

Special Select Standing Committee on Members' Services

Tuesday, December 22, 1981

Chairman: Mr. Amerongen

4 p.m.

MR CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MR MANDELBAUM: Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure this is the proper place to bring it up; I'd like to get your decision on it. On going through the minutes, I noticed the intent was to increase both votes 130 and 430 by 11 per cent. Administratively, what had been done in the budget separation was to include or subsume the amounts we had previously put under votes 110 and 120 under 130; in other words, in the 1981-82 budget votes 110 and 120 were not included in this year's budget proposal but instead included under 130. In the minutes, it said the vote for 130 would be 11 per cent. Does that mean that we would get no percentage increase at all to account for votes 110 and 120 being included in that?

MR CHAIRMAN: What you're saying is that since the vote now includes two elements it didn't include before, the increase isn't totally as it appears but it is less.

MR MANDELBAUM: It comes to 6.93 per cent as opposed to 11 per cent.

MR CHAIRMAN: Could you go through that again? I think a few of us hadn't found our place.

MR APPLEBY: Is there a specific reference we're talking about here?

MISS BLANEY: Page 8 in the budget.

MR APPLEBY: I thought we were working on the minutes, Mr. Chairman.

MR CHAIRMAN: Yes, but if we approve the minutes as they are -- well, no. The minutes are a correct reflection of what we did. If we're going to amend anything we did the last time, that's going to have to come later.

MR MANDELBAUM: That's why I wanted to get clarification on it.

MR CHAIRMAN: So we'll deal with it later. There's a motion by Mr. Purdy that the minutes be approved as circulated. Are you all agreed?

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR CHAIRMAN: Carried. Before we go into the business of the meeting . . .

MR APPLEBY: It would be business arising from the minutes.

MR CHAIRMAN: Well, of course that's all we're here for, those two estimates we hadn't covered. In view of what Mr. Mandelbaum said, we may want to take another look at the NDP budget. But I think it would be appropriate if the minutes of this meeting recorded that I have received a letter dated December 17, 1981, from Grant Notley, MLA, under the signature of Henry Mandelbaum. This is what the letter says:

I would like to protest the decision made by the Progressive Conservative members of the Members' Services Committee regarding the budget for the New Democratic Party opposition. In my mind, there can be no justification for the government caucus receiving an increase of over three times that accorded to either the Social Credit or New Democratic Party opposition. I am also dismayed to learn that the Progressive Conservative caucus was allowed to revise its budget by a significant amount, i.e. 29 per cent increase in September to a 45 per cent increase in December. Surely it would have been appropriate for all caucuses to be advised that their budgets could be revised.

As a result of these concerns, I request that all opposition members be invited to attend the next Members' Services Committee meeting, and that the caucus budgets be re-examined at that time.

With regard to the last paragraph, notice of this meeting has gone to the three opposition offices. Copies of this letter went to members of the Social Credit caucus and to Mr. Sindlinger.

I'm not sure just what the order of distribution of this letter was, but some time before I got mine I got a call from a media representative who already had the letter and asked me what I had to say about it. It seems to me that maybe it was addressed to the media rather than me, and should be treated accordingly.

As far as notice is concerned, notice of this meeting went to the opposition offices. Notice also went when, in order to accommodate one of the members and to perhaps have more adequate time without straining anyone's schedule, we moved the meeting an hour ahead, from 5 o'clock until 4 o'clock. We have no objection from anyone to that, as far as I'm aware.

I also see that in the *Journal* of December 17 -- that was the same day as the day on which this letter purports to have been typed -- there is an article by Dave Cooper which outlines the complaints of the NDP member with regard to the NDP budget. It talks about our meeting having been hastily rescheduled. I believe we were also told we hadn't given notice. My understanding is that we did give notice, and we also gave notice of the rescheduling. I don't recall receiving any complaints about either the notice or the rescheduling.

I don't know whether the committee wants to do anything about this stuff.

MR APPLEBY: Mr. Chairman, could I ask you a question? What did you say the distribution of that letter from Grant Notley was?

MR CHAIRMAN: I haven't sent copies to members of the committee as yet.

MR APPLEBY: Oh. I thought maybe you had.

MR CHAIRMAN: No. It was addressed to me. The acknowledged distribution is to the Social Credit caucus, attention Mr. Raymond Speaker, and to Tom Sindlinger. It doesn't show how many media outlets . . .

MR APPLEBY: It wasn't sent to any government members.

MR CHAIRMAN: No. But I assume it got fairly wide circulation. In any case, I thought I should bring that piece of correspondence to the -- could you make room there, Fred?

MR WOLSTENHOLME: Squeeze up, folks.

MRS OSTERMAN: It's all right. I won't be here for the full time, Mr. Chairman.

MR CHAIRMAN: All we've done so far is for me to report to the committee about some correspondence I had about the last meeting about a complaint about scheduling and the lack of increase given to the NDP caucus in comparison with the increase given to non-ministerial members of the government caucus.

MR MANDELBAUM: Mr. Chairman, if I may, because I'm obviously aware of some of the background of that letter -- first of all, in terms of delivery I can assure you that delivery was not any gap at all between the media and the time that letter was delivered to this office.

MR CHAIRMAN: Well, I had the phone call about an hour earlier.

MR MANDELBAUM: I can assure you the letter was delivered at the same time as it was delivered to the media, that there was no gap at all. I delivered it, and I can give you that assurance.

MR CHAIRMAN: The media and I were tied for first place.

MR MANDELBAUM: I just want to alleviate that incident.

MR GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I would question the propriety of the letter in view of the fact that I understand these committee meetings are public meetings.

MR CHAIRMAN: That's right.

MR GOGO: If the press don't wish to attend, I guess that's their affair. If people want to try to conduct the business of this committee through the media, I'm somewhat disappointed.

MR CHAIRMAN: As I mentioned before I reported this thing, I don't know whether it requires any attention. I just thought I would report it and report the sequence that was known to me.

Are we ready to go on with -- which one do you want to do first?

MR APPLEBY: We have the library people here.

MR CHAIRMAN: Okay, let's go to the library.

MR WOLSTENHOLME: All business arising from the minutes will be taken care of . . .

MR CHAIRMAN: This is the business arising from the minutes: the library and the interns. In addition to that, Mr. Mandelbaum wants us to have another look at the NDP budget, I think Code No. 130. You weren't here Mrs. Osterman, but the point raised was that the increase in that code is more apparent than real because it includes two items that were under other headings last year. We can come to that and deal with it, and see where there is going to be any further consideration given to it.

MR GOGO: Mr. Chairman, could we agree at this point to follow the agenda as laid down?

MR CHAIRMAN: Sure.

MR GOGO: In view of the library being here, we could switch those around -- the interns come before the library. If the members agree, we could do the library first, followed by the interns.

MR CHAIRMAN: Okay. A question was raised about the research service. At the time, I didn't have with me -- and perhaps should have had -- the information which had been given to the committee last year when this program was approved. If there are questions or if you would like to have a narrative on this, Mr. McDougall is here.

MR APPLEBY: Mr. Chairman, if I may, we had approved a program last year. As far as I'm concerned, I'd like to know where we're at in that program and what the plans are from here on, how we're fitting in to what we approved.

MR CHAIRMAN: Possibly Mr. McDougall could . . .

MR McDUGALL: I put a brief together here, and I'll explain it to you. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, first of all I'd like to say I'm sorry Mr. McDonough isn't here, who is our new director of the legislature research services section. He's in Ottawa. All the planning that was done for the section from the very beginning was completed by me. I discussed this brief with Mr. McDonough before he left.

The brief consists of two sections. I'm not going to take a lot of your time on this, because I know you're busy. The first section has to do with documenting the development of the section. The intention is to indicate that we've been working on this for over two years, that it went through the appropriate authorities and so on, and that it wasn't done on short notice or patched together at the last moment, and secondly, the reasons I feel that the program should go ahead as planned.

Very briefly, in connection with the planning that preceded the section and what's going to happen in the future, the general plan for this section, which I've prepared in consultation with the chief librarian of the House of Commons in London and the head of the congressional research service in Washington, Erik Spicer, the parliamentary librarian in Ottawa and so on, was forwarded to the Speaker and the committee on December 13, 1978, and outlined all the details of that. I have copies of that here, if anyone wishes to have it, or they could contact the library. Following that, the financial part of the plan, which included all the staffing for the whole period of implementation,

was included in the library's estimates '81-82, and subsequently was approved by this committee. That included the full range of the nine-person unit and the extent of all costs in the exact fiscal years: what people would be added at which time.

Then we went into the first section, which was approved, and encountered a five-month delay in classification, despite repeated warnings to the chief classification officer from me of the serious consequences it would have on the future of the section, as well as services to the Assembly. Finally, after five months, we got a decision out on the classification of the director. The point of this argument is that we're not responsible for that delay. Our request for classification was submitted on February 26, 1981, which was five or six weeks before the new fiscal year even started.

Following the arrival of the new director -- we went into open competition of course. Following his arrival, the specifications for the positions this year were developed. I had done that the previous year, but I wished the new director to check them to make sure he was satisfied. They were released December 9 and should be appearing in the paper any time now. These employees should be on staff by the end of February '82. It's our objective to have the section begin functioning for the spring session. The full nine-person unit, which was in the original plan, will be in place by the summer of 1984.

That's the chronology of how this developed, and the documentation of it. Our first objective is to begin service with the spring session of '82, also that we'll have the two new positions that are up for discussion now in by the spring as well, following approval of the estimates. How well trained they will be at that point is something else.

I'd like to make five points in terms of why I feel we should stay with the original plan, which was developed in 1978. The first is that if we continue according to plan, our Legislature will have access to the wide variety of services that are provided by sections of this type. The attachment outlines the services a unit of this type provides. You can see that for yourself.

The second thing is that the Legislature, if we continue, won't be deprived of the full counsel of a more experienced and mature group of research officers. I'd like to point out that the minimum academic degree required of research officers that are employed by parliamentary libraries is a Master's degree and several years' related experience. They are subject specialists. The first two coming on: one will be a lawyer and the second one an economist. They're not recent or junior graduates that may not have any related work experience. It's a different level of expertise. The third point is that they're not a substitute nor do they duplicate personal research assistants. The best way I've heard that explained -- I've got personal assistants; it's a duplication -- is to say that we can't afford to provide every member of the Assembly with an economist or a public administrator of some experience; however, other assemblies in the Commonwealth and throughout the United States have found it practical to employ a group of subject specialists in their library that the personal assistants, or the members themselves, can go down and consult with. So rather than the unrealistic objective of trying to have that type of expertise for every member on an individual basis, we have a shared pool of subject specialists.

The fourth reason is that if we don't proceed with hiring one additional research officer and the clerk-stenographer, the situation will be that the existing senior clerk-stenographer will be providing secretarial service for three research officers -- that is, the director and two research officers. The accepted ratio of secretarial assistance in a research unit is two to one. If we go ahead with the plan, we will have the balance in terms of the

secretarial staff to the research officers, and we will also have an additional subject specialist on the staff.

The fifth reason I've given here is that if we delay implementing the existing plan, there will be a number of dislocations, one being -- I've spent some time in here on the Public Works planning. I've been working with Public Works since -- well, I finished the local plan on May 1, 1980, and submitted it to them and acknowledged. We've been working since that time toward the facility for these persons, which obviously can't be in this building because of the space. That is moving toward the final stages. The change could result in Public Works forestalling the development of that facility, and the staff would have to remain in the existing quarters, which are on the main floor of the IBM building, with one of our other units. Presently the two research officers' desks are in the main aisle of that office, which is hardly an ideal situation. Continuing again with the plan, the Public Works facility will materialize April 1, 1982. The working conditions will materialize according to plan as well. So the thing has been very carefully planned and structured, and there are a number of other working conditions Public Works have worked into it, as well as our credibility in terms of indicating to persons that we interviewed for the director's job and the planning for this that certain things were going to happen and that a plan had been approved, and so on.

In conclusion, I indicate that I feel it's unwise to alter the existing plan and that, even though we had a five-month delay in classification, we are rapidly recovering from the initial loss of time, and things are beginning to take shape quite quickly. We should be back on schedule during the spring of 1982. We're overcoming that loss of time and will be able to proceed normally if our estimates are approved.

I was also going to indicate to you that the Alberta plan, which I referred to earlier as being developed in 1978, was used by the province of Ontario during the implementation of their research unit. I was asked for permission to use it because they felt the quality of planning was better than the material they had on hand. They began their unit in 1979, and since that time they have a unit of 12 persons. On the other hand, in my opinion our proposal is quite modest and, I think, realistic, but modest both financially and in terms of scale. Our plan is, and has been from the beginning, to have a nine-person section in position by 1984. It's unrealistic to compare another provincial jurisdictions with the federal government, which of course has a massive research organization in their legislature. But to compare it to another province is quite fair and to indicate that they used our plan when they were implementing their own service.

That is what I wish to say about it. If anyone has any questions, I'll do my best to answer them.

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, just a couple of questions before I get into the scheduling of this. Where is the facility going to be?

MR McDOUGALL: The temporary facility is the IBM building, about a block and half from here. The planning for the facility -- the exact number of square feet has been established and the fact that it must be within Government Centre, and the street parameters. No specific building has been designated for it. Although several have been mentioned that will be available at that time, the specific building hasn't been chosen. We've asked for it to be as close to the Legislature as possible, for obvious reasons. Even in Ottawa, they don't occupy the same premises as the Parliament itself; they're several

blocks away. So we don't have a specific building at this time, although a number have been mentioned.

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. McDougall, I have no quarrel at all with the plan. The questions I raised last time were as a result of the delay. What I want to hear from the person who was putting this into effect -- and I'm sure you can answer those questions -- is: because of the compressed phase-in time, if you and he were still comfortable, that somehow you'd still have the same good base laid, if you will, in terms of bringing people on stream and developing the kind of unit you want to develop. I was concerned about that, because if you have good reason for laying out the time frame to begin with, then surely if that time frame is changed it's quite proper to ask the question: is the phase-in that you're now faced with going to alter the situation in being able to do the good job? I'm not at all questioning the fact that you're going to be hiring certain people, and so on. I only question the time frame as a result of what has happened.

MR McDOUGALL: We discussed that at length with Mr. McDonough. As I indicate in the brief, we're recovering quickly now from the delay. I'm not going to say for a moment that the five-month delay didn't cause us a great deal of consternation and problems. But we will have recovered from that by the time the estimates have gone through the House and we are legally permitted to employ. So we will have caught up by spring. So no, we wish to proceed. I can't state that too strongly.

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, one last question. It relates to the ratio you speak to for your clerk-stenographer and the number of people being served. Where is this ideal condition you speak of in terms of the amount of work that obviously is generated by two people that keeps one person typing, I guess, and filing. That boggles my mind in terms of what must be being generated.

MR McDOUGALL: There will actually be three persons. This is already a fact. They'll be the director and two research officers. The title we've given the first secretarial assistant is the senior clerk-stenographer, and she's serving three. Her duties are office manager, to set up the filing system, supplies, and all that -- supervising subordinate clerical staff that comes on. So in the beginning, that person is actually doing the typographic work for three persons, as well as looking after the general, routine office maintenance tasks. The two we're talking about coming on -- one more research officer and a clerk-stenographer II, which is a junior class employee -- will balance it back to two.

In terms of where I got that ratio, in the research for the preparation of this plan I was concerned about that because we've had problems in the library with not having balance in the different classes of employees. It has dislocated work routines. The consistent response was that the ratio required to maintain minimum working conditions in a parliamentary library research unit is two research officers to one clerk-stenographer. That was confirmed by Mr. McDonough, who was previously an employee of the research branch of the Canadian Senate and House of Commons. He confirmed that as well.

So all this is based on planning and consultation.

MRS OSTERMAN: You're saying that even though it is in a start-up process, enough activity is going to be generated immediately to be needing two clerical people to serve four other people.

MR McDUGALL: In the initial phases of course, in the organization of any unit, there are a lot of things to be done other than routine matters alone. I'm saying, yes, that's our requirement. That's why the plan is laid out the way it is. I feel it's necessary.

MRS OSTERMAN: That's all, Mr. Chairman.

MR APPLEBY: Mr. Chairman, mine is probably to Mr. Stefaniuk or Mr. McDougall. I notice the estimates for '81-82 and the forecast for that same period. But with these people not coming on staff until late in the year, it appears the forecast will probably not be that much.

MR STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, as I pointed out at the last meeting, the forecasts are prepared when we tackle these budget documents in July. At that time, when we're through approximately one-quarter of the year, our natural inclination when we prepare these figures is to forecast precisely what has been budgeted. Obviously, these figures change as the year progresses. But I suggested that the forecast input is the same as the estimate simply because these figures were compiled in July, when we have gone through April, May, June -- three months of the year -- and we have no alternative at that point in time but to forecast that we will use the entire estimate.

MR CHAIRMAN: Mr. McDougall, did you say you had extra copies of this original proposal which we approved last year? Does anyone want to see those? It sets it up for the whole five-year program, of which we're now discussing the second year. I don't know if anybody wants to refer to that. It was circulated last year, but I wouldn't expect everybody to remember to bring it. Are there any other questions?

MR GOGO: Maybe it's to you, Mr. Chairman, or the Clerk. It's related to the request for four new positions, one wage and three permanent. Can you, Mr. Chairman and the Clerk, live with those within the guidelines? I understand there are guidelines that talk about permanent positions at about 2 per cent.

MR STEFANIUK: You're talking about the increase in permanent positions?

MR GOGO: Yes.

MR STEFANIUK: As I look at the top of the first sheet of the actual budget sheet, I see that our man-years are up by three, which is in keeping with the plan.

MR GOGO: That's with the five-year plan.

MR STEFANIUK: That's right.

MR GOGO: I'm referring to getting approval from Treasury; that's all.

MR STEFANIUK: The final effect in terms of manpower increase is the global manpower increase for the Legislative Assembly. For that purpose, we look at the first summary sheet, at the very front of the book, and we show on manpower budgets a global figure of 2 per cent manpower increase in the total Legislative Assembly.

MR GOGO: What I'm saying, Mr. Chairman, is that I wouldn't want the Clerk's office penalized in not getting personnel because there are four new positions in the library. Having said that, that's on the table and you can respond or not. However, while he's here, I want to say to Mr. McDougall how pleased I've been this past year with the Legislature Library, particularly Mr. Buhr. I don't mean to pinpoint him, except I've had extremely good service from him. I'd ask you to pass that on to him, if you will. I've no quarrel with the budget at all, and I would endorse the budget.

MR STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, I should point out that the global figure for the Legislative Assembly calls for 111.11 man-years, which is equivalent to a 2 per cent manpower increase. That figure will in effect change owing to the approval last week of additional manpower for the government members' caucus.

MR CHAIRMAN: Which was four.

MR STEFANIUK: So that figure should now go up to 115.11 man-years.

MR CHAIRMAN: It won't affect the percentage too much.

MR STEFANIUK: No, it won't be a whole percentage point.

MR CHAIRMAN: Any other questions? Frank, John, Connie?

MRS OSTERMAN: Is a motion in order, Mr. Chairman?

MR CHAIRMAN: Any questions George?

MR WOLSTENHOLME: No, I haven't any questions. I just want to commend Mr. McDougall for the excellent service we get down there.

MR APPLEBY: I think we are all for that.

MR McDOUGALL: Thank you very much.

MR CHAIRMAN: Is there a motion?

MRS OSTERMAN: I move that the estimates be approved as submitted.

MR CHAIRMAN: Any further discussion? All those in favor?

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR CHAIRMAN: Carried unanimously. Thank you very much.

Just before we go into the interns, I have to fess up to some misrepresentation, misleading the committee.

MR GOGO: Shame. That's a point of privilege.

MR CHAIRMAN: If I fess up fast, you can't raise a point of privilege. We were discussing the salaries, and I was astonished at first when the amount was mentioned, and said it couldn't be right, but it is. The figure of \$1,400 a month was mentioned, and I took exception to that. But I was wrong. It's correct, and it results from an inflation increase.

I should say this. In order to ensure a smooth relationship, we always -- Bill perhaps will recall this from a year or more ago, being the caucus representative on the intern selection and advisory committee. We've always carefully watched the interns honoraria so they would be less than what the caucus researchers get. We don't want the researchers to think these people are coming in and, you know . . . I think that situation will continue.

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, then the information we had last time was accurate. I see you have the 11 per cent, which we agreed was the cost-of-living increase.

MR CHAIRMAN: Since then, some briefing notes have been prepared with regard to the interns. I don't know if you have had a chance to look at them.

MISS BLANEY: Only you got them.

MRS OSTERMAN: I do want to ask this question. If you add 3 per cent for merit, this would affect the people who are presently on staff. How can you give a merit increase to a group of people -- what you're saying is that that total will then be in place for a brand new group of people, who will not have been tried and tested. It becomes part of a base, when in fact probably the amount offered to a new group should be less 3 per cent. The 3 per cent can be given at a certain point in time if you and the committee believe that those who are supervising this group -- but I don't feel comfortable at all in terms of making that the base.

MR CHAIRMAN: The base. Yes, I see that.

MR PURDY: That wasn't my understanding.

MRS OSTERMAN: That isn't the way it . . .

MR PURDY: Not the way it reads there. My understanding is that if it's warranted, it's given; if it isn't, it isn't. The new group coming in on September 1, 1982, will reflect the rate of \$1,400.

MRS OSTERMAN: That then makes the 3 per cent as part of it.

MR PURDY: Pardon me.

MRS OSTERMAN: It should be 11 per cent of \$1,225.

MR PURDY: Yes.

MRS OSTERMAN: And those two figures added together. Mr. Chairman, I would have no quarrel with what is here if that were made perfectly clear. The 3 per cent then is only for a very short period of time. Obviously, in terms of length of time to do an assessment and offer that kind of increase, you're only talking about a short period of time.

MR CHAIRMAN: Yes. The fiscal year comes part way through the intern year. They go from September 1 to the end of June. The present interns will be here for only April, May, and June of the current financial year.

MR PURDY: Mr. Chairman, I thought at the last meeting we were going to amend Code 130 to reflect 10 months, not 12 months.

MR CHAIRMAN: Apparently, there are administrative or, shall we say, financial administrative difficulties in regard to that. If you've had a chance to look at that additional information Miss Blaney prepared, you'll see it covered.

MR PURDY: We haven't got it.

MR CHAIRMAN: Oh, I'm sorry. Maybe you could explain it orally.

MISS BLANEY: It's discussed in our first little note. The reason we have to use 12 months is that it is a systems requirement. Whenever we budget for a contract position, the payroll office and the financial and budget office won't recognize a contract position unless it's one man-year, which is 12 months. With the surplus we've had, we either used it to cover off deficiencies in the travel budget within the interns or we've returned it to General Revenue; also, too, if there was an increase that had not been scheduled, that helped. So we weren't having to ask for more money than what you had originally approved. Unfortunately, it's a system requirement.

MR WOLSTENHOLME: You can't beat the system.

MR PURDY: We create the system.

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, in terms of your saying the excess might be used to cover off travel, does that mean travel comes into play that hasn't been authorized by the committee? Or is this just extra costs?

MISS BLANEY: Extra costs, mostly in relation to air fares. If there is short notice, we haven't been able to book excursion fares. It depends on the hotel room costs if the locations are busy, for example, when they go to the seminars and if they haven't booked in time.

MR CHAIRMAN: As far as I can recall, there has been no appreciable change in the amount of travelling that has been done by interns for the last three or four years. But as Charlene says, we get caught with hikes once in a while.

MR GOGO: Do we have an annual report for the interns, or a report by the Speaker?

MR CHAIRMAN: We have an annual report of the interns, and it's available. I'll send you a copy.

MR WOLSTENHOLME: It's not tabled.

MR CHAIRMAN: No, the *Standing Orders* don't require it to be tabled. But it's no problem.

MR GOGO: Does your recollection indicate how many constituencies they visited last year?

MR CHAIRMAN: Not very many. They never do.

MR GOGO: They're never asked, you mean?

MR CHAIRMAN: No. They go if the members ask them.

MR GOGO: That's what I'm saying. They're not asked.

MR CHAIRMAN: That's it. We try to arrange the use of the travel money so it's as nearly as possible equal per intern.

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, how are we attacking this? Are we going down the different votes, or are we just asking questions in general?

MR CHAIRMAN: I thought we were asking questions in general. Then when you finish, I'll go down the votes if you like.

MRS OSTERMAN: Okay. I would like now, if I could, if we're done with the salary part of it, to talk about travel. I know there was a note -- and I don't have my ones from last week -- on the rather significant increase in travel, and you added to it. In terms of a breakdown, John, have you got your last notes? There have been some trips . . .

MR CHAIRMAN: You're looking at Code 200?

MRS OSTERMAN: That's right.

MR CHAIRMAN: Could you look at page 3.1 of your working book.

MRS OSTERMAN: Could you explain what additional travel has been added from last year?

MR CHAIRMAN: I don't think any has been added.

MRS OSTERMAN: The costs are 52 per cent higher.

MR CHAIRMAN: Sometimes we've been operating, shall we say, with perhaps excessive frugality. Interns have gone to a party convention or a seminar and have all gone and stayed with friends. It hasn't been too efficient. So we're trying to allow reasonable amounts so they can have modest accommodation.

MR GOGO: To encourage them not to stay with friends.

MR CHAIRMAN: I think the work suffers when you have this kind of thing.

MRS OSTERMAN: I can't quarrel with that, Mr. Chairman. But what I see happening is that there was a certain travel budget, and it was spread very thin in order to get a whole bunch of things, different events, taken in by this group. Based on that, this kind of travel has been accommodated. I have to ask the question that possibly, if we're going to have more of the real costs paid that should be paid for these different events, maybe there shouldn't be so many events, because 52 per cent is just one whale of an increase.

MR CHAIRMAN: No question. It is a large increase, although I must say that a good part of that is due to increased costs. Basically, the travel, in each of the last four years, as far as I can recall, includes three seminars. We have six altogether, but three are in Edmonton, two in Calgary, and one in Lethbridge. What we try to do, and we're doing that this year -- and some years we can't -- we have one trip: they're going to the Lethbridge seminar and doing one of the Calgary ones on the way home. That's planned for next month. In addition to the six seminars, of which three involve travelling expenses, they attend the political conventions of the parties. Normally, the parties don't charge them delegate fees. They go to the Liberal, NDP, Social Credit, and Conservative conventions. It depends on whether they're in Edmonton or Calgary. Of course if they're in Edmonton, the cost is less. In addition, we have some travel for applicants -- sorry, back to the interns. We have constituency travel. It's not been very extensive, for the reason I mentioned to John. Then we pay the travel expenses from within Alberta of the applicants who are chosen for interview. They come up here. We have a full day of interviews with the applicants who are sorted out from the applications.

MISS BLANEY: That's not included in this estimate.

MR CHAIRMAN: But it's in our travel estimates.

MISS BLANEY: Starting last year.

MR CHAIRMAN: We've always done that, from the beginning of the program. We've paid the travel expenses of the applicants.

MR GOGO: From \$8,000 to \$12,000 is not a significant increase, I don't think.

MR CHAIRMAN: It looks big, but as I said, all it really represents is increased travel costs and some more adequate accommodation. Another thing: some years, they're able to get a car and they go down in one or two cars. Other years, we can't get them and they take the airplane. But before they make any trip at all, I get an estimate of the cost and go over it. The understanding is that they may not exceed those costs. Any travel, whether constituency travel or other, ahead of time I get a breakdown of the costs, and that's what we do. There have been extremely rare occasions when we exceeded those breakdowns.

MR GOGO: The reason I'm in favor, Connie, is that I want to have one in my constituency this year to do some poll work, so I want the increase.

MR CHAIRMAN: Good experience for the intern.

MR GOGO: Not bad for the MLA.

MR APPLEBY: Do they ever travel by bus?

MISS BLANEY: Yes.

MR APPLEBY: I was thinking, you made the comparison that if they can't go by car, they go by airplane.

MISS BLANEY: They went to Red Deer that one year by bus.

MR CHAIRMAN: To a convention. But they share a car. We're extremely strict and frugal. In fact, sometimes they think I'm an old skinflint.

MR STEFANIUK: Even the accommodation, Mr. Chairman, is shown on the basis of shared accommodation as opposed to single accommodation, which is unlike what is provided for the public service and for elected officials. The other thing that perhaps should be mentioned is that in the past, there have been deficiencies in the travel budget. At the conclusion of a year, we have looked to other elements to determine whether funds are available for transfers, simply because the budget has been inadequate to carry the program. This now identifies virtually the same travel program that has existed in the past. The figures shown are the maximum figures which could be used. Obviously, there is every attempt, not only with this travel but with all travel arranged by the Legislative Assembly, providing sufficient advance notice is available, to book charter class fares as opposed to even economy fares, with a view to realizing savings.

MR CHAIRMAN: I wouldn't hesitate to say that this has to be one of the most frugally operated intern programs anywhere, because we are really strict with the expenses.

MR PURDY: Even the per diem.

MR CHAIRMAN: That's shared accommodation, as the Clerk mentioned.

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, maybe I don't have an appreciation because I haven't been close to the program. I'm comparing the kind of travel our permanent researchers -- and I speak of all of them, not just in the government members' caucus -- have. I believe this is overly generous by comparison.

MR CHAIRMAN: You mean we give them too much opportunity to travel?

MRS OSTERMAN: In comparison, yes.

MR CHAIRMAN: The thing is that it's an educational program. I assume the government researchers travel when it's necessary. How much they get, of course I don't know. But I doubt that your government researchers are going to travel on this kind of travel expenses.

MR MANDEVILLE: The 52 per cent does look high, Mr. Chairman, but taking into consideration \$11,910 doesn't really sound like that much money to me. I like the aspect of everything being approved before.

MR CHAIRMAN: I can show you in the records. There's not a trip taken without my having a look at the expenses, or my assistant. If we start to cut back on the travel program, for example, conventions, I'd be in difficulty if I had to make a selection as to which of the four party conventions they could go. As I say, we never know whether they're going to be in Edmonton or Calgary. The seminars we could possibly cut a modest amount off. Those are gauged the way they are on the relative sizes of the universities. The minimum is one, and

Lethbridge has that. Calgary has two, and Edmonton has three. Of course, that one doesn't cost us any travel expenses.

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, on the one hand, I hear one member talk about it being an educational program and therefore this is part of their education, but on the other hand, when you take a look at their remuneration, it's supposed to be somewhere near -- and it's fairly generous if we're talking about their getting an education at the same. I'm just trying to look at the balance between the two things. You use one argument to support one thing, but on the other hand there is an argument that sort of belies the first one to support the salary level.

MR CHAIRMAN: I wasn't saying anything yet about the salary level, apart from the fact we try to keep a sufficient margin between the interns and the government researchers. As far as the salary is concerned, we are getting the services of some of the top university graduates in Alberta. We get applications, numbering anywhere from 50 to 70, from our three universities. We ordinarily select for interview 15 or 16 of those, as Bill can tell you; he's been through it. Of those, we select eight. I don't think it's out of comparison with other kinds of -- because they're all graduates. It's a considerable reduction, I would say, below what they could get if they went out and just got ordinary employment.

MR GOGO: Mr. Chairman, the government researchers are about \$900, and Mr. Notley's is about \$1,300 or \$1,400. I have no quarrel. This comes out to \$1,500 per intern.

MR CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions regarding anything on interns?

MR APPLEBY: I was just wondering about 002, supplies, services control group. There is a substantial increase there.

MR CHAIRMAN: That's the total figure, Frank.

MR APPLEBY: Oh yes, right.

MR CHAIRMAN: Okay. Do you want to go down item by item? 130?

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR CHAIRMAN: 140?

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR CHAIRMAN: 150?

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR CHAIRMAN: 200?

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I would make a motion on 200, although I have a feeling I know the fate of the motion. I would like to move that Vote 200 have a percentage applied of 40 per cent as opposed to 52.

MR CHAIRMAN: Is there any discussion of the motion? All those in favor? Opposed? Okay. That was 200.

MR WOLSTENHOLME: Mr. Chairman, I notice that Mr. McDougall is still here. He's welcome to stay, but do we need him anymore?

MR CHAIRMAN: Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't know you were still here. You are certainly welcome to stay or leave.

MR McDOUGALL: That's fine.

MR GOGO: Maybe he wanted to do some travelling.

MR McDOUGALL: I have another meeting.

MR CHAIRMAN: Now he's going to ask us for a hike in the travel budget. Thank you very much.

MR CHAIRMAN: Where were we?

MRS OSTERMAN: Code 200.

MR CHAIRMAN: 430?

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR CHAIRMAN: 510?

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR CHAIRMAN: 600?

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR CHAIRMAN: 790?

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR CHAIRMAN: That's it I guess.

MR GOGO: 790 was for . . .

MR CHAIRMAN: Each of the three profs.

MR MANDEVILLE: I move we approve the intern vote.

MR CHAIRMAN: Ready for the question? All those in favor?

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR CHAIRMAN: Carried. Can we go back to the NDP budget now? Mr. Mandelbaum wanted to say something about Code 130.

MR MANDELBAUM: First of all, I have put together some information I'd like to pass around to members. It compares the Conservative budgets over the last three years to the NDP budget.

MR CHAIRMAN: Does it compare the per member?

MR MANDELBAUM: Well, can we get into that discussion?

MR CHAIRMAN: Sure, why not?

MR PURDY: Maybe we should.

MR MANDELBAUM: What shall I deal with first? The actual technical point?

MR CHAIRMAN: Why don't we zero in on 130 to start with, since you mentioned that a while ago.

MR MANDELBAUM: Can you take a look at your budget book. In 1981-82 in the budget, under votes 110 and 120, we have \$1,100 and \$1,314 respectively. Then there was the money voted for in Vote 130. For the 1982 and '83 estimates, instead of having three sets of figures, what in 1981-82 came under votes 110 and 120 was included in Vote 130. So if you take a look at your 1982-83 estimates, no money is budgeted for in either 110 or 120.

MR CHAIRMAN: Aren't you partly the author of your own situation by switching those? Didn't you sort of bring it on yourself? Maybe for the benefit of the committee, Charlene Blaney can explain what's been done here.

MISS BLANEY: They should have budgeted wages. The wages would have covered when the secretary is on holidays or on training programs. It's a natural course of action to budget for wages. That's why it was done in the past. This \$1,100 is an amount given to the NDP on a B budget item during the 1981-82 fiscal year, for the purposes of a secretary. They've decided to use that money for research, so that money actually can be left in 130, because it is being used for research, unless it's considered to be a misappropriation of those funds. But most certainly, wages should be taken out of 130 and re-established.

MR MANDELBAUM: In effect, then, only 11 per cent is accorded -- if the total amount of money for those three categories is increased by . . . The way the minutes last time were recorded, there was going to be an 11 per cent increase over Vote 130. If that is all that is done, it means that our increase for votes 110, 120, and 130 is 6.93 per cent as opposed to 11 per cent, because no money is allocated for votes 110 and 120 for the expenditures to be used for that purpose.

MR CHAIRMAN: Maybe Mr. Stefaniuk can shed more light on this.

MR STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, from an administrative point of view, I don't think we could take moneys out of Code 130 to cover what is normally intended to be covered by Code 120. With reference to Code 120, I refer members to the explanatory information at the front of their books, which says remuneration of employees, based on hourly rates of pay, includes overtime wage payments, retroactive, and holiday pay. As Miss Blaney explained a moment ago, that is

really to cover shortages which result from secretaries being on vacation, in the case when there is only one secretary in the office, a secretary being absent due to illness, attendance at courses, and so on. I really don't think an amount which is intended to pertain to wages should be budgeted under Code 130, rather there should be a separate amount provided for under Code 120 for a very specific purpose.

MR CHAIRMAN: Are you suggesting that the estimates as submitted ought to be revised in order that the definitions will apply to them the same as they do to the others?

MR STEFANIUK: We do not offer these, as you can appreciate, Mr. Chairman.

MR GOGO: You mean the first time the NDP made the mistake.

MR STEFANIUK: I suggest that if Code 130 includes an amount, or the proposal by the caucus in Code 130 includes an amount for wages, then in effect that amount should be separated and placed under 120.

MR MANDELBAUM: I apologize to the committee for that. I don't know why it was included, frankly.

MR CHAIRMAN: You didn't prepare the figures?

MR MANDELBAUM: I didn't prepare the figures, no.

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I'm quite pleased to make a motion that we reconsider that in light of that. That's really unfortunate, because there has been one "h" of a keffuffle over some of this.

MR CHAIRMAN: Don't let that bother you.

MRS OSTERMAN: No. It's perfectly proper for them to reinstitute that code. It's really unfortunate that it happened that way.

MR CHAIRMAN: It wasn't any of our doing, because we don't do these.

MR STEFANIUK: The caucus authored this submission.

MRS OSTERMAN: Then I would move that in consideration . . .

MR APPLEBY: Do they want it included?

MRS OSTERMAN: It has to be. They can't look after that particular item . . .

MR GOGO: Only if they want the money.

MR APPLEBY: That's what I mean. Have they requested it?

MRS OSTERMAN: Are you making that request formally?

MR MANDELBAUM: Yes, I'm making that request.

MR CHAIRMAN: We might run into a problem with Treasury if we don't change it.

MRS OSTERMAN: I would make that motion, Mr. Chairman, that we reinstitute . .

MR CHAIRMAN: That Code 130 be reconsidered?

MRS OSTERMAN: No, 130 can stay the same.

MRS PRATT: Connie, in Code 130 you already have an amount of \$4,000 for part-time and summer replacement, if you look at the explanatory notes.

MRS OSTERMAN: I thought it had been left out altogether.

MRS PRATT: That would be the amount going into 120.

MR MANDELBAUM: That's right. The reason for the 22 per cent increase is that the amount that would normally have been voted under 110 and 120 was included under Vote 130. That accounts for that 22 per cent increase.

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, for clarification. The amount forecast to be expended for last year and allowed: \$44,155. That's the actual figure from last year. That's what has actually been budgeted for. Is that quite correct?

MR CHAIRMAN: For the current year.

MRS OSTERMAN: Then I don't have a problem with the motion as it stood last week, with the 11 per cent being applied to that. We're not looking at anything in that vote by applying it to last year's budget that's inappropriate. What was inappropriate was the percentage that they came up with because they had added something else into it. So I would say that the figure stand as we voted it last week, but we have to add an additional amount to their budget to take care of the figure they just plain left out.

MR APPLEBY: It's reflected there. That's the addition to 130.

MRS OSTERMAN: It's the addition over and above. It's what makes it look so large. So 130 stays the same as far as I'm concerned. What we do is reinstate Code 120, to look at what would normally be allowed. All I have to be assured is that is an appropriate amount from last year, adding to it \$1,314.

MR STEFANIUK: \$1,314 represents wages for a clerk-steno IV for a one-month period.

MRS OSTERMAN: So that seems quite proper, in terms of it being done last year. We don't need to add any factor there, do we? Do we go down the list and add any kind of factor according to the way we did the other budgets?

MISS BLANEY: Probably 11 per cent.

MR CHAIRMAN: What we've achieved here by juggling these figures is in the percentage change in forecast, it shows two minus 100 per cents. I wonder if we could ask Miss Blaney to express, in plain and simple language, what we

ought to do in order to achieve what appears to be the intent of at least some of the members of the committee. What ought we to do?

MR APPLEBY: Could I ask a question before you proceed any further on that? That figure of \$1,100 in 110 and \$1,314 in 120, if it were carried on into the current budget, would have an increase on each of those as well.

MISS BLANEY: My suggestion would be, first, the \$1,100 which was originally budgeted for secretarial was not used for secretarial; it was used for contract research services. Therefore, I would leave that in Code 130 and not put it in at all. The basis for the \$1,314 last year was to hire one clerk-steno IV for a one month period, recognizing three weeks holiday for the secretary and one week off for training or staff development. I would use the same formula this year, based on current clerk-steno rates, which are approximately 11 per cent.

MR APPLEBY: So you would include a 120 code, not a 110?

MISS BLANEY: Yes.

MR APPLEBY: And build the 110 into the contract employees?

MISS BLANEY: Right.

MR APPLEBY: So each of those votes would also have to show an annual percentage increase as well?

MISS BLANEY: Yes.

MRS OSTERMAN: This is for 120.

MISS BLANEY: For 120.

MR APPLEBY: And the amount you put from 110 into 130.

MRS OSTERMAN: No. They've already got their research component.

MISS BLANEY: Mr. Appleby, they already included that 110 in their request for an estimate input. It's in that \$54,000.

MR APPLEBY: But if you cut back the 11 per cent, that isn't allowed.

MISS BLANEY: I would add the 110 onto their forecast input of \$44,155, and then calculate 11 per cent on that.

MR APPLEBY: Yes, that's what I was suggesting.

MRS OSTERMAN: In light of that explanation, I can make a motion.

MR CHAIRMAN: It's not that I don't trust you, but I wonder if we could vet this motion carefully, because the administration is going to have to act on it.

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, the first part of the motion would be that Code 120 be reinstated.

MR CHAIRMAN: At what amount?

MRS OSTERMAN: The figure that has been used as calculated one month's salary for that position.

MISS BLANEY: Plus 11 per cent.

MR CHAIRMAN: That's \$1,314 plus 11 per cent: \$1,458. So the first part of the motion is that in Code 120 . . .

MRS OSTERMAN: We have an amount of \$1,458.

MR CHAIRMAN: Right.

MRS OSTERMAN: And that for Code 130, the figure of \$44,155, add \$1,100 to it: the sum of those two be increased by 11 per cent.

MR CHAIRMAN: Is that a motion you can give effect to?

MISS BLANEY: Oh yes.

MR WOLSTENHOLME: What about the \$4,000?

MRS OSTERMAN: It's all taken care of.

MR WOLSTENHOLME: I didn't understand that it was. That's why I asked.

MISS BLANEY: It works out to \$50,198.

MR CHAIRMAN: Do you want to adopt that figure in your motion?

MR STEFANIUK: It would be easier for us if the motion could be expressed in dollar terms.

MRS OSTERMAN: If you have the dollar amount, and you're precise about it, I'd be pleased to have it.

MR APPLEBY: The 130 estimate would be how many dollars?

MISS BLANEY: It's \$50,238.

MRS OSTERMAN: The 130 estimate is now \$50,238. I'd be pleased to include that amount in my motion.

MR STEFANIUK: And the 120 estimate is \$1,458.

MRS OSTERMAN: I apologize, Mr. Chairman. I have to go back to another meeting. I may return if you're here for a while.

MR CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Merry Christmas, Connie.

MRS OSTERMAN: I'll try to get back in a few minutes.

MR CHAIRMAN: Okay. So there was a two-part motion. The first was that Code 120 be reinstated at \$1,458. The second part of the motion was that Code 130 be changed from what it is to \$50,238.

MR GOGO: Perhaps with discussion, it wouldn't be upsetting to ask that if there is a letter as a result of what we've done today, I be sent a copy.

MR CHAIRMAN: If there is a letter . . .

MR GOGO: There was a letter as a result of what we did last week. So if there's another letter, I'd like to be put on the list.

MR CHAIRMAN: That's my fault. I should have sent you that.

MR GOGO: From the author of the letter.

MR APPLEBY: If we were put on the distribution list, I think it would be useful to us.

MR CHAIRMAN: All those in favor of the motion? Opposed? Carried. Are there any other items of your budget that you want us to reconsider?

MR MANDELBAUM: Well, could we start off [laughter]. Realistically, the answer is yes. To go back to a question you had asked earlier on and all the inferences from that, the differences . . .

MR CHAIRMAN: Oh yes. We need a motion that consequential changes in other estimates be made -- employer contributions, and so on.

MR APPLEBY: I'll make that motion.

MR CHAIRMAN: A motion by Mr. Appleby that consequential changes following from the adoption of the immediately preceding motion be made by the administration.

MR GOGO: That's the fringe benefits?

MR CHAIRMAN: Yes. Those in favor?

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR CHAIRMAN: Carried. Anything specific apart from a general plea of poverty?

MR MANDELBAUM: A general plea of poverty, nothing specific. If I've answered the question you asked earlier on . . .

MR CHAIRMAN: About?

MR MANDELBAUM: You asked if the figures represent a per-member allocation.

MR CHAIRMAN: Oh yes.

MR MANDELBAUM: It's the feeling of our office that when you're taking a look at the moneys allocated to members, it's critical that you understand that there's a difference between an opposition function and an ordinary member's function. By definition, an opposition member can't be a cabinet minister, even though the reality is that the opposition has to perform many of the same functions. The opposition members perform many of the same functions that government cabinet ministers do. They have to develop legislation. Surely it is a critical part of any opposition member's duty to develop bits of counter legislation to what the government has in place that he considers unfair. The reality is that the opposition does not have the resources of any government to perform this function. First of all, a government backbencher, if he's going to develop legislation -- and I think it's fair to say that government backbenchers have not presented much legislation, or is comprehensive legislation normally, as does . . . If you take a look at the past session, the past year, over 40 per cent of the private members' Bills were Bills by Mr. Notley.

MR APPLEBY: Quality, not quantity.

MR MANDELBAUM: That's an arguable point in and of itself; I think that depends on where you sit. But I think it's legitimate to expect that that is one of the duties and one of the things an opposition member does perform. He does not have the resources that government backbenchers do to do that. A government backbencher, if he's going to put together a Bill, can go to a cabinet minister, ask for information. From my experience, working as an executive assistant to a cabinet minister, I know that the full weight of that government department and research capacity goes toward that backbencher. Our experience is that we go to a cabinet minister and say, listen, we're going to propose some legislation that you disagree with but that we think is important, the cabinet minister will say: thank you very much; I wish you the best of luck.

The second thing is that the reality of this government is that the opposition has a very difficult time getting information out of the government.

MR CHAIRMAN: All oppositions say that.

MR MANDELBAUM: From having worked in opposition and government both, I think this government is more restrictive in the information it gives out than other governments are.

MR CHAIRMAN: What you're really saying is that there is more work to do . . .

MR MANDELBAUM: It's not only more work to do. I think there's more responsibility that goes with being an opposition member than a government backbencher.

MR CHAIRMAN: My understanding is that the funding is about three to one in favor of the opposition members.

MR APPLEBY: It's more than that.

MR GOGO: Six to one.

MR MANDELBAUM: That six to one doesn't even take into account economies of scale.

MR CHAIRMAN: No question.

MR MANDELBAUM: If you have one member in opposition or 40, the workload is exactly the same.

MR CHAIRMAN: Are you suggesting it should go up to 10 or 15 to one, or something like that?

MR MANDELBAUM: I'm not talking about any ratio. But I think the amount of money allocated to the opposition should reflect the task that opposition has to perform.

MR CHAIRMAN: I guess we're in a difference of opinion, on which I can't express any views. The government members evidently think the ratio is not unfair, and you think it is.

MR MANDELBAUM: If you take a look at what's been happening over the course of the last three years, the disparity between government members' caucus budgets and that of the NDP opposition . . .

MR CHAIRMAN: Has been decreasing.

MR MANDELBAUM: Yes. What you're talking about is -- off the top of my head -- in 1980-81, the NDP budget, salary alone, was 11.74 per cent of that of . . . If you take a look at the total budget, the disparity would be even greater. The NDP budget alone was 19.74 per cent of that of the Conservative caucus. Now, it's 11.89 per cent, or at least it was until today. It would be around 13 per cent as of the decisions today. So what's being happening is that rather than the funding for the opposition going up, the NDP opposition has actually been going down in relation to that of the Conservative budget.

MR CHAIRMAN: The ratio has gone down, from about eight to six.

MR WOLSTENHOLME: Why not go back about five years, when the whole opposition jumped to beat the dickens and divided up Gordon Taylor's bit . . .

MR CHAIRMAN: It goes before that. It starts with a \$25,000 jump in 1975.

MR WOLSTENHOLME: I was on this committee at the time it did. You got a real jump then. I can't see the argument of why we shouldn't have a little jump now, five or six years later.

MR MANDELBAUM: We're not talking about a little jump. We're talking about . . .

MR WOLSTENHOLME: You're talking about a little jump when you talk about \$25,000 for one man, but then here you're talking kind of apples and oranges.

MR MANDELBAUM: If you take the last three years for salaries alone, at least for votes 110, 120, 130, and 430, your budget has gone up by \$300,000.

MR APPLEBY: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could ask a question for information. When this caucus salary budget sheet was presented by the NDP, why was the official opposition not included for comparison purposes?

MR MANDELBAUM: Frankly, because of time constraints.

MRS PRATT: I'd like to ask you where you got your figure of \$288,000 from, which codes you added up.

MR MANDELBAUM: I added up 110, 120, 130, and 430.

MR GOGO: I've heard the comments. Maybe you're making Mr. Speaker's arguments. Who knows, maybe next year we'll be dealing with the official opposition and the government and Mr. Speaker and then spread the money around.

MR CHAIRMAN: Mr. Speaker ain't going to spread any money around.

MRS OSTERMAN: Not you.

MR CHAIRMAN: Oh. Ray Speaker. I see. Well, they opted out of that.

MR APPLEBY: They were allowed to, but we didn't have any hassles in this committee when we did it that way.

MR CHAIRMAN: I have just been reminded that we haven't dealt with the B budgets. I thought we had. So we have a B budget for the NDP caucus.

MR APPLEBY: I suppose the same general comment by Mr. Mandelbaum applies to this as well.

MR CHAIRMAN: Have you found the B budgets? Last year, we had an addition of \$1,100, that same \$1,100 we've been talking about which, apparently by choice of the NDP office, was used for research rather than the purpose for which it was budgeted last year. It's now included in Code 430. As I understand it, here we have a proposal which will reinstate that amount. Am I right?

MISS BLANEY: It should be 130, not 430.

MR CHAIRMAN: Right. I'm sorry.

MR GOGO: Mr. Chairman, once accepted, the B budget proposal becomes part of the following year's A budget. Is that correct?

MR PURDY: That's right.

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, if I might. All the discussion we had previously about this member's budget applies to this particular item. In light of all that previous discussion -- we could go back and rehash all that again -- I would make a motion that this B budget item be rejected.

MR CHAIRMAN: Is there any discussion?

MR GOGO: Looking at the explanation sheet, this is to handle excessive workloads.

MR CHAIRMAN: An extra clerical person.

MR GOGO: This is not necessarily work -- I heard the argument before, and perhaps you could expand upon it, that a lot of mail is received in the NDP office from throughout Alberta. This would be part of that load.

MR MANDELBAUM: So I can anticipate the criticism, what happens is that we have a differentiation between political work and work that has to do with the office. Where something is clearly party work, we refer it to the provincial organizational office. We don't handle it out of our office. Frankly, even that referral takes a secretary's time. What has been happening, in an ever increasing amount, is that we get a substantial number of cases -- the last count we did was somewhere close to 3,000 a year -- that have to be handled in the office, and we have an ever increasing amount of correspondence.

Coming back to the other point of contention in the committee, regardless of Mr. Notley's formal standing in the Legislature, by different groups, including the Alberta Medical Association, the farmer's unions, Mr. Notley is considered to be a party leader. As such, they direct correspondence to him as well as to Mr. Speaker's office and Mr. Lougheed's office. That kind of workload we have no control over. If all we did was acknowledge receipt of a letter and transmit letters, it takes a significant amount of the secretary's time. Our secretary in the office has been putting in a tremendous amount amount of overtime that she has not been billing for, simply because we do not have money in the budget for that. What we're asking for is another position or some more funds so we can hire another person, on a part-time basis, who would pick up part of that workload that the secretary has to pick up on her own time right now.

MR CHAIRMAN: Any comments?

MRS OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I still maintain that the same arguments apply. It's interesting that there was an amount in their budget that was for a part-time person and that amount was used for research. I find that interesting in light of this so-called workload. I don't at all quarrel with the fact that I'm sure there is a lot of mail coming in. I guess the question is in terms of what the Legislative Assembly is obligated to pay for, and that is that it is as a result of the member outside the Assembly being recognized as the leader of a political party -- I guess there is an onus on that political organization to acknowledge that -- and inside the Assembly that person has the status of an independent member.

MR CHAIRMAN: You're making a distinction between Assembly responsibilities and political party responsibilities.

MRS OSTERMAN: Yes.

MR WOLSTENHOLME: It seems to me -- correct me if I'm wrong -- that I remember the same argument in a B budget submission last year, that because of an extra workload they needed a clerk-steno. Yet from what I can see here, they didn't get one; it was used for research.

MR PURDY: They got some money.

MR WOLSTENHOLME: They got some money, but they used it for research instead. But they asked for a steno. Are we again in the same position where we're being asked for a clerk-steno when it will be used for some other purpose? Frankly, I have problems with that sort of submission.

MR CHAIRMAN: Is there any other discussion of the motion?

MR GOGO: I would just add that I've been on television and I asked people to write me if they have concerns about booze. They wrote me. So I had to be prepared to answer that mail, whereupon I asked my secretary to undertake that job. I'm forewarned now for the future. If I'm going to do that, I'd better be prepared to have some additional help. So I'll think twice about asking people to write me when I'm on television.

MR MANDELBAUM: Mr. Chairman, I wasn't here last year, but my recollection is that \$1,100 was requested, and that was approved. There is a difference between that amount of money and \$16,000.

MR CHAIRMAN: No question.

MR MANDELBAUM: That is really comparing apples and oranges.

MR CHAIRMAN: You mean it's a small apple and a big apple.

MR MANDELBAUM: No, I think it is really apples and oranges. We asked the last time -- what you're talking about is picking up less than one month. Now you're talking about something totally different. That's one argument. The second thing is that the reality is that our increased workload is not Mr. Notley going around the province on television, radio, and through the newspapers asking people to write to him.

MR CHAIRMAN: There are other ways of provoking people into writing to you, don't you think? I've achieved it.

MR MANDELBAUM: When Mr. Notley is doing his job in the Legislature, and when he raises an item which is picked up by the media, then we get a tremendous amount of correspondence on that. There's a difference between that and Mr. Notley soliciting correspondence. Not all correspondence that comes in is congratulating Mr. Notley. If it were, we'd be in a much more fortunate position.

MR CHAIRMAN: Does he answer it anyway?

MR MANDELBAUM: We answer it anyway.

MR MANDEVILLE: Mr. Chairman, just to take a good look at what we're doing here. We're going to hassle on this, and are we going to come to any conclusion? I would like to see us come up with some guidelines on how to draw up the budget, and the Social Credit opposition, the NDP opposition, and the independent, so we have some type of guidelines. If somebody can come in with a B budget, we're going to submit a B budget too, or anyone is going to

be able to. So long as we have some guidelines and know what we have to spend.

MR CHAIRMAN: But isn't it in the nature of B budgets that they are outside guidelines?

MR MANDEVILLE: We should have some guidelines to determine what we're going to ask for in our budget.

MR APPLEBY: Anybody can ask for anything they want in the B budget.

MR CHAIRMAN: Sure.

MR PURDY: That's right.

MR CHAIRMAN: We have a motion. We've had a fair amount of discussion. I wouldn't want to cut it off or anything. Are you ready for the question? The motion is that we decline to approve the B budget of the NDP. All those in favor? Carried.

Now, we have a government members' B budget, revised. There was a previous version, and now we're talking about the second one.

MR APPLEBY: Oh, that was the word processing.

MR CHAIRMAN: You have a word processor, haven't you?

MR MANDEVILLE: Yes, we have.

MR CHAIRMAN: Is it self-contained, or do you hook into the government data centre.

MR MANDEVILLE: I really can't tell you, Mr. Chairman.

MISS BLANEY: Self-contained.

MR CHAIRMAN: Anyone want to open discussion or move a motion on this?

MR APPLEBY: I'll move a motion to approve it.

MR CHAIRMAN: Motion for approval. Is there any discussion or questions? Fred?

MR MANDEVILLE: The B budget here is to cover word processing.

MRS PRATT: Plus an operator.

MR WOLSTENHOLME: How many of them are there in the building?

MISS BLANEY: The Premier, Mr. King, Dr. Webber, Mrs. LeMessurier.

MRS PRATT: Probably half a dozen.

MR MANDEVILLE: We have one in our office.

MR PURDY: Is it used pretty extensively, or not?

MR MANDEVILLE: Yes, they really like it.

MR WOLSTENHOLME: There isn't one for members. It's just some departments that have them.

MRS PRATT: Plus the Social Credit members have one.

MR CHAIRMAN: The only members who have one available right now are the Socreds.

MR GOGO: Speaking in favor of this, Mr. Chairman, I have had various members mention to me -- for example, when they get a list regarding citizenship and want to send out a letter, there are literally hundreds of letters. I know I want to get some work out; I can't get it out because they're tied up typing these letters, rather than zexxing them. I've been assured by a couple of people that if this piece of equipment were in place, more of the secretary's time allocated to me, which is two hours a day, I would have.

MR PURDY: You're lucky.

MR GOGO: Well, I treat her right, Bill. So I've looked at this pretty closely. Several people have come to me, and I certainly support it from the description here.

MR PURDY: I sent out a number of letters, about 35, to various students in my constituency that were successful in achieving the Rutherford awards and so on. It took my secretary about two weeks because of her very, very heavy workload to get those out. If she had had that, we could have had them within no time.

MRS OSTERMAN: Speaking in support, I guess what we're all conscious of is utilizing people time in the best possible way. In looking at the kind of ratio government members -- and you've probably heard us talk about this often enough, in terms of what we think is a pretty bad ratio that we have upstairs in comparison to the service all other MLAs have, regardless of where they sit. Instead of increasing dramatically in terms of a lot of positions, some of the work being done, if you take a look this might be a secretary and a half, say. That is just an excellent utilization of resources, in talking about 43 government members and a budget of \$28,000. That's a very small amount spread over, because we have the economy of scale, to do it in that way as opposed to sending a lot of work out. Maybe the official opposition -- they believe in economy of scale too. I guess because of their special duties, they are obviously able to use a word processor to the maximum. I can't comment on that, but I know that in assessing it, 43 members for a word processor is just an excellent utilization. It will be going full tilt and save significantly in terms of what several salaries would be for stenographers. Hopefully, that will assist somewhat.

I guess what I have to say is that in looking at the 43 members and the \$28,000, that adds only about \$500 per member.

MR APPLEBY: Looking at '84-85.

MRS OSTERMAN: That would be ultimately, yes. This year, it's \$25,000, so it's still under \$10,000 per government member in terms of office administration.

MR PURDY: You mean \$1,000.

MRS OSTERMAN: No, I'm talking about a total. I'm talking about government members' total budget. With this B budget item, it's still just around \$10,000 per member.

MR GOGO: It's academic, but it's \$17,000, plus this jump.

MRS OSTERMAN: It's under \$18,000. This is by adding all the operation in.

MR CHAIRMAN: B budget, divide \$25,000 by 43 members. About \$650 per member. You're going to make the NDP and me jealous, you know.

MR GOGO: Why? Aren't you allowed to use it?

MR APPLEBY: Have you asked for one?

MR CHAIRMAN: Have I?

MRS OSTERMAN: Do you have the volume? Unless you join our ranks, you won't have the economy of scale we're talking about.

MR CHAIRMAN: I know.

MR GOGO: Bill makes an excellent point with the Rutherford scholarships. I don't know what the future holds, but if it's anything like we've just come through . . .

MR CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mandelbaum has a comment to inject.

MR MANDELBAUM: I'm just wondering, on economies of scale we could use that also.

MRS OSTERMAN: The opposition has one, and you might speak to the official opposition in terms of their only having three members now.

MR CHAIRMAN: Grant Notley and I shared a secretary, typewriter, dictating machine, and a little bit of a central office for about two years, my first two years here.

MR GOGO: And look what you did to him: made him into a \$110,000 operation.

MR APPLEBY: Mr. Chairman, just to comment on this. We have been seeing in our office increasing demands for services from secretaries. There are two ways to go: try to increase that staff dramatically, which really wasn't going to be an economical thing, not only costwise but spacewise too. That's a factor. But we also want to realize that our members are heavily involved in caucus committees. These caucus committees get reaction from all over this province as to the type of thing they're involved in. That also creates a great, excessive workload too. We felt this was the most economical way to go to take care of the situation that is increasing so severely all the time.

MR GOGO: That doesn't mean it's approved. It's recommended if this motion passes. Someone else will make the decision.

MR CHAIRMAN: I hope the government doesn't change the decisions of this committee, this being a committee of the Legislature. Anyway, are you ready for the question? All those in favor of Mr. Appleby's motion that the government members' B budget, December 7 version, be approved at \$25,323 as submitted? Carried.

The Clerk has said that his happiness and contentment would be increased if we were to pass motions approving the estimates as submitted, subject to the amendments as recorded in the previous minutes and today's minutes. Moved by Mr. Wolstenholme. Any discussion? All those in favor? Carried.

MR WOLSTENHOLME: Let's see the smile now.

MR APPLEBY: How many months later, Bo?

MRS OSTERMAN: If you keep coaching us, eventually we'll all learn about this budget process.

MR CHAIRMAN: Then we'll get a new members' services committee, that's what will happen. We've been through that a few times, except for a few veterans like Frank and me.

What about the next meeting? Are there items you know of that we should be considering?

MR GOGO: I think there are a fair number outstanding. We never did resolve the parking. Some people want to be named.

MR CHAIRMAN: Named?

MR GOGO: In terms of tags. What about February 2 or 3? The 2nd is bad for Connie.

MR CHAIRMAN: Is 2 a Tuesday?

MR APPLEBY: Monday or Wednesday would be better, would it?

MRS OSTERMAN: Unless we do it in the evening, starting at 5:30.

MR APPLEBY: What about the Monday before the Tuesday?

MRS OSTERMAN: Monday is fine.

MR GOGO: I'm thinking of obligations on Wednesday. The 2nd, in the evening, is better for me.

MR APPLEBY: What about your availability, Fred?

MR GOGO: Be back from Hawaii then, Fred?

MR CHAIRMAN: Feeling tanned and benign.

MR APPLEBY: George, pretty open?

MR WOLSTENHOLME: I don't know. It all depends on what my doctor tells me.

MR GOGO: Could I suggest 5 o'clock on the 2nd, Tuesday?

MRS OSTERMAN: 5:30.

MR CHAIRMAN: We have staff considerations; we cut into staff time.

MR APPLEBY: Why don't we go for a little earlier on the Monday?

MR PURDY: I could go 4 o'clock on the Monday. I won't be back from Red Deer until then.

MR GOGO: I've tried to make it a practice to utilize the Monday and Friday in the constituency when the House is not sitting.

MR APPLEBY: Okay, Wednesday. What time could you get here?

MR PURDY: 3 o'clock.

MRS OSTERMAN: We have some delegations on Wednesday.

MR CHAIRMAN: Can you tell how long it's likely to take?

MRS OSTERMAN: There's a delegation at 1:30, 3:30, and 5.

MR CHAIRMAN: Oh brother. That looks after Wednesday afternoon. Somebody said Wednesday morning. How does that sit?

MR PURDY: No good for me. Mornings are out for me.

MR GOGO: Could we go back then to the evening of 1 or 2. How would the afternoon of the 2nd be, from 4 o'clock on?

MR APPLEBY: Connie can't be off till 5.

MRS OSTERMAN: 5:30.

MR APPLEBY: Let's go Monday at 4.

MR PURDY: You've got the staff to consider.

MR APPLEBY: I move we have the next meeting Monday, February 1, at 4 o'clock.

MR MANDEVILLE: That sounds good to me.

MR WOLSTENHOLME: Is there any chance of it being a little earlier?

MR APPLEBY: Bill won't be back.

MR PURDY: I have a company thing down in Red Deer, and we usually break up by 2:30.

MR CHAIRMAN: Compromise for 4:30?

MR APPLEBY: That wouldn't help John.

MR PURDY: What time do you get up here, John?

MR GOGO: Well, I may be.

MR APPLEBY: Monday, the 1st, at 4:30.

MR CHAIRMAN: All those in favor? Opposed? Carried.

SOME HON MEMBERS: I move we adjourn.

MR CHAIRMAN: All those in favor? Carried.

The meeting adjourned at 6 p.m.

