, and limitation of applications, like lapels, stick pins, cufflinks, et cetera. Then it had the art work for the three designs. I think you'll all remember that now.

MR PURDY: Have you any information on how the federal government went about theirs for the MPs? They have very distinctive pins.

MR STEFANIUK: No, I don't know how they arrived at a design. They have a Mace through a circle, and in the circle are some words to the effect that the wearer is a member of the House of Commons.

MRS OSTERMAN: Is it a precious piece?

MR STEFANIUK: Yes, it's a precious metal. There was some public controversy about the pin when it came out. It has gold and silver. These are alloys, and of course the price provided to you is based on metal alloys.

MRS OSTERMAN: Have we any idea what a pin in silver . . .

MR STEFANIUK: In sterling? Probably in the area of \$10 apiece.

MR PURDY: I stand to be corrected, but I understand the ones the federal MPs have are anywhere to \$350 apiece.

MR STEFANIUK: They have some gold in them.

MR CHAIRMAN: Old gold or new gold?

MR PURDY: I'm not sure.

MR CHAIRMAN: Do you want us to get prices on silver?

MRS OSTERMAN: I'd like to see a price.

MR CHAIRMAN: It would have to be cleaned, wouldn't it?

MR STEFANIUK: Sterling would.

MR CHAIRMAN: Sterling would tarnish, if you get near those sulphur plants.

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, there are a lot of charm bracelets. I have some charms that are sterling, and they haven't tarnished. I've had them for a number of years.

MR STEFANIUK: Some of them have a coating on them. They can be coated to the extent where there won't be a tarnish.

MR CHAIRMAN: Do you want to deal further now or would you rather put it off? Is there a motion?

MR APPLEBY: I don't really think we could deal with it in a finalized manner, Mr. Chairman, without our caucuses having an opportunity to review it.

MRS OSTERMAN: In terms of talking about the samples, though, the various of alloys isn't going to make much difference. It's if we go into a precious metal . . .

MR APPLEBY: It's the design, I think.

MR CHAIRMAN: Do you want it tabled until you check with your respective caucuses? Your motion, Bill?

MR PURDY: Yes. I so move.

MR CHAIRMAN: All in favor? Carried. Identification cards: I assume that at some future meeting, we'll be getting a further report on that from the Clerk.

MR STEFANIUK: The card is now in production, Mr. Chairman.

MR CHAIRMAN: It has just been reported that the identification card is now in production.

MRS OSTERMAN: Excellent.

MR CHAIRMAN: And will be circulated when received.

Possible extra funding for the Ag. Building offices, if and when they are instituted, will be left to the agenda the next meeting. Is that agreed? Your motion, Frank?

MR APPLEBY: Okay.

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, in view of the time, and we have people here who would . . .

MR CHAIRMAN: All right. We have here a representative of Mr. Notley's office. We'll go to the estimates, then, for that office.

MR MANDELBAUM: I have a memo here from Mr. Notley. I'm sorry, I don't think I have enough copies. I have only six.

MR CHAIRMAN: Okay. And your name is?

MR MANDELBAUM: Henry Mandelbaum.

MR STEFANIUK: For this office, there is also a B budget proposal.

MR CHAIRMAN: Just for the purposes of getting quickly into the topic, the budget, as you can see, is under the appropriate tab, NDP office. If you'll also look at your B budget tab, the last tab in the book, there are two sheets following that. They both deal with a B budget item for the NDP office. Specifically, as indicated by the minutes of the October 7 meeting, someone on the committee raised two questions with regard to the proposed NDP budget. Is it your wish that we deal with those questions now?

MR PURDY: Mr. Chairman, I raised the one question under Code 430, the 27 per cent increase in manpower and technical services.

MR MANDELBAUM: There are two parts to that. First of all, there is the decision that all people in the office receive equal salaries. There's going to be an increase for that reason. Also, I think the 27 increase accounts for actually a two-year increase, if you take a look at the second paragraph under one. It accounts for 1981-82 and an expected increment in '82-83.

MR CHAIRMAN: This explanatory note you brought, Mr. Mandelbaum, refers to a contract payment being brought into line. What sort of position is that contract position?

MR MANDELBAUM: In effect, it's a research executive assistant position.

MR CHAIRMAN: To Mr. Notley?

MR MANDELBAUM: To Mr. Notley.

MR CHAIRMAN: Oh yes. The Clerk has just pointed out the code number in that first explanatory note from Mr. Mandelbaum is 430, of course.

MR PURDY: Why would you want to show the expected increment for 1982-83 in here? I'm still not clear.

MR MANDELBAUM: My understanding is that the figure related particularly to the projections for the 1982-83 budget. That's why it would be included as the 27 per cent. It's for this fiscal year and the upcoming fiscal year.

MRS OSTERMAN: But why put those two years in here? Why wasn't there an increment last year for this year's budget?

MR MANDELBAUM: I think one of the things is that last year that position itself came up under a few portions of the total budget. One of the reasons for it this year is that instead of some of the salaries coming out of categories other than 430, we decided to include it all this year. I imagine that's why it is included all in one category -- if that makes sense at all.

MRS OSTERMAN: No, it doesn't. An increase is an increase. So there should have been an increase somewhere last year. I don't see how you can put two years of increase into the '82-83 budget.

MR MANDELBAUM: What happened is that in this current fiscal year, when we -- I'm not sure of the proper term, but the money for that position came not only from 430, professional services, but it was done on the expectation that they might come out of some other portions of the budget that were severely underexpended. So this year, it was decided to include everything under that one category. That's why it shows as the total increase.

MR CHAIRMAN: Yes, but that doesn't meet Mrs. Osterman's question. If I don't misunderstand you, the increase is being substantiated or justified on the basis of an increase already given during this current fiscal year, and a continuing or further increase to be given in the 1982-83 fiscal year. So the question is, how can you use a 1982-83 budget or estimate item to pay increases for 1981-82? Is that it, Connie?

MRS OSTERMAN: Yes, and if I can go just a little further. I think I'm understanding what you're saying. What you've done is pay somebody far less -- hired somebody on and used other places to pick up the funds for that person, and now you want to pick it all up from one place, when in fact you weren't budgeted for that amount for that person. You found the dollars somewhere else and now you're . . .

MR MANDELBAUM: That's right.

MRS OSTERMAN: So you overexpended your budget for that category last year and took the funds from somewhere else.

MR MANDELBAUM: That's right.

MRS OSTERMAN: Okay.

MR CHAIRMAN: And of course transfer of funds is okay. What I'd like to get clear is, as a result of increases paid this year, are you running a deficit which you expect to cover out of 1982-83?

MR MANDELBAUM: No. What's happening is that the salary -- when you're talking about the 27 per cent increase, it's just a reflection of the 27 per cent

increase over the original projected '81-82. It's not that we're taking money out of this coming year's budget to put into that budget.

MR CHAIRMAN: In other words, that accounts for the jump -- what's being said, as I understand it, is that the 27 per cent includes an increase for not only '82-83, but covers an increase already given by a transfer of funds for '81-82.

MR APPLEBY: And not budgeted for.

MR CHAIRMAN: No, clearly. It must be an appropriate transfer of funds or the Provincial Treasurer wouldn't let it go by. You know, transfers of funds are being made within departments and otherwise -- possibly within the government caucus as well, I have a notion.

MR MANDELBAUM: I think there's also a reality that we may have to take funds from other sources to pay for that money, other than government sources.

MR CHAIRMAN: For which year?

MR MANDELBAUM: For 1981-82.

MR CHAIRMAN: That really has nothing to do with . . .

MR MANDELBAUM: That has nothing to do with this budget.

MR CHAIRMAN: No. What we really are getting now is an explanation as to why in one jump it goes up 27 per cent.

MR MANDELBAUM: If I could just backtrack [inaudible]. What happened is that it comes out of two things; first of all, to bring that salary in line with the other staff salaries, and then to put all that into the budget. Then when you look at that, you have to show a large increase. Regardless of where that money came from otherwise, there wasn't that amount of money allocated for salaries for that person.

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, just on this point, and maybe I don't understand the process properly. It would appear as if, in a previously approved budget, was there an approval for a part-time person or something of that nature? I don't understand how you're in a position where you've hired someone that you obviously weren't budgeted for, only partially budgeted for, and now you're having to do a large increase in order to pay for that person.

MR MANDELBAUM: That person, whom I happen to have some sensitivity for because it's me, is hired on a contract basis, a month by month contract basis, on a fee for service basis. That's because there is not a position there.

MRS OSTERMAN: That's what is important to know. It's a little different from -- it's a contract position.

MR CHAIRMAN: So that explains the 27 per cent. Is there any further discussion about that item, which is covered in Mr. Mandelbaum's memo of today under point one?



MR APPLEBY: I don't think there's any more discussion on that.

MR CHAIRMAN: Does somebody wish to move a motion?

MR APPLEBY: Not at this time.

MRS OSTERMAN: No. I think I'd like more of an overview of all the budget, Mr. Chairman.

MR CHAIRMAN: Okay. Do you want to go on with the second questioned item referred to in the minutes of the October 7 meeting? It was under Code 140, employer contributions, which showed an increase of 45 per cent.

MR MANDELBAUM: That was just done according to a formula for employer contributions for that salary. It was worked out that for X salary there is X amount of employer contributions. There was an increase in the salary, and that is just what it worked out to. There's nothing above and beyond that. Apparently there's a formula for working that out, and that's what was applied to the salaries. That's what it comes to.

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, to the Clerk. Does this fit what you . . .

MR STEFANIUK: I'm not sure whether the formula in this case applied to the amount shown in Code 130 and 430, or whether it restricts itself to the amounts shown under all the 100 series codes.

MR MANDELBAUM: It's my understanding they do not apply to 430.

MR STEFANIUK: It wouldn't apply to 430, and I would be willing to accept the advice given, based on the global amount of salaries and wages in the 100 codes reflects the value of benefits. I see a total of roughly \$75,000. It seems to me that the amount of \$4,500 for employer contributions is in line.

MR CHAIRMAN: Is there a motion, or do you wish to hold that?

MRS OSTERMAN: I'd like to hold it, Mr. Chairman.

MR CHAIRMAN: John?

MR GOGO: It's not on this. I'd like to raise a question before we proceed in the estimates. My confusion arises when I look at the bottom line of the various estimates, including government members. To you really as the minister, I thought I had some understanding of the budgetary process, but here is what I'd like clarification of. It seems to me that the Provincial Treasurer issued guidelines, and the guidelines were 11 plus 2: 11 per cent of the operating and a 2 per cent inflation factor, an overall bottom line of 13 per cent. Departments were asked to do their budgeting on that basis of a maximum increase of 13 per cent in the bottom line for their whole department. My question is, how does that apply to what we're dealing with here? I'm seeing some that exceed that by 100 per cent. Maybe the deputy minister is in a better position to answer, because I think the memo went to the deputy minister here.

What bothers me is simply this. If this committee makes a recommendation to adopt these estimates, do they go ipso facto or does the Provincial Treasurer

get involved with Mr. Speaker at some point and say you can't go for this much, the guideline is this much, and so on?

MR CHAIRMAN: That could be the process if we had what they have, for example, in Ottawa, and perhaps Ontario, where they have commissioners of internal economy. But as it is here, we were given the assurance two or three years back that the estimates as approved by this committee would not be amended by the priorities committee or the Provincial Treasurer. You may recall that led to a reaction in the committee that if that be the case, there had better be more caucus scrutiny, or something like that, of the estimates.

MR APPLEBY: Mr. Chairman, I just wonder if, in view of the fact that we have had all the information from the NDP representative, and we do have Mr. Sindlinger to hear from, we could have this discussion some other time. Time right now is a factor for a number of members of the committee. Maybe we could hear from Mr. Sindlinger now.

MR CHAIRMAN: Yes. There's also the B budget for the NDP. As you know, these are not closed meetings.

MR APPLEBY: No, no, no. I'm not saying that. I'm not saying he had to leave.

MR CHAIRMAN: It's possible perhaps that the NDP caucus might like to hear what our discussion is on this point.

MRS OSTERMAN: Oh, definitely.

MR APPLEBY: Sure.

MR CHAIRMAN: We don't go into a huddle and . . .

MR APPLEBY: No, I just thought we could hear from Tom now.

MR CHAIRMAN: What about the B budget for the NDP caucus?

MR MANDELBAUM: The B item asks for another clerk/steno. One of the difficulties, and it's a very serious difficulty for us in the office -- is that whereas Mr. Notley is an MLA for Spirit River-Fairview, very similar to other MLAs, he's thought of throughout the province as also being the party leader. So the workload comes not only from his constituency and immediate environs; the workload, which we in the office can't control, comes from throughout the province. As a result, I daresay we have a heavier workload than any individual MLA. Our secretary really bears the brunt of all this. Not only does she have to handle normal work that a secretary would do but, because of the increase in the workload, has a much heavier workload than a secretary normally would expect in an MLA's office. She puts in tremendous hours, tremendous overtime, which she doesn't look for simply because there isn't the money available.

So we're asking for a position to take some of the work off her.

MR GOGO: I see Mr. Sindlinger here, and I would anticipate that if something like this is given favorable consideration, Mr. Sindlinger probably gets a lot of correspondence from people of independent thoughts in this province and we'd be faced with it again. I guess the difficulty I have is if this is

addressed to Mr. Notley as the leader of a political party, namely the NDP, I would expect it would be shipped downtown and dealt with there.

MR MANDELBAUM: But it's not political things. It's ordinary people saying that we've had this problem with the government, can you help us -- that's one type of thing. We have a tremendous -- which last year I think came to 2,300 cases, by far the largest portion of which doesn't come from Mr. Notley's constituency. So in fact, it's an ombudsman role that Mr. Notley performs for people throughout the province.

MRS OSTERMAN: In other words, you don't say to those people to contact their MLA.

MR MANDELBAUM: What will often happen is that some of the people have been in contact with the MLA and, for one reason or another, aren't happy or are possibly trying two different avenues, regardless of the politics.  
[Inaudible]

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, it would just seem -- I'd have to think about this more -- that Mr. Notley would be getting into the position where he has the same kind of situation as what would normally be recognized as the opposition party in the Legislature, in terms of the Official Opposition.

MR MANDELBAUM: We're talking about the workload we can't control. I think there's a perception by some people in the province, regardless of political affiliation -- well, they don't separate official opposition and unofficial opposition. They feel that Mr. Notley is a party leader and, as such, is there to help them with their concerns. We have correspondence on that basis.

MR CHAIRMAN: Looking at it from the point of view of a Speaker who, hopefully, has a modicum of impartiality, we don't have recognized parties in the Alberta House, as they do in some of the provincial parliaments. As far as I'm aware, under our *Standing Orders* Mr. Notley is in the category of an independent member. He may, outside the House, be the leader of a party, but at the moment he is not the leader of a party in the House.

MR MANDELBAUM: I'll accept that.

MR CHAIRMAN: Looking at the overall funding for members, it's my understanding that the funding for opposition member or independent member is about three times that for a government member. I assume that some of the government members are perhaps getting representations from constituents in Mr. Notley's constituency. Are we going to reflect that in the estimates?

MR MANDELBAUM: I think there are two things there. Mr. Notley, in the Legislature, is an independent MLA and, as such, it would be fair to say that in terms of work we can control -- in other words, the reports that come out of the office, and things like that -- it should reflect that. There is also the work we can't control, and that's where people write to Mr. Notley and say, can you help us with this? Regardless of how we may feel about ourselves and what our actual standing is in the Legislature, in fairness to people who do write there has to be some kind of action. The workload wouldn't decrease much if all we did was wrote back to them, saying you should contact your MLA -- especially when it comes to the secretary's time. It's the typing of

letters -- she would have to write a letter and a memo, which is exactly what she has to do now. So her workload would be the same. In the end, it's not work that we control. People have a perception of Mr. Notley, regardless of political affiliation. I'm sure you'll find some people write to three or four MLAs. We get that as well.

MR PURDY: With all due respect, I watched the provincial events the other night where Mr. Notley and Mr. [inaudible] were on. They were inviting -- the closing comment was, write to me at such and such a mailing address at the provincial Legislature. He's inviting that type of correspondence into his office. I clearly remember being around this Legislature from '67 to '71, not a member at that time but being in the Leader of the Opposition's office. They were farming out a lot of their work to the Conservative headquarters on the hill. A lot of correspondence was coming into Mr. Lougheed, and a lot of it was being answered -- because they didn't have the staff and the capabilities to do it out of this building.

MR MANDELBAUM: Well, I wish it were that I could say different, but I don't think our correspondence load from that kind of request is as heavy as -- it's not so much political correspondence we deal with as actual case work. That is not the kind of letter you get in on the basis of the kind of thing you're talking about.

MR APPLEBY: Mr. Chairman, I have some difficulty with the suggestion that any MLA would not be willing and do everything possible to tend to a request coming from some constituent in his area. If it was referred to an MLA in any constituency, no matter what their party affiliation, they would do their best to take care of it. If people wish to write to Mr. Notley because they are affiliated with his particular party, it becomes a party responsibility.

MR MANDELBAUM: If I could respond to that, I think that if all the correspondence we get -- speaking very frankly -- came from party members, we would have far more members in the Legislature than we do now. The reality is that Mr. Notley, regardless of how people vote, is seen as being a person who will at least take care of that complaint. In his constituency alone, if everybody who wrote to us was a New Democrat Mr. Notley would be coming in with 90 per cent of the vote. I'm really not trying to exaggerate. The workload is very heavy from people [inaudible] who just view Mr. Notley as being someone who will take care of that complaint. That doesn't mean the MLA wouldn't do the same thing. It's just because Mr. Notley is viewed on a provincial basis, you get more letters from other constituencies than an ordinary MLA.

MR GOGO: Mr. Chairman made reference with three to one, my calculation is that Mr. Notley's request this year is 12 times as much as a government member. So I'm having some difficulty appreciating the request. I'll retain my views until we make decisions.

MR MANDELBAUM: If I can respond to that, just in terms of speaking on the basis of my own experience, I worked as an executive assistant to a minister in the government. Because of that developed an understanding that on occasion an MLA could have recourse to a minister; just say, could you take care of this. That helped an MLA deal with his or her own workload. It would be fair to say that, for whatever reasons, we don't have that fallback

position. Except for the fact that every MLA works hard, we in opposition, especially in our position, have fewer resources to fall back on than a government MLA would.

MR COOK: Could I just point out that I understand that the Notley budget proposal is for \$110,000. The average backbencher on the government side, last year, was around \$7,000. I just want to point out that most ministers are probably spending about the same amount as Mr. Notley. In effect, he has ministerial budget status.

MR MANDELBAUM: I think there's a substantial difference, though. Again, from when I worked in a minister's office, even though what you're saying is true, if there were research that would have to be done, there was recourse to the department. So just staffing money, you're probably right. But again, in terms of resources, we're in a much more difficult situation than would be true of MLAs [inaudible].

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I believe we've heard thoroughly the identification of the reasons for the B budget. In view of the time, because some of us have to leave -- hopefully, you'll be able to come back and there should be consultation . . .

MR CHAIRMAN: This meeting isn't likely to go on for more than another 15 minutes or so, as far as I know, because some of the members have other commitments. So we'll give you a notice of the next meeting, and no doubt it'll come up again then.

MR MANDELBAUM: Thank you very much.

MR CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your presentation. There's no need for you to go if you want to stay. You're very welcome to stay and have coffee.  
Should we go to Mr. Sindlinger's budget?

MR GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I don't know whether Mr. Sindlinger wants to make a presentation first. Just looking at numbers, I have some questions.

MR CHAIRMAN: Maybe he'd like to zero in on your specifics.

MR GOGO: Well, the first one, the 100, I understand that's a secretary's position: an increase from \$17,000 to \$23,000, 37 per cent. I don't know whether this is a Clerk-Steno IV -- I guess I'd have to look at it and ask the deputy minister, what do we pay secretaries?

MR STEFANIUK: That to me would appear to be getting into the over-range situation.

MR GOGO: I thought administrative assistants got \$23,000 to \$24,000. I'm asking about a secretary.

MR STEFANIUK: They can go that high with a certain number of years of experience and then what we call a wait, and finally there's an absolute maximum which is reached. That in effect can be reached in a Clerk-Steno IV.

MR APPLEBY: How does this figure compare to the maximum?

MR CHAIRMAN: Any other questions?

MR GOGO: Would Mr. Sindlinger like to respond to that?

MR SINDLINGER: I don't have much to say except that the salary was set in accordance with the salary schedule provided to me.

MR CHAIRMAN: Provided to you by whom?

MR SINDLINGER: By Charlene Blaney. I asked her for guidance in terms of salaries, and she gave me a salary schedule for people in the category my secretary is in. She said this was in the guidelines and I said, fine.

MRS OSTERMAN: Who is your secretary, Tom?

MR SINDLINGER: Mrs. Ivy Robinson.

MRS OSTERMAN: She's receiving this now, and you would want to jump her to \$23,000? You said she was improperly paid before?

MR SINDLINGER: I just said that when her salary came up for review, I reviewed it in consultation with Charlene Blaney and also with [inaudible]. In that consultation, I was provided with a salary schedule for this grade or level of civil servant, and said that this particular person with her responsibilities, here is the salary range.

MR PURDY: The question being asked is what is she getting now?

MR GOGO: \$17,000.

MR PURDY: According to that, it's \$17,006.

MR STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, I think what needs to be looked at here is we are showing at the moment a budget figure for 1981-82 of \$17,016. In the course of this current fiscal year in which we operate at the moment, the incumbent's salary was under review. If you'll look at the supplementary materials for this particular budget, there has been a recommendation for an increase to \$20,998. There is a note to that which, in effect, says that the documentation has not yet been completed. It has been recommended by the member. So the increase, in effect, as foreseen in 1982-83 is from \$20,988 to the \$23,000 level. It appears as a 37 per cent increase because of the figures we're dealing with at the present time.

MR CHAIRMAN: Similar to Mr. Mandelbaum's situation.

MRS OSTERMAN: So when we find out for sure what her present status is, we can revise that percentage. There's also a question of what her experience is, and so on.

MR APPLEBY: She's very qualified.

MR CHAIRMAN: And she works on her own with not much supervision.

MR APPLEBY: Right.

MR CHAIRMAN: I'm not faulting Mr. Sindlinger for lack of supervision. In other words, he hasn't got a big administration under his direction.

MR APPLEBY: When will we get that figure?

MR STEFANIUK: As far as I know, it's in the works right now.

MR APPLEBY: Is it retroactive for this past year?

MR STEFANIUK: It comes into effect at some time during this year. That happens in all budgeting. We do not normally budget increases, certainly not the normal increases which are granted to absorb cost of living, if you like. We don't budget those. In order to recover those funds, we go to something called a salary contingency fund, which as you know is voted on by the House every year in a lump sum for the entire public service. For the purposes of that budget we are considered a department and draw on that fund.

MR PURDY: Mr. Chairman, may I be excused?

MR CHAIRMAN: You haven't a final question for Mr. Sindlinger?

MR PURDY: I had some other ones, but the time constraint . . .

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, we have a very large increase in contract employees. There are several on there. I guess we can start with the first one.

MR APPLEBY: There's a substantial increase there, from \$17,000 to \$26,000, Tom. How is that recommended or requested?

MR SINDLINGER: Why am I asking for more money for a researcher?

MR APPLEBY: Right.

MR SINDLINGER: First of all, we should bear in mind that the events of last October were unanticipated. So when it came down to my trying to get a researcher for a short period of time between then and the budget year, I didn't have adequate time to do so. However, over this year I have had some foresight as to what would happen and wanted to get a researcher who could adequately serve my needs. I don't want somebody who can just clip newspapers for me, because I can do that myself. I want somebody who can do some actual, primary research.

Even though I conducted quite an extensive search, I was unable to find someone with the qualifications I wished to have at a salary of \$17,000, especially bearing in mind that that's a salary range for a secretary, never mind a qualified researcher. In terms of qualifications, I'm thinking not only of academic credentials but also work experience. I think I'm in a little different situation from any of the backbenchers. I know that backbenchers get only \$10,000 a year, but I think it should also be borne in mind that they have the weight of the government behind them, the departments of government, and they can call upon them for assistance.

I also noted with interest your comments too, Gerry, about the impartiality you have in the House but [inaudible] employing it as such in the Legislature and that Mr. Notley was considered to be an independent member, which I

believe I am as well. Nevertheless, I understand Mr. Notley's budget is somewhere in the \$100,000 range and mine is half that amount. If that's the criterion for the budget, I would think I would be treated on a comparable basis.

Specifically, to respond to your question why from \$17,000 to \$26,000, in my experience and the search I conducted for a researcher, I found that if I had an amount of money in that range, I could find somebody with the credentials and experience [inaudible] research.

MRS OSTERMAN: The employer contributions, the \$3,700, are commensurate with what, if the budget were approved, would be the expenditure on the manpower end. Is that about right?

MR APPLEBY: Yes, that would fit. The travel is up a fairly substantial amount -- 334 per cent.

MR SINDLINGER: Well, Mr. Appleby, it depends where you start from. When the initial budget was drawn up, I maintained that there should be greater amounts for travel at the time. So of course there is a quantitative increase from that which was set during the initial period of my budget. I did set up a travel agenda, and I thought I had attached it to my budget, but I don't see it there. Taking into consideration the fact that many of the things affecting this province and our responsibilities here occur outside the province, I felt a larger travel allowance was justified.

For example, the other day the Premier pointed out how important the port of Vancouver, Neptune Terminals, Pacific Coast Terminals, and the Ridley port up north are to us. A lot of the work going on in government today is taking place in Ottawa in regard to the constitution. I understand a lot of members feel it is necessary for them to go to London to carry out their responsibilities. I too feel I have similar responsibilities and, to meet those responsibilities, it requires travel. The \$5,000 referred to I consider not only for myself but for a researcher.

MR MANDEVILLE: If I'm clear on this, Mr. Chairman, this was for a portion of the year. It was an order in council, was it not? Special warrant. It wasn't for the full term. That would reflect some of these increases we're looking at here, I would think, wouldn't it?

MRS OSTERMAN: No, it was the full term. The figures you're seeing, in terms of the '81-82 estimate are for the . . .

MR MANDEVILLE: Did we not have a special warrant last year, Tom, on your budget?

MR SINDLINGER: I don't know if it was a special warrant or not, but it was a partial budget.

MR APPLEBY: That was '80-81, though, that partial year.

MRS OSTERMAN: Last year's is a full one, yes.

MR APPLEBY: He had a full budget for '81-82. That's reflected in your forecast figures.



MR CHAIRMAN: Do you want to comment on any of these?

MR SINDLINGER: No, but I wouldn't mind a response in regard to the independent member status, myself vis-a-vis Mr. Notley, and the difference in the budget allocated to him and that to me. I'd just like to know the rationale.

MR CHAIRMAN: Looking at it unpolitically, it would mean that if any other members followed in your action and left the government caucus, then every time that happened, we'd have the funding go up \$120,000 or whatever it is per government member. The Clerk and I, having our eyes on the dollars, will strenuously exert ourselves to have members stay where they are.

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I wouldn't mind commenting on Tom's question. When I first came on this committee -- and I remember the budget process last year and a long discussion because I was new to the thing -- it occurred to me that what I heard by way of rationale over budgets was that historically, certain things have come to pass, in something to do with another member who came an independent member, for instance. There is some sort of precedent. That's why Mr. Notley has over time built up a certain budget. There's been some precedent involved in terms of that. I guess the independent member was looked at to some degree somewhat like another independent member. That's the conversation I remember, because I felt I wasn't sure how these things came to pass either, when viewing a totally new budget for someone.

MR CHAIRMAN: Any further discussion, questions, comments?

MR APPLEBY: It wasn't too long ago that we had the opposition receive funding and the distribution was made through the office of the Leader of the Opposition. If I remember right, Fred, they just divided it up between the number of members.

MR MANDEVILLE: It started in 1975 that the money was given to the Leader of the Official Opposition. That's why, if you take a look at it, you'll see that we kept in line right down the line. What we did was divide it up between the six members in the House at the time.

MR CHAIRMAN: \$150,000, and gave each one \$25,000.

MR MANDEVILLE: That's right. We're still at pretty well the same ratio between the NDP and Social Credit. We're getting the same on a similar basis.

MR GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I realize people have to go. I have to go. I have to come back to the fundamental point I raised, and that is simply this, Mr. Chairman: if all departments of government are expected to operate within given guidelines, is that not applicable to this committee? If it's not applicable to this committee, fine. But I for one am not going to make a recommendation whereby certain members are going to receive more than the guidelines, only at the expense of withdrawing or reducing from other people.

MR CHAIRMAN: The only thing is that overall, we're well within the guidelines. We may not be on certain specific estimates -- we're well over the guidelines -- but on some other estimates, we're very far under them. In fact, you might say we've gone minus on some of them. Some of them have been eliminated.

MR GOGO: The bottom line for the responsibilities of this committee, if we're under 13 per cent, I frankly don't have much quarrel.

MR CHAIRMAN: Well, the Clerk can tell you what it is. I think it's around 4 per cent, isn't it?

MR STEFANIUK: The global figure for the Legislative Assembly is now projected as a 3 per cent increase. All right?

MR APPLEBY: Where did we make the adjustments to get the increase?

MR STEFANIUK: General administration, because of our efficiency, is down by 7 per cent for next year.

MR CHAIRMAN: That's a fairly hefty item.

MR GOGO: This is looking at our postal budget that we know.

MR STEFANIUK: The Speaker's office is only at a 5 per cent increase. Government members . . .

MR APPLEBY: That's not taking the budgets into consideration.

MR STEFANIUK: I'm sorry, at least the members' indemnity is 5 per cent. The Speaker's office is up 46. We have certain new items, if you like, there. Government members are up by 29 per cent. The opposition, grouped -- that is, official opposition and other opposition members -- is plus 18 per cent. The official opposition is up 13 per cent. The proposal for the NDP increase is 19 per cent. The proposal for the independent member increase is 67 per cent. Committees are down very considerably because, as I mentioned at the last meeting, to the extent we can we produce this budget based on the zero base formula. With committees, for example, we have no indications at the present time as to what in fact is going to happen next year with committees. So we're reducing that again to \$100,000 from this year's projection of \$235,000. That's a reduction of 57 per cent. So that's why the percentages vary so much.

MR APPLEBY: So there's your answer, John.

MR STEFANIUK: But the global proposal for the Legislative Assembly is for a 3 per cent increase.

MR APPLEBY: Mr. Chairman, I move we adjourn.

MR CHAIRMAN: Tom, we'll send you notice of the next meeting.

MR SINDLINGER: That's nice. Thanks for having me here today.

MR CHAIRMAN: There's nothing else? I guess maybe there's no time. Next meeting.

MR GOGO: We're going to try next Monday evening? I have two meetings. Perhaps I could change one.

MR APPLEBY: How about Wednesday?

MR CHAIRMAN: This coming Wednesday or a week Wednesday?

MR APPLEBY: No, a week Wednesday.

MRS OSTERMAN: In the evening, you mean?

MR APPLEBY: Yes. I'm thinking there'll probably be a sitting next Monday.

MRS OSTERMAN: Yes, most likely we will.

MR APPLEBY: We'd get an extra hour, though.

MRS OSTERMAN: But John's busy. What about Wednesday morning?

MR MANDEVILLE: Public Accounts.

MR CHAIRMAN: What about Thursday, between the afternoon and evening sittings?

MR GOGO: Later this week? Is that what you mean?

MR CHAIRMAN: No.

MRS OSTERMAN: Public Accounts is at 10, isn't it?

MR APPLEBY: Why don't we go for next Monday?

MRS OSTERMAN: And Private Bills?

MR MANDEVILLE: Private Bills is at 8:30.

MRS OSTERMAN: And you're in Private Bills, are you? Okay.

MR APPLEBY: As I say, why don't we go for next Monday. We would have more time.

MR CHAIRMAN: Could we have an agreement that we go right from the Assembly to have supper, and at 6 o'clock we're here to start business?

MR GOGO: I'll know tomorrow whether I can cancel that meeting.

MR CHAIRMAN: Is that for Monday, John?

MR GOGO: Yes, a week today. But I think I can probably rearrange it for Tuesday, as long as you don't want a meeting Tuesday as well.

MR CHAIRMAN: Well, it looks as if a lot of it is going to be plain sailing.

MR APPLEBY: Now that we have that word from the Clerk.

MR GOGO: I just can't believe we're getting all these increases and end up with a net decrease.

MRS OSTERMAN: No, but you can't just pad somewhere else because the Clerk has managed to pare down the administration. Anyway, that's a whole discussion.

MR CHAIRMAN: Okay, next Monday, 5:30 for supper, 6 o'clock to meet.

MR GOGO: Could Mr. Wolstenhome and Mr. Purdy be notified?

MR CHAIRMAN: Oh, they will be.

MR GOGO: Tomorrow, in case they have plans?

MR CHAIRMAN: All right, tomorrow morning we'll notify Mr. Purdy, Mr. Wolstenholme, Mr. Sindlinger, and Mr. Notley.

*The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.*