

Special Select Standing Committee on Members' Services

Tuesday, April 12, 1983

Chairman: Mr. Amerongen

6:15 p.m.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could we come to order. All members have copies of the notice and attached documents. Just after the House rose this afternoon, I received a memo from Norm Weiss, further to what he sent to us previously regarding an allowance for members with constituencies that have a lot of inaccessible places. Perhaps we could hand those out.

We have Mr. McDougall and Mr. McDonough from the Legislature Library, and Mr. Ray Martin is here. Mr. Martin has to leave in about an hour. Of course, we want to just take a brief look at the minutes. What is your wish? What order of business do you want to follow? We have the Library estimates to finish. We could do those, if he agrees, after Mr. Martin leaves. The remainder of the work is the estimates for the three caucuses, so there will be the question of what order we take those in. Do you want to start on the NDP caucus, the government caucus, or the Independents'? What's your wish?

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, I think we should finish the Library item first, and then look at how the time has gone and perhaps address the issue at that time, in view of Mr. Martin having to depart. I understand Mr. Speaker is coming from the Independents tonight.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He's here.

DR. REID: Oh, yes. No Dr. Buck. Let's see what happens when we are finished with the Library. If we're close to the end of the hour that Mr. Martin can be here and we are then at quarter past seven, say, we certainly couldn't go into the NDP budget. It would be a little unfortunate to start into one of the others with only maybe 20 minutes of realistic discussion to go.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. So you want to go to the Library first?

DR. REID: I think that's the best way.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Members may recall, from a remark made by someone a meeting or two ago, that these estimates were prepared about last July and August, so some of the figures are no longer up to date. We have amended, up-to-date salary figures for the Library. If you could just refer to the section of your books dealing with the Library and go to the supporting material on page 1, the first item, code 100, salaries, is given as \$621,900. Are you with me? That has been updated to \$657,972.

Going to page 2, you have an amount under code 120 of \$35,640. That has been brought up to date to \$41,923.

AN HON. MEMBER: Which number again?

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is page 2 of the supporting material for the Library. I believe you have copies. I wasn't aware of that.

Then there is a revision of page 3, if you would like to look at page 3. The employer contributions have been recalculated at \$64,416 for code 140, and allowances and supplementary benefits are the same.

The total at the bottom is \$776,329, which is an increase of 22 per cent rather than 7.3 per cent. Do you want to go back to page 1 of the supporting material? Is there any discussion? Mrs. Embury.

MRS. EMBURY: Mr. Chairman, are we looking at the sheet that has the 20 per cent increase, page 1?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, we are.

MRS. EMBURY: As members will know, I've spoken on this topic before. I feel that I just have to speak again and say that in this economic time that Albertans are going through, I find it very hard to justify a 20 per cent increase, which I believe eventually becomes a 22 per cent increase at the end. If I recall from last week when we were looking at what is now on the back of our page, which was an attachment before, I know there's a new position requested, which obviously contributes a lot to that budget. To my mind, I guess I cannot justify either filling that position, if that's what makes the increase -- or I'd like to ask where are the other increases that it's that high at 22 per cent, when people in the private sector are out there getting 0 per cent increases.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Perhaps I could ask Mr. McDougall to respond.

MR. McDOUGALL: Mr. Chairman and hon. members, first of all there are really two questions. One is to do with the amount of the overall increase. The second, more specifically, is the additional position of a research officer.

First of all, in connection with the overall increase, a large part of that is a consequence of the agreements that have been made with the different bargaining divisions during the past few months. They all have rolled up at this particular time and, in my opinion at least, give a somewhat false impression concerning the actual increased Library expenditures. I think, though, Charlene Blaney could probably explain technically how that has happened. There is no question that overall, there is a considerable increase in the Library's expenditures.

What I've found has been helpful in the past and, if there aren't any objections, members usually ask -- if questions arise in the Chamber when our estimates are being presented, one of the members of the Members' Services Committee is asked to answer those questions. I always prepare a very short memo, usually one page -- in this case, it's a page and a half -- that indicates in very to-the-point terms the overall situation of the Library in terms of its estimates. It's also available to any member of the public who wishes to inquire. I have it here. If there are no objections, I would just like to give you a copy of it. Is that acceptable? Then, of course, I'll answer the questions.

In just a few moments, first of all, the overall picture is that including all of the Library's salaries for the complete fiscal year '83-84, the Library's estimates are 18 per cent over what they were for the fiscal year 1982-83. The largest part of this is due to the salary agreements that were made. The amounts put in the supplies and services and equipment groups are just over 7 per cent. So that's the general situation.

Generally, I'm asked five questions. The first one is, are we undertaking any new programs that will have the effect of raising our estimates? The answer to that question is no.

The next question which has usually been asked -- and which is being asked now -- is, is the Library requesting any additional staff positions? The answer to that question is that we presently have an establishment of 28 persons. That's 24 permanent staff and four full-time wage equivalents. I've

dropped one wage position in order to accommodate part of the expense of a new research officer. This was done according to the plan that was adopted in 1980 for this section. What we were doing there was following the plan. We have been following it year by year, and the complete unit will be finished in the next fiscal year. So that position was put in as a part of the overall plan of development for this section, which was approved in 1980. Now I'm quite aware of the fact that decisions made in 1980 aren't necessarily binding now. But that's the reason it's there.

In connection with that, you probably may wish to pursue that further. I've indicated that the position was put in according to the plan that was developed in 1980. That's why it's there. I've indicated that to compensate for that in part, we dropped one of our full-time wage positions. That's the simple reasoning for it. We're certainly open to any suggestions or recommendations that the committee may wish to make to us in that regard.

MR. HYLAND: Just roughly figuring, it would seem -- there's something that I don't understand here. If the settlements have been coming out -- I thought the wage settlements were 12 per cent or somewhere in that neighborhood. Yet in number five and six on here, on the permanent staff we're looking at a 24.9 per cent increase. Further down, we're looking at a little better than that, I think. I can't make the calculator work properly, but my mental 'guesstimate' is about 31 per cent or something.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Perhaps Miss Blaney could answer that.

MISS BLANEY: What has happened to a number of the employees in the Library is that we have had some reclassifications, especially within the research unit. Secondly, the librarian series, of which I think there are three or four people, has had what's called a regrading. That is that when the settlement was reached, it was decided by the union and the government to increase the grade they're paid at. So not only did they get a cost of living, they got a regrading, which is in there too. But that was in the final settlement.

MR. HYLAND: All the top -- right from five to about 13, you're looking at anywhere from 24 upwards percentage increase in wages, including the regrading and the settlement.

MISS BLANEY: Yes.

MISS BLANEY: The reclassifications for the research unit, then, would be significantly over the 20 per cent.

MR. MARTIN: Just for our own information -- especially for new members; the older ones may be aware of it -- I understand the percentage increase in arbitration that you're talking about. I do not understand what constitutes reclassification. Is it simply experience? This is what I'm having difficulty with, at least. Is everybody automatically reclassified? How does it work exactly, if you don't mind?

MR. McDOUGALL: Mr. Chairman, the situation with the research officers is this. When we started the research unit, a study was done in consultation with the other leading parliamentary libraries in Canada. Naturally it was our desire and intention to pay approximately the same salaries that were paid in similar units in the other provinces that have a research section in their parliamentary Library. Personnel felt that they didn't wish to make a final decision in this regard for at least six months after the first research officers started. So what they did is classified all the positions as

research officer I -- that's the bottom of the research officer class -- and indicated that following nine months, they would be prepared to reconsider. It did seem sound, but at that time they weren't prepared to make that decision.

Subsequently, after approximately a year had passed, I requested that the research officers be made research officers II, which pays remuneration at the level they would receive if they were working in the parliamentary libraries of Quebec, Ontario, or Ottawa, which have research units. That's sort of the background. In other words, we started them off at a lower salary initially. Then following a year's experience and so on, they were reclassified, and I recommended it, of course, on the basis of my knowledge about the other situations in the country. That's the reason for that change.

MR. MARTIN: I'm sure there is a reason for it. I guess what I'm struggling with a little bit -- people don't know where the bottom line is. Obviously the people get the raise in terms of the arbitration, and I think we all understand that. We also understand that we're talking about increments people get for merit or comparisons, as you've used, with other parts of the country. I guess what I want to know is, will we be coming back next year with another increment? Do we have any idea what makes up these increments? The sky could be the limit if we didn't have some idea of what we are dealing with here. That's my confusion; I don't know if the other members . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could I make a comment. Had this been a settled situation in effect for some time, it is likely that when these people were engaged they would have been engaged as research officers II. Since it was an uncertain situation and the matter was dealt with through the government personnel service, they were started at a lower grade. The result was that for the first while, they weren't paid as research officers II, but eventually they were put at the grade they would have been put at had the decision been made at that time. There was no decision made, as the librarian has pointed out. The result is that they got this lower salary until the decision was made. Of course, I is the lowest grade; you couldn't start them any lower than that. So eventually the thing was straightened out, and they are now at their proper grade.

In answer to Mr. Martin's question, as I understand it, there are no plans in the foreseeable future to raise those grades. Am I right?

MR. McDOUGALL: No, Mr. Chairman. They are now on a par in terms of other persons doing that type of work, both within our own provincial government administration and other assemblies that have a research group in their parliamentary Library.

MR. MARTIN: Next year, it will be strictly what is achieved in the collective bargaining and the arbitration process, then?

MR. McDOUGALL: It would be scale, yes.

MISS BLANEY: [Inaudible] for '84 will be identical to what they're approving tonight.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, can we have some clarification as to when this increase is dated? Is this increase dated from April 1, 1983, as it appears to be here, or is it retroactive back into the 1982-83 fiscal year?

MISS BLANEY: It's effective for April 1, 1983. We've already processed any retroactive payments prior to the end of the current fiscal year '82-83.

MR. HYLAND: How far back does the settlement go, then?

MISS BLANEY: April 1 of '82. We had two catchups to do.

DR. REID: So the salaries that were listed on the original information that we had -- is the left-hand column we're looking at here the increased salaries that they had, including the retroactive payments to April 1, '82?

MISS BLANEY: That's the increase at the beginning of this month.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. Reid is talking about the left-hand column.

MISS BLANEY: The difference from July of '82, when we did the estimates. We didn't have any figures as an interim or a final until November, and then into March.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions?

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, I'm looking at the total, overall increase in the Library. We're looking at just under 20 per cent, and the highest four earners have not increased at all between the July '82 figures and the 1983 figures. So we are looking at an increase of the remaining 21 positions. That must be well over 20 per cent. I haven't got an adding machine to do it. We've been asked to authorize a new position in the research staff, excluding another position that did exist until this year.

I'm getting alarmed at the cost of our Library. I know there are comparisons with other provinces and everything else, but the increase in cost appears to be getting a little difficult to swallow. I have constituents who have been laid off where mines have closed down for three months out of the year or six months out of the year, have reduced their staff from 1,000 to 500 -- that type of situation. This is a little difficult to swallow and a little difficult to justify.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's a responsibility within the public service, but perhaps I could ask Mr. Blain and Miss Blaney to . . .

MR. BLAIN: The comment I want to make in response to Dr. Reid's remarks is that new position is [inaudible]. The new position is included in these figures. [Inaudible] that's marked there as vacant.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Less the elimination of the other position.

MISS BLANEY: As well, Dr. Reid, the first four positions are the management positions in the Library. When we formed the original estimates, management received their settlement in 1982. At this time, we don't know the management settlement for '83.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, what I was trying to indicate was that we're looking at a fairly large increase on the remaining 21 positions, whether they are vacant or not. I have a feeling that I am even more convinced that we should leave that position vacant, in that it will at least bring some semblance of order to the total amount between what was paid out last year and what will be paid out this year.

MRS. EMBURY: Mr. Chairman, it dovetails pretty well on what Dr. Reid said. My one question goes to Miss Blaney. Where does the money come then for the

management settlements which have to be arrived at, if it's not out of this budget?

Secondly, I wonder if I could have Mr. McDougall comment. Given some of the conversation or statements that you've heard, and if it were my choice to make a motion to delete that one new position, I would like to hear your opinions on if there is any other possible way the budget could be reduced so that you could still maintain the services. We're certainly not speaking about the personnel involved and the services that are offered in the Library. But I wonder if Mr. McDougall would like to give us some direction on how he might see a reduction in some of these figures, before one of us possibly makes a motion to arbitrarily reduce them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll go to Miss Blaney on the first question, and then to Mr. McDougall on the second.

MISS BLANEY: Mrs. Embury, we're working on the assumption that management will receive a 5 per cent increase this year. We hope to be able to find the funds to cover that difference somewhere within the existing budget. If we're unable to do that, if there are no surpluses, then we have the alternative of going to the salary contingency fund, which is provided to us by Treasury to cover such overages.

MR. McDOUGALL: First of all, on the question in connection with the position, I indicated previously that when we included the new position in the estimates, we were simply following the development plan. If it's the wish of the committee that that position be dropped, that will be the case. I know you realize the staff's salaries are worked out through the collective bargaining process with the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees, so I don't personally control the increases that are awarded. As has been noted, that accounts for over 20 per cent, the largest part of the Library's estimates.

I have control over the supplies and services control group and fixed assets. There, we are only asking just over 7 per cent, and that's pretty close to what we require. One of the peculiar things in our present economic situation is that although times are more difficult, our suppliers and vendors don't seem to be maintaining their previous prices or dropping them. They continue to raise them, so that we have to meet increased costs. That is my general response to the question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It seems to me there are three components in this estimate for salaries. One is the difference between a contract position and a permanent position. From the amounts shown here under Item 11 would have to be subtracted the amount in the contract position, in order to give a net figure of increase. Another one is the recategorization of these people who started in the first category, for want of another place to start. Apart from that, we're simply in a situation where we're more or less in lock step with the public service.

We're not legally part of the public service, because we're parliament, not government. But we do in fact follow the public service in making our positions comparable and our salaries comparable as well. I believe that also applies to those people who were upgraded from I to II. That makes their positions comparable to other people in the government service performing similar services. There is very little here that is discretionary. I'd say that the maximum amount one could describe as discretionary would be the difference between this permanent position and the contract position.

Were you waiting to get in, Mr. Hyland?

MR. HYLAND: Maybe it's asking some of the same questions. All through -- and you said on some of the research people there was a difference in categorization. But even No. 23, clerk typist II, in rough figuring, to me that's between 30 and 33 per cent increase. They didn't settle at that rate over one year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, let's deal with that.

MISS BLANEY: I will check the specifics. But I suspect that in her case, she's probably had merit reviews -- more than one merit review -- over the year.

MR. McDOUGALL: Christina began with us at the I level, the first step of her class. By government policy, upon satisfactory performance they are awarded more than one merit increase during the first year of service. That's straight policy. She wasn't awarded a double increase on the basis of outstanding performance, et cetera. Charlene knows the exact step sequence, but I believe it's three, six and 12. In other words, the clerk typist I-II begins in the public service at the first step in their level. The performance is reviewed after three months. If it's satisfactory, they're automatically given one increment. The same thing happens at six months, and then at the end of the first year. Is that correct?

MISS BLANEY: It's 18 months, and then to 24.

MR. McDOUGALL: That's all predetermined. This isn't a case of my deciding to raise her salary from \$12,228 to \$15,000.

MISS BLANEY: [Inaudible] the merit increase. It's equivalent to 3 to 4 per cent.

MR. PENGELLY: Mr. Chairman, I was concerned about the amount of work the three researchers have done. From the report, there were 14 oral consultations by telephone, 10 MLA in person, 12 staff person, 10 written communication inquiries, 25 projects, for a total of 71 in the year. Unless there's a lot I don't know about this, that doesn't seem like many projects for three researchers in one year.

MR. McDOUGALL: With the permission of the Chairman, I would ask Mr. McDonough to respond to that question. Mr. McDonough is the director of the research section. As you know from our annual report, I'm familiar with the statistics, but I feel he's in a much better position to comment concerning your specific question.

MR. McDONOUGH: Mr. Chairman and members, the research branch has been in the process of establishing itself over the year. The staff members were not all on staff over the period of that year. In fact, I was on staff for the full year, engaged largely in setting up the activities of the branch. One research officer was here full time during the spring session and continued. One person was here for a few weeks of the spring session and didn't return until September. The third research officer was here in September. We really had a full complement for about a third of the year.

Shortly after we had our full complement, there was an election. In the months from September through December, approximately half of the work was done at that period of time. There were 15 projects completed and one inquiry, for a total of 16. An inquiry is often a minor project somewhat less than 10 pages, and a project is considered to be somewhat larger and takes a

somewhat longer period of time. The nature of the projects varies considerably, in terms of how extensive the information required. I think the average length of most projects is about 20 to 25 pages, but we did a major project of over some 150 pages. It took a considerable amount of time to gather that information from various government agencies, not only within Alberta but in several other locations across the country.

In fact, a great deal of the work we are now doing has been comparisons of activities within this province to other provinces, and this takes a considerable period of time. It wouldn't be unanticipated for a project to take, on an average basis, about a month for a research officer. Some of these projects took considerably longer, because they were considerably more involved. Also, as we are just beginning this organization, the research officers are being inducted into the process, and they are going through a bit of a learning process. So the whole procedure has been in a breaking-in phase. If I might say, that is somewhat of an explanation of the amount of work we have been doing. Mind you, we do as much work as we are generally asked. I think the election period had something to do with the amount of work we had, because we could not assist members in their electoral campaigns. So I think that may partially explain the amount of work. I think there is still the problem the section has in terms of its visibility with all members of the Assembly. We're still in the process of being acquainted with the Assembly and of having people find ways in which we fit into their plans as legislators. Since we are new, there is still this breaking-in procedure.

MRS. CRIPPS: In that answer, you said you did a project which is some 130 pages. If I wanted to take a look at the projects that you have done, can I look at that document?

MR. McDONOUGH: The work that is contracted by a member of the Assembly is done for that member and that member alone. If that member decides he wouldn't mind making the paper available, then it can be made available. We could not make work available without that member's permission.

MRS. EMBURY: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to go back to explanation you gave in regard to -- as I understood what you said, you said that many of these positions that are listed are not members of the union but, because of circumstances, they receive the same settlement. Is that right?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm not sure which ones are union members and which ones aren't. A lot of them are not, because they're doing confidential work, and this research is included in that. What I'm saying is that they are not legally, members of the public service; they work for the Legislative Assembly. But these salaries are the same as they would be in the public service. That's my understanding. And the grades the research officers were given would be the same as the comparable positions in the public service.

MR. BLAIN: There's one scale.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, there's one scale. If you fit within that, that's what you get. So really there's nothing discretionary here, as far as I know, except the difference between a contract position and a permanent position. Because as Mr. McDougall mentioned, he is not proposing -- and I'm sorry I wasn't clear about this when we were here the last time. There is no increase in staff. There is a change of one position for another, although the position being changed to is rated somewhat higher, according to the public service scale, than the contract position.

MRS. EMBURY: Sorry, I have another question. What I'm trying to ascertain, if these are not union contract positions, is that if one position could be removed, would that be one way to reduce the budget?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Technically, you could remove all of them.

MRS. EMBURY: Well, I don't know that. I don't know about union contracts, but I'm assuming that that may not be as easy to do if they were members of the union. But I may be wrong on that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You mean we might have less difficulty dismissing someone because he wasn't a member of the union? I'm trying to get the question. I really don't know; I haven't looked into that.

MRS. EMBURY: Before I'm prepared to vote on this, I guess I would like an answer to that question as . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: You want to know whether there's a difference in the procedure for dismissing a staff person who is not a union member from what there would be if that staff person were a union member?

MRS. EMBURY: I would also like to know how many of these people do belong to a union.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think we can probably -- the fact that they don't belong to the union doesn't make them contract employees; they're still on permanent staff.

MISS BLANEY: It's just that they don't pay union dues, but they're still governed by benefits and salary and permanency.

MR. CHAIRMAN: They're still permanent staff.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to get back to the workload. I think what originally we asked the chief librarian -- whatever Mr. McDougall's official nomenclature is -- and the head of the research division was to get some clarification as to the type of work and the workload. We have a lawyer and an economist. I don't know the background of the third position or what background is suggested for the fourth position. I hoped we could get some more detailed information, because in the annual report oral consultations totalled 36 and written ones were 35. We've had a sort of very minor breakdown, in that an inquiry is a minor project and a project is a major project. But what types? I don't want to get down to the individual projects, because that is a matter of some confidentiality for an MLA.

The first question I have is: are all these research projects, however minor or major, done for Members of the Legislative Assembly? Or are any done for non-members of the Assembly, people other than members? The distribution between the lady who is regarded as a lawyer and the one who is regarded as an economist -- the breakdown between those two categories; also the third category, whatever it is, the position that I understand was filled in September, 1982. What I'm trying to find out is what the pattern is, in order to rationally decide whether we need another person and, if so, what type of person, before I feel I can authorize the filling of that position.

MR. McDONOUGH: Mr. Chairman and members, the work done by the legislative research service is done for Members of the Legislative Assembly and officers of the Legislative Assembly and no one else. There has been work asked for by

the Speaker, who is also a member of the Assembly and, from time to time, we have done work for the Clerk's office that would help them.

The distribution or breakdown among the research officers involved. There are three: a lawyer, an economist, and the third research officer's expertise is political science. He has some public administration background. The lawyer has public administration background. The economist has a very diverse background in cultural economics, business economics, and some transportation economics. I count myself exceedingly fortunate that, while maintaining a degree of specialization, all of the research officers are also generalists. From time to time the economist might very well end up doing a report that isn't particularly economic in nature. He uses his research skills to find the available and required material and to put it together in a package. Where I can, the work is distributed on the basis of what expertise is required for a particular question, but the questions are often very general. So the lawyer may do work that isn't precisely of a legal nature. The distribution hasn't been precisely even among them, partly because some projects took some people longer to do than others. But they're all working all of the time doing something as closely related to their fields of endeavor as possible.

The new position we are thinking of, again, would require a generalist, probably with a political science or public administration background and with some expertise in the area of social policy. The general line of work is to do policy-oriented research plus other general fact gathering. They all do that, and they all contribute in one way or another. So it isn't a fact that the lawyer is sitting around waiting for the next legal question to arrive on her desk, if that answer is a help.

MR. MARTIN: Just to try to put this into perspective, when we look at the budget it is clear, at least from my understanding, that we really cannot do anything about the salaries. That seems to be settled either through arbitration or through increments. The only thing we can look at, it seems to me, is do we want to actually cut back on the program? Am I correct in the assumption that, first of all, there really isn't much we can do in terms of salary if we have these people? That's already settled.

MR. McDOUGALL: Mr. Chairman, first of all, until a position is approved it's not automatic that we employ so on, so on, and so on. In the list of positions here, the new research officer position hasn't been approved, so that's discretionary.

MR. MARTIN: This is probably beyond the scope, but I think some of the frustration felt by people here might be that we don't understand their increment system. With tough times, I suppose there's a feeling that perhaps people here -- not to do strictly with the Library -- are being shielded unnecessarily with high increments. It's hard for us to make a decision about this without knowing the increments. As we come through each one of the positions, the only real power I suppose we have is to actually cut back on a program. Following what Ian was saying, that's very hard for us to judge. We go through so many of these particular things that I think that's a frustration. I guess that's just a general comment I feel at this point, and I don't know what can be done about it in the future. Maybe it's something we could look at.

MR. HYLAND: Part of mine is what Ray said, and I guess there's nothing we can do about it. When we look at an increment of 3 per cent -- and maybe it's tied into the contract, plus the settlement and everything -- or a couple of increments, it's tough on the general public that we all represent when they

have to settle for 3 and 5 per cent or lose their jobs. It's tough to explain the difference to them, but I guess that's beyond our control.

My other comment is assuming, firstly, that my arithmetic is correct and, secondly, that the research staff was totally in place for six months, I took the total amount and divided it in half. The four people were in place for 6 months. Four months? Well, that may make a difference. I assumed that everything was in place for six months, including your position, and divided the total by two. It looks like the costs, ignoring the oral consultations -- and I don't know how long 36 oral consultations would take. It might take a long time. But we as MLAs probably go through that in how many days? Including the inquiries, the projects total 35. If you apply any sort of cost/benefit analysis to it, it looks like each project cost us \$1,966 to complete. Would that be fairly close?

MR. McDONOUGH: I haven't costed them out. I won't quibble with your figures. The only comment I would make is that the process we are still looking at is a process of beginning a service. The initial cost of its first year and perhaps even the second year of operation will be larger than if it had been in place for a considerable period of time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: To make the comparison valid, if I might make a comment, we might draw a comparison between the research projects that are done here and some of the studies we get from private consultants.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Chairman, I guess the only place we have any discretionary latitude, in that there are 24 permanent positions . . . You've got 25 on the list, but one of them is a new position which has not been authorized. There are four full-time wage equivalents. What does that encompass?

MR. McDOUGALL: Mr. Chairman, there would be three now. At any rate, the wage fund is used for the student pages who work here, come after school and return Library material, do photocopying, very routine work, and some cleaning duties that are specific to Library materials. Their wages are paid out of that, as well as persons that might be employed in emergency situations to cover off, through the provincial government, for persons who are sick for long periods of time or for other reasons aren't able to meet their work commitment. If you asked who are on wages at the present time, it's the student pages.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think we get some STEP people in once in a while, too, don't we?

MR. McDOUGALL: We used to employ considerable numbers of STEP and PEP persons in the Library, but the moneys for those projects are supplementary in that they are supplied through the funding department. You apply on them, and they go through a review. So that doesn't include STEP and PEP employees. They are grant-type employees.

MRS. CRIPPS: If I may, a supplementary again. Assuming that the average -- and I'm just glancing at this list -- is \$20,000, then that four-time wage equivalent would approximate \$80,000?

MR. McDOUGALL: The amount that we have for wages in the next fiscal year is \$41,923. Those positions are classed as clerical because the persons that we employ for them are paid at the junior clerk or clerk typist I-II level. So the amount that's involved in the next fiscal year is \$41,923, and that is the equivalent of a wage for three employees at the clerk typist I-II level, which is \$13,836. It's on page 2 of the new estimate sheet.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions?

It is not specific of course to any particular position, but I think there is a valid comment in paragraph 5 on the second page of Mr. McDougall's memo of April 12, where I think he makes a fairly strong case for the frugality with which our Library is run. We provide more services at less cost than somewhat comparable libraries in other provinces.

Are there any motions? We are still on the Library.

MR. MARTIN: Could I just ask one last question before I go? It seems that we're saying that the new research component is very much in its infancy, that it will become more efficient, and perhaps in a year or two we can take a better look at it. Is it correct that we will have a better idea, say, a year from now in this Members' Services Committee about whether we were getting, if you like, the proper dollar value, whether it was worth while? We could sit down and take a better look at it in a year? I want to know that specifically.

MR. McDOUGALL: Mr. Chairman, that's correct.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're not suggesting, as Mr. McDougall has mentioned, that a decision made some years ago by the previous Members' Services Committee is necessarily binding on this committee. But I think in fairness to the librarian, we should recognize that he was going along with a directive of that committee.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, before making a motion, I'd like to make a few more comments. The research division was originally authorized in 1980. It took some time to get the seed in the ground, never mind getting it fertilized and watered. It has, in actual fact, developed quite rapidly in the past 12 to 15 months. Having been involved with medical things, I know it's sometimes very difficult in the beginning to estimate the usefulness or the necessity of any new procedure. I think the same applies to any new service.

With regard to what Mr. Martin just said, I think it would be very useful to this committee to have a much better breakdown of the workload of the research service over the next fiscal year so that next year when we're looking at this problem, we will have a much better information base. I made my remarks earlier on about the financial situation, so I won't repeat them.

I wish to put forward a motion that position No. 11 on the list, the new research officer position requested for 1983-84, not be authorized for the coming fiscal year, and that next year when this same committee is addressing the presumed growth in the research service, we have a better information base to look at. Because once the position is established, it will then become the base for the next addition. I would rather do it on a more rational basis than the information I've received so far.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there some further comment on that motion?

Before putting the motion, the estimates were prepared on the basis of cutting off something else in order to assist in financing this other position. I suppose we could make that the subject of another motion. The question then is whether that other wage position should be restored.

If there are no other comments on the motion, do you all agree with the motion?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Anyone opposed?

MRS. EMBURY: I was going to speak against the motion, but I guess it's just that I was going to bring up something else. I get caught, Mr. Chairman. You don't call for a seconder to a motion when we're in in these meetings.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We haven't done so far. We can change that if you like. But they don't do it in the House, and we felt it unnecessary here.

So that motion is carried. Could I ask the committee to direct their attention to this other position? Perhaps you want to ask Mr. McDougall some questions about it.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, the obvious one: what was the position that was cut out, and what were the duties and responsibilities of that individual or that position?

MR. McDOUGALL: The one position that was dropped was a full-time wage equivalent position at the clerk typist I-II level. As I indicated previously, other than the student pages that's used primarily for contingency in terms of long-term sickness absence of employees, that type of thing.

MRS. CRIPPS: Is the \$41,923 figure with or without the employee that you had included in the other estimates?

MR. McDOUGALL: Mr. Chairman, it is surprising that there is only a 1 per cent difference after the position was dropped. That is because of the effect of the wage settlements. The value of each position was considerably less in the last fiscal year.

The answer very directly to that question is that \$41,923 is a three-person wage equivalent.

MRS. CRIPPS: The \$41,923 figure that you're giving us is over and above the motion just made by Dr. Reid.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're in a different category. We were in salaries, and now we're in wages. Dr. Reid's motion dealt with code 100; we're now in code 120.

MR. HYLAND: I'm a little confused right now. We dropped a position which was to replace a clerk typist to replace possible sick leave to pick up the researcher, right?

MR. McDOUGALL: That's correct -- to partially compensate the cost of the researcher. They aren't the same class of employee so that the . . .

MR. HYLAND: Saying that we picked up the researcher and did not have this position of relief, what would you have done then if somebody got sick?

MR. McDOUGALL: Approximately one third of the positions -- that would be one of the three positions -- is a contingency-type allowance so that the two pages would take approximately two thirds of that amount. The remaining third is a wage-type contingency for permanent staff persons who require replacement. The fourth one, of course, was dropped.

MR. HYLAND: So you would have created a new difficulty, then, if you had already dropped it and you have the contingency there if it's not replaced.

MR. McDOUGALL: In my opinion, Mr. Hyland, we could accommodate that.

MR. HYLAND: What we're doing . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: We've had two people to cover contingencies. We're now prepared to accept whatever additional difficulty there may be in covering them with one. That was done in order to get that other position in.

MR. McDOUGALL: Mr. Chairman, the answer to the question is yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, we've done -- no we haven't done. Can we go back to code 100? Is code 100 approved? Is there a motion, with the deletion of position No. 11 in the schedule on the back?

MRS. EMBURY: Mr. Chairman, could somebody please give me the percentage increase that that would be?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'd be taking out \$26,000: about .75 per cent. We have these built-in things, as I mentioned. There's no . . .

MR. McDOUGALL: Mr. Chairman, I believe the intent of the question is what is the percentage effect of taking \$26,316 off the manpower control.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's \$26,000 on a total of . . .

With the deletion of position 11, is there a motion for the approval of code 100?

DR. REID: I'll so move, because we can do nothing about the others.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's nothing in code 110.

MRS. EMBURY: Is it possible to have a negative vote recorded?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, sure. So we have, let's see, one, two, three, four, five, six -- we're still a quorum.

MRS. EMBURY: I'm quite sure that, with the convenience of the person and myself, it would be possible for me to speak with somebody to find out -- I believe you mentioned that it's built in and there's nothing we can do about it. I wondered if I could have a little lesson on what makes that up, please.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A breakdown? Is that what you'd like?

MRS. EMBURY: I'll do that on my own time. I realize you probably don't want to take the time of the committee. I really feel that I'm . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm in the hands of the committee.

MRS. EMBURY: Well, I seem to be the only one that is very concerned about a 20 per cent increase in the budget in a year such as we're going through. I'm sorry, I've just followed an election and I know what I was elected on. I just can't justify it. So I'd like some explanation so that I can maybe serve the committee in a little more worth-while way next year when I've had some more background in these topics.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So you're making a request for a breakdown? Is that as I understand it?

MRS. EMBURY: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. And you want to be recorded as voting against the motion on the approval of . . .

MRS. EMBURY: Yes, thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No problem there.

MRS. EMBURY: Mr. Chairman, just to clarify and make it simple: it seems to me that there's a total budget -- and I realize it's difficult. There's no way that I'm saying that the Library has not performed a worth-while function and is doing very commendable work. As you referred to in point 5, it certainly justifies it. All I'm saying is that you have an overall budget, a 20 per cent increase. Somehow, if you can't cut the salaries, which certainly isn't fair in any one way, then you have to cut positions or something to justify it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Had the increases in the public service not taken place, we wouldn't have this.

MR. HYLAND: I can see where Sheila's problem is. If you accept the public service thing and then -- I guess we don't know enough about the increment system to. That's half of the increase.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's why I asked. Would you like to have a memorandum setting that out?

MRS. EMBURY: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Once we do it, we might as well give it to all members of the committee.

MRS. CRIPPS: It isn't just Mrs. Embury. I would like to know how those increments work so that we are actually getting, in some cases, a 32 per cent increase in comparison to what the wages were. It just doesn't seem reasonable. In that case, every three years your wages double.

MR. BLAIN: Hon. members, I was about to say that everything we do in the administration of manpower, including the salaries, is governed by manuals produced by Treasury. In those manuals are laid out the increment system and information regarding reclassification and regrading.

I was about to suggest that Miss Blaney and I, if I can assist her, could provide you with a circular memorandum with samples of the charts for increments and the instructions regarding reclassification and regrading, if that would be acceptable.

MRS. CRIPPS: Is everybody automatically reclassified? Because it appears that everybody here has been.

MR. BLAIN: No, not automatically. Circumstances govern cases. In this particular instance, these regradings were approved by the government and the unions. They are to make these positions comparable with positions in the public service and in market place generally, the latter part of which is the basis for all reclassifications in the public service.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mind you, we're in a tight market place.

MR. BLAIN: That's quite true. Also in that tight market place are extremely high salary classifications. There are a great many more that aren't so high.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Can we go on to code 120? Is there a motion?

MRS. CRIPPS: That's the three positions instead of the four?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right.

MRS. CRIPPS: I'll so move.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Code 140 -- one of those consequential things which arises out of the previous estimates.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Code 150.

MRS. CRIPPS: What's memberships?

MR. McDOUGALL: Mr. Chairman, I've been asked several times, including by the disbursement audit, about memberships. The Legislature Library does not pay anyone's personal memberships in any associations with the one exception, the lawyer, which again is a policy thing.

We subscribe to these memberships in order to get their publications, many of which are scholarly type journals that are used for reference and research purposes. An example of that is The Institute of Public Administration of Canada. When you subscribe, you get a membership. You then get their publication which, as you all know, contains articles concerning public administration which are very useful to us. So the memberships are used to acquire memberships to associations that publish material that's useful to users of the Library for research purposes.

No personal memberships, including my own or anyone else's, are paid, with the one exception; that is the Canadian Bar Association fee for the lawyer.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions? Incidentally, until this moment I didn't know that the Library staff were personally paying their own memberships in their associations.

There is a motion by Dr. Reid that code 150 be approved. Okay.

Can we go on to code 200? Any questions, comments? Part of this is due to what are known as interLibrary loans. We are able to cut down our own acquisitions very considerably because we have access to other libraries in the city, such as the Cameron and the Rutherford over at the university. Am I right, Mr. McDougall?

MR. McDOUGALL: Yes, we operate an interLibrary loan service, and there are two employees who go back and forth between the University of Alberta and our own office looking after this. This particular program is done on a government-wide basis, and all the department libraries can utilize it. They are, by the way, charged a fee for that. Those funds are deposited in general revenue. That program was approved two or three years ago, its merit being resource

sharing; rather than the government libraries acquiring a lot of the material that the university has, that it be shared within the city.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do other libraries also use some of our material?

MR. McDOUGALL: Yes, we are what is known as a net lender, which means we loan more material from our collection than we borrow. That's because it's a specialized collection and the material isn't available anywhere else in Edmonton.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would you have an idea of what the offsetting income is that you turn over to the General Revenue Fund?

MR. McDOUGALL: The volume of loans is indicated in the annual report: 9,031 loans were transacted through the service in 1982. The recovery is approximately two-thirds of the cost of the service. That's because of the fluctuation in the volume. But if you are indicating how much of that cost we recovered during 1982, it would be approximately two-thirds.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any questions? Any motion, Mr. Hyland, for approval? Is it agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We come down to freight and postage, on page 5, code 290. Mrs. Cripps moved that. It's agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Code 350 on page 6. Moved by Dr. Reid, and agreed.
Code 400 -- there is a rather drastic reduction there.

MR. HYLAND: Did we vote on 430?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not yet. We are at code 400 on page 6. Moved by Mrs. Embury and agreed. Code 410: moved by Mr. Pengelly and agreed. Code 430.

MR. HYLAND: Where is this project that you have of putting -- I don't know if the dailies are, but the weeklies newspapers on microfilm.

MRS. CRIPPS: That's next.

MR. McDOUGALL: 644.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any comments on code 430?

MRS. CRIPPS: It would appear to me that what we've done is transfer the position that was originally in code 120, wages, which we approved at \$41,000, to this vote under code 430, because it is an increase of 346 per cent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Have they done that?

MR. McDOUGALL: No. I have elaborated on the reasoning for that. One of the reasons that I responded to that increase in the memo that I made up was that I was quite sure that people would feel that that was the case. The case is that at the present time, I do not have a personal secretary. What we do is that the junior secretary in Mr. McDonough's section comes down two half-days

a week in order to help out with that situation. My particular style of work is that I don't rely heavily on clerical support, but most chief librarians have a secretary. The chief librarians of the three parliamentary libraries that are referred to in the memorandum have assistant librarians, chief librarians as well. I don't feel that I require either.

However, I would like to know that I could employ secretarial assistance through a commercial agency, or my successor, who might not feel that my particular way of doing things generally on my own, quite independently, was suitable for him or her. The idea is to provide for that. The advantage of a commercial agency of course is that it doesn't commit the organization to additional permanent positions, and the people only have to be acquired as they're needed. So I felt that that would be one way of providing for personal assistance, yet not committing the Library to a secretarial position.

MR. HYLAND: That position in the previous vote could be used to relieve some of that work too, if she wouldn't be busy full time with your work.

MR. McDOUGALL: That's correct. It would be used as required. It would be used only as required.

MRS. CRIPPS: What then are positions 18, 23, and 24, if they are not clerk stenographers?

MR. McDOUGALL: Eighteen is the senior secretary in the research section. Twenty-four is the junior secretary in the research section. That's the person who comes down Wednesday and Thursday afternoons presently to do some of my correspondence or work that she's capable of handling.

Is it 23? Christina works in the co-operative government Library services section, which is in the IBM building. Her time is committed to that section. We have three sections. So two of the clerk typists, secretary typists, are in the legislative research services section, and the other one is with the co-operative government Library services section. I don't have a secretary in the main Library. I have an accounts clerk.

MRS. CRIPPS: Further to that, how many of those 24 people are in the research section? Are there any others?

MR. McDOUGALL: The research section presently consists of the director, three research officers, a senior secretary, and a secretary.

DR. REID: Mr. McDougall, I take it that what is being suggested here is that as you yourself need it, you will call in somebody from one of the secretarial services.

MR. McDOUGALL: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I have had occasion to do that before, but I worked out this arrangement with Mr. McDonough that he send the junior secretary down here to this building two afternoons a week presently. My particular concern is, as I've indicated before, that you shouldn't build an organization around your own particular work style. My work style is to work quite independently, without an extended support staff; that is, in terms of my personal work. Many people would not find that acceptable, so what I'm trying to do is provide for that. If that particular situation should arise, there would be funds available for that in addition to my own needs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I doubt there's a chief librarian anywhere in Canada who doesn't have a personal secretary, other than the one in Alberta; maybe Prince Edward Island.

DR. REID: I think I'm aware of Mr. McDougall's work habits. What is really being said here is that in actual fact this is probably, for yourself, an overallowance in view of your own habits, but if it were somebody else, this would probably be pretty accurate or it would be a full-time position. That's the point that's being made, isn't it?

MR. McDUGALL: Yes. As well I don't have any associate librarian, and I don't feel there's any need for one. Another person might not feel that way. So consequently, to be quite frank, I think you're realizing considerable savings on that side of the Library at the present time. I won't guarantee that it's always going to be that way.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there any other comment or motion?

DR. REID: I move that we accept that item.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Code 430, is it agreed?

I think we're going to have to pack it up. We're going to be superceded by a more senior body. Have you any ideas about a date for another meeting? Thursday?

MRS. CRIPPS: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No? I have a memo from Lou Hyndman. He's waiting for our decisions.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, I know there may be pressures on us to get these estimates to the Provincial Treasurer, but there are still a considerable number of the other estimates that have to go through the Assembly, quite a number of departments.

MR. CHAIRMAN: These have to be printed in a separate book.

DR. REID: I'm aware of that. The others are already printed of course. I don't think we should allow the pressure from the Provincial Treasurer, in view of the other departments that still have to go through -- we are essentially doing the same job in this committee that the Committee of Supply does for the other estimates, and we are running pretty well concurrent with the other departments. I think we should set our timetable so that we can have adequate representations. At the moment, we are functioning with only government members here. I think we will have to find out when we can get a quorum together that includes representation from the opposition, either the Official Opposition or the Independent members.

MR. SPEAKER: So in other words, we will not fix a date for another meeting now, and you will expect the chairman to make inquiry. Do you want to indicate any preferences? Next Tuesday?

MRS. CRIPPS: Next week is just unbearable from my point of view. I don't know about the rest of the members.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The week after next?

MRS. CRIPPS: That might be more suitable.

DR. REID: I think we'd better get our heads together subsequent to this meeting.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You're all here now; I don't have to phone you individually, and I'd like to have something to shoot at -- I'm not speaking of the members personally.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, I will take it on my shoulders to make sure that the government members get back to you when is a suitable time for a reasonable number of us.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's on the record.

DR. REID: I know it is; that's why I said it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. We're adjourned? Agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.