

[Chairman: Mr. Amerongen]

[9:05 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll come to order. For Sheila's information, we have sitting around the table, clockwise, Mr. Kowalski, Mrs. Pratt, Dr. Garrison, Mr. Blain, Shirley Cripps, myself, Bill Purdy, the Clerk Mr. Stefaniuk, and Peggy Davidson.

The first is item 2 on the agenda, approval of the minutes of November [23], 1983. If you're all content, would someone make a motion.

MR. KOWALSKI: So moved.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The second is business arising from the minutes. I reviewed the minutes. Some of the items are carried forward on this agenda, and others aren't. I'll go through the business arising, item by item.

First of all, there is Minute 83.344 — and I won't keep repeating the 83 — dealing with alleged NDP use of Legislative Assembly letterhead for party purposes. The support material is under item 3, first page in your books. There's a reference in Minute 345 to a report by the Clerk concerning the matter raised in 344. I wonder if there's any comment by Mr. Kowalski, who raised the point, or by the Clerk by way of a possible report.

MR. KOWALSKI: I'm sorry. I was reading the memo.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This refers to Minutes 344 and 345. There is supporting material under item 3. That's a memo by Mr. Mandelbaum, dated December 12, 1983, which purports to serve as an explanation. There was reference to a report by the Clerk. I wondered whether Mr. Kowalski has any comments after having read Mr. Mandelbaum's memo.

MR. KOWALSKI: I have no difficulty with the explanation. Basically all I wanted was an explanation. The sheet I provided — and I can't recall if I provided the letter in question to Mr. Stefaniuk or not — did have the term "NDP caucus" on the second page or on the back page. That seems to contradict what is written in the second paragraph: "The covering letter does not even mention the name of the New Democratic Party." I'm looking for the covering letter in here, and I don't see it. The one I had did have "NDP caucus" typed on the second page. I'm confused now.

MR. STEFANIUK: I received nothing from Mr. Kowalski. What I had was some material that had been returned to me by the post office because it was undeliverable. That is the correspondence in regard to which I raised the question. This is the explanation received relative to the question I raised.

MR. MANDELBAUM: If I can address Mr. Kowalski. The letter itself was a one-page letter. The second page was a list of reference places that was sent to all organizations if they weren't successful in trying to reach the office or they wanted further information more quickly. One referred to the NDP office in Calgary as a reference place. The reason for that quite simply is that we've had difficulty using any of the government buildings. As a matter of fact, Executive Council has decided not to serve as a conduit [inaudible] newspapers Calgary Herald. We've had extensive difficulties with

the government offices and now [inaudible] set up as a contact point.

MR. KOWALSKI: I've found it now. The first page of the sheet I have has the title: "The Official Opposition of Alberta invites . . ." Fine, in terms of the understanding I have. The second page of the sheet says: "Schedule of NDP task force sittings, November 28 through to December 1983."

MR. MANDELBAUM: The reason very simply is that we are the Official Opposition but we are also the NDP caucus. That is just a syntax thing. It was not set up as a party event. It was not proceeded with as a party event. As a matter of fact, there will be a report provided as an Official Opposition report.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, I guess that's really the basis on which I raise the issue. It was my understanding that hon. members should be as diligent as possible in avoiding the use of party names on letterhead and correspondence that might be paid for by the public. That has always been my understanding. I guess that's the reason that most of us, if we choose to send something out under the party label of which we are members, just undertake to purchase our own correspondence, papers, and envelopes and pay for the mailing under our own sources, whether they be private or through constituency associations.

I guess it's a matter of clarification of the policy. If I'm in error in understanding the policy we've always followed in Members' Services Committee and in government functions, I just simply need to have that clarified. If it's permitted to use party labels on correspondence paid for by the people, I'd like to know that.

MR. MANDELBAUM: Just by way of explanation. Until we were designated Official Opposition, we were always referred to as the NDP opposition. That's what our sign on the door said.

MR. KOWALSKI: It's a question of the usage of public funds to pay for mailing. It's my understanding that we're not permitted to use party labels on mailings.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Paid for out of public funds.

MR. KOWALSKI: That's correct. That's always been my understanding.

MR. PURDY: That's the same as with the communication allowance we have. We cannot have any connotation in there whatsoever of any political party.

MR. KOWALSKI: In referring very, very specifically to the last sentence of the second paragraph of the memo of December 12, 1983: "The covering letter does not even mention the name of the New Democratic Party." The document I have certainly does mention it. Perhaps Mr. Notley and Mr. Martin might want to re-address that. I certainly would like to receive an explanation from them with respect to this. I think it's a matter which they would want to avoid as much as possible in terms of the rules as I understand them to be. If it's an oversight on behalf of someone on their staff or in their office, I think that's a matter that both Mr. Notley and Mr. Martin would want to have corrected.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is your wish?

MR. KOWALSKI: The memo of December 12, 1983 — I think a review of the minutes of this meeting by both Mr. Notley and Mr. Martin would highlight my concern with respect to one statement in the memo from Mr. Mandelbaum to the Clerk saying that "The

covering letter does not even mention the name of the New Democratic Party." The document I have certainly does mention it, and there's a contradiction there. I would ask Mr. Notley or Mr. Martin to convey to us a further explanation of this matter as to how it came about and if it's their misunderstanding of the policy that has always been followed by all members — just an explanation from them with respect to this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that a motion?

MR. KOWALSKI: I move that Mr. Martin and Mr. Notley be provided with a copy of the minutes of this particular meeting and the request from them for a further explanation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you ready for the question? All those agreed? Opposed? Carried.

The next item arising from the minutes is Minute 347. In that regard, I think Mr. Kowalski was intending to make some kind of report about certain travel expenses. But it appears as item 5(b) on today's agenda, so we can let it go until then.

The next item of business arising is Minute 348, a report requested by Mrs. Cripps. The support material for that is under item 3, the second and third pages in your three-ring binders. One thing I noted there was that I construed the request by Mrs. Cripps to relate to installation in members' homes generally, whereas the material deals specifically with Mrs. Cripps' own telephone. That might have been the intent; I don't know.

MRS. CRIPPS: In my motion I said that Charlene could use my telephone as an example if she wanted to, because I already had it in.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Evidently that was done.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, we understood that this was to illustrate very simply if there is a cost saving. As you can see, using Mrs. Cripps' installation as an example, we're saving almost 50 per cent, which is what we anticipated when the program was proposed.

MRS. CRIPPS: That certainly justifies Alan's contention that we would have a 50 per cent saving on toll charges made with a credit card.

MR. HYLAND: You guys just can't believe it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I didn't note the presence of Mr. Hyland. He is here, Mrs. Embury.

MRS. EMBURY: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mrs. Embury, are you content with that discussion of the savings resulting from installation of telephones in members' homes?

MRS. EMBURY: Yes, thank you. I found that information very interesting.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The next item of business arising is Minute 352. That was a concern of Mr. Hyland in regard to rents for constituency offices. He asked that it be carried forward to the next meeting because it might require lengthy discussion. I don't know exactly what Mr. Hyland has in mind there.

MR. HYLAND: All I had in mind was — and we set that a few months ago. I just wonder if it has to be done again or if it's good enough till the next budget period. If rents are

MR. STEFANIUK: From what I see coming across my desk, we're not seeing an awful lot of recent lease renewals at this time. We're seeing contracts for staff, but we're not seeing a lot of lease renewals, nor have any difficulties been brought to my attention.

MR. HYLAND: So we could be all right for this year?

MR. STEFANIUK: We could be. It's a matter that, if it needs review, can be addressed some time later in the year, as we have done in other years, and an adjustment made mid-year if necessary.

MR. HYLAND: As we did last year. That's okay then.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you're content with that, perhaps we can consider that item dealt with unless and until some indication to the contrary comes out of rents charged for renewals of leases. Is that all right? Are you content, Mrs. Embury?

MRS. EMBURY: Yes, thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The next item arising from the minutes is 356, estimates for committees, under agenda item 5(c); then 357 on life insurance, under agenda item 5(a); and 359 regarding workers' compensation, under item 6(a). The next item is 360. There was some reference to a report by the Clerk, as I understood it, with regard to accident insurance covering the travel of constituency staff between constituency offices and Edmonton.

MR. STEFANIUK: That will be forthcoming, Mr. Chairman, in conjunction with the discussion on coverage of constituency office employees on workers' compensation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Good. That completes the business arising. If we could go to agenda item 4, concerns of visitors. Our visitors are Dr. Garrison, Mr. Mandelbaum, and Mrs. Pratt. Are there any concerns you want to raise right now? Then suppose we go on to item 5(a), life insurance for members: a report by the Clerk.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, there is some documentation under item 5(a). We've reported to you the amount that would be required to provide each member of those eligible — and there are two ineligible for life insurance coverage because they are over the age of 65. The plan does not cover anyone over the age of 65. So only 77 out of 79 members would be eligible for coverage. If we were to provide maximum coverage for each of those 77 members including the maximum optional coverage, the cost to the Assembly would be \$1,429.50 per month. If it were to be brought into effect December 1, 1983, the cost for the current fiscal year would be \$5,718.

I'm advised that we do have sufficient money in the budget for 1983-84 to bring it into effect on that date. We have also taken the liberty of providing funding for the program for the fiscal year '84-85 in the budget which has already been submitted.

I have also received information to the effect that the underwriters have agreed that members could be covered under the plan that's now available to management and opted-out employees. I discussed the matter with the Minister responsible for Personnel Administration. He indicated to me that he suspected that there may be some further consideration of the question by the government caucus last week. I have no further information. Perhaps the members of the government caucus here may wish to comment on it further insofar as availability of funding and availability of program. It's very simply a case of yes, we can go ahead.

MRS. CRIPPS: A question. Would cabinet members not already be covered?

MR. STEFANIUK: Cabinet members would already be covered. But when we enter into a program providing a benefit to members, we take the attitude that we must treat all members equally regardless of whether or not they hold a cabinet post. Therefore the funding must be provided by the Legislative Assembly to every member who is eligible for a program. I would imagine that that would then take the place of any program which is presently provided to ministers by the various government departments.

MRS. CRIPPS: So in effect the additional cost would only be for some 40 members as opposed to 77.

MR. STEFANIUK: To the public purse. It's a question of where the money comes from. I think we must take the attitude that we must provide it for all members.

MR. KOWALSKI: To the Clerk, on a point of clarification. The provisions of this life insurance coverage would in essence equate what is currently provided under the management pension plan for public service.

MR. STEFANIUK: That's right. Management and opted-out employees.

MR. KOWALSKI: There are basically two or three parameters to that plan, as I recall. The level of coverage is two and a half times the annual indemnity. Is that correct?

MR. STEFANIUK: That's the option that's available.

MR. KOWALSKI: What's the mandatory aspect?

MR. STEFANIUK: One hundred per cent, or one time.

MR. KOWALSKI: What we're basically proposing here is to have the optional coverage included as well.

MR. STEFANIUK: That's right, if the member so desires. Of course if the member wants it beyond a certain amount, he must submit evidence of health and so on, must subject himself to a medical examination. There's the family coverage available as well, for spouse and dependants, which are options.

MR. KOWALSKI: So what we're basically talking about here under the dollar coverage you talked about is for the minimum coverage?

MR. STEFANIUK: Maximum.

MR. KOWALSKI: Including the optional.

MR. STEFANIUK: Including the options, having taken into consideration the 77 eligible members and the current family status of each.

MR. PURDY: What would be the extra cost to the member if a person took the plan and put his family on it?

MR. STEFANIUK: I can't answer that offhand, but it is minimal. I believe the spouse is insurable for a maximum of \$10,000 and children for either \$1,000 or \$4,000.

MR. KOWALSKI: I think the motion is in order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there any further discussion? Is there a motion?

MR. HYLAND: I'll move that we take the suggestion of the Clerk, with the maximum coverage of insurance from December 1.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, members should understand that what we will have to do is communicate with every single member, requesting that the appropriate application forms be completed. We will do that as quickly as we can.

MR. HYLAND: Would January be a better date?

MR. STEFANIUK: It would seem a little more practical to do it as of January 1 at this stage. Most of December is gone and we're into Christmas week, which slows down communication somewhat.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think it's going to be difficult to get everything in place for January 1.

MR. STEFANIUK: If we at least get the applications back for that date, we can backtrack it to January 1. The other difficulty is that the December indemnity and expense allowance cheques have already been printed. They will be available on the 23rd, by the end of this week, the result being that if we backdate it now we will have to arrange for double deductions for December. That is not an insurmountable problem if members feel they want a double deduction in January. But if we effect the program on January 1, then we can make the appropriate adjustments to the payroll for the month of January.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any further discussion?

MR. HYLAND: It doesn't make any difference to me. We could use January 1 or today's date, and that won't affect . . . The deductions can be taken January 1.

MR. STEFANIUK: Then we're into part months. I'm not sure if we can do that. I think the deductions must be in whole month sums.

MR. HYLAND: Let's go January 1 then.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So we have Mr. Hyland's motion that this plan as described by the Clerk and the supporting material under item 5(a) be put into effect starting January 1, 1984. Is there any further discussion? Is it agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The next is agenda item 5(b), under Code 200, which was withheld when we were approving our estimates. I think everyone is looking expectantly in the direction of Mr. Kowalski.

MR. KOWALSKI: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Over the past year, a number of discussion points have been raised in this committee. Certainly when both Dr. Buck and Mr. Martin were members, the point came up: the issue of travel expenses, costs incurred in travelling from residences to the provincial capital, and travel within the province of Alberta. It's a matter that struck my interest. What we've done over the

past months is investigate the existing situations throughout Canada and look at a series of alternatives.

This morning I'd like to propose to all members of Members' Services Committee a plan for action to resolve the outstanding concerns raised by so many Members of the Legislative Assembly with respect to this. I would like to propose a motion and then speak to the motion. I would like to move that effective April 1, 1984, we put in place a mileage proposal concept scheme based on the following two parameters: that members be able to claim for mileage expenses on the basis of 18 cents per kilometre for 52 round trips per year, from their place of residence to the Legislature Building; and, two, in addition to these 52 round trips, that they be able to claim travel assistance for a maximum of 15,000 kilometres per year within the province of Alberta on the basis of 18 cents per kilometre.

Just to repeat that outline. There are two phases to it. One is that members would be able to claim mileage expenses on the basis of 18 cents per kilometre for 52 round trips per year from their place of residence to the Legislature Building, plus be able to claim up to an additional maximum of 15,000 kilometres per year for travel expenses within the province of Alberta. Of course it's on business in their capacity as Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Chairman, in speaking to that, that's the basic part of the motion. I think the important aspect of it is that this kind of proposal does have a cap on it. It would be impossible at this time to determine exactly what budgeted amount should be set aside in the 1984-85 estimates with respect to it. But the suggestion I want to make is that at this time, subject to the approval of the Members' Services Committee, an endorsement of this concept, we should budget for the 1984-85 estimates an amount equal to that currently included in the estimates for the air line credit card usage factor.

Secondly, this proposal would apply to all Members of the Legislative Assembly, including those who currently have the benefit of a government automobile. If they use a private automobile — as an example, if Mr. Notley were to leave his publicly funded automobile here in the city of Edmonton and have to travel from his residence to pick up an aircraft in Grande Prairie en route to Edmonton, those miles incurred in travelling from his place of residence to the airport would be covered under this proposal.

Thirdly, it would apply — again, not to be repetitious or redundant — equally to urban members as it would to rural members.

I would suggest and ask the Clerk and his people in the next four to six weeks to look at the administrative side of this proposal. I would strongly suggest that the administrative form that would be used in ascertaining the claims from individual members be as close to or identical with the form currently used by the Legislative Assembly when members claim for mileage expenses. In essence the claim form would simply put the date down with the trip from their place of residence to Edmonton or someplace else. I think it would be unnecessary to have times, those travelling with them, and the like, included in that. I think the form we currently have in practice and have been using for a number of years is a good form. We needn't muddle it with a lot of bureaucracy that would just get lost — totally unnecessary information anyway, in my view.

Another item I think should be considered is the timing of the processing of these claims. I think it would be rather horrendous upon the Director of Administration in the Clerk's office if once a year members just simply filed one form. Perhaps we might want to consider a quarterly processing arrangement attached to this.

Those are really the broad parameters of it. Should members have additional questions, I'd be pleased to respond.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sure there'll be some questions. Mr. Purdy?

MR. PURDY: No, no questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mrs. Cripps?

MRS. CRIPPS: No, I've discussed it with Mr. Kowalski and understand.

MRS. EMBURY: The only question I have of Mr. Kowalski, Mr. Chairman, is that I imagine there was a factor of equality or something in the proposal, that it has to be equal for the urban members as well as the rural members. I'd just like to ask you the rationale for that decision. It seems to me that the needs in the rural area are quite unique. I guess what you're saying is that this still allows the rural members to have the advantage of some payment for their travel expenses, and probably the urban people will not take advantage of that. Is that right?

MR. KOWALSKI: I think, Mrs. Embury, we'll probably have to wait a year to really get the answer to that particular question. As it exists today, should you choose to travel from your place of residence in Calgary to Edmonton, you basically can use your air credit card. Under the proposal I make, however, should it be more convenient for you to travel by car, then the usage of your automobile can be claimed under the proposal I give. I think it provides the greatest degree of equity. Living in the town of Barrhead, I currently have an air line credit card. Unfortunately we have no air lines that go from Barrhead to Edmonton. However, I retain the card in the event that I have to travel to Calgary, Fort McMurray, or some other place in my capacity as a Member of the Legislative Assembly. Even though I haven't used it, I find it useful to know there is a provision that would allow me to do it. It's really on that basis of equity. Whether or not you use it, the opportunity would be there for you to use it, as the opportunity currently exists for me and other members who represent rural constituencies without scheduled air line service to in fact use the air line credit card if we have to travel from centre to centre served by air line service today.

MRS. EMBURY: Thank you very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I haven't discussed the matter with Mr. Kowalski, and I'm not sure I grasp it fully. I have a couple of questions. One is what application the proposal would have for cabinet ministers. The other is whether a rural member travelling between his home and his constituency office or an urban member travelling between home and the Legislature Building would have that sort of travel by private automobile covered.

MR. KOWALSKI: It would under the parameters I have. In fact it would be yes to both questions. To respond to the specific question with respect to a cabinet minister, I didn't use the example of a cabinet minister. I used the example of one who has basically the same status; that is, the Leader of the Opposition. So if a cabinet minister, the Member for Smoky River, were to travel from his home in Debolt to pick up an aircraft in Grande Prairie, the same thing would apply. He would be able to claim for those few kilometres he would have to put in if he were using a private automobile rather than the publicly funded one.

The second part of your question, Mr. Chairman, dealt with an urban member travelling between his home and the Legislature Building. Under the parameters of the concept I've given, that would certainly be covered.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have a further question in relation to cabinet ministers. Suppose they were travelling on combined constituency and departmental business. How would that be looked after?

MR. KOWALSKI: They would have to make the choice. I assume that in almost all



cases, they would simply use their publicly funded car, if that was a car, and just ignore this provision. If, on the other hand, as a member of Executive Council they are also undertaking responsibilities as a Member of the Legislative Assembly . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions?

MR. MANDELBAUM: Yes, I have one question. What effect would this have on the credit cards and the other provisions [inaudible]? Would this be in addition?

MR. KOWALSKI: I have real difficulty responding to questions from Mr. Mandelbaum, seeing as he isn't a member of this committee. But I'm going to exempt my point of principle and respond to him. This would be over and above. The basic reason we've looked at the 18 cents per kilometre basis is that the alternative was to eliminate the gasoline credit cards and go with what would then be a higher rate of 23.6 cents, which I think is the figure currently used by the public service. But the rough calculation I did in coming up with this is that, really, the difference of about 5.6 cents per kilometre roughly equated to what would be the costs on a per kilometre basis; so downgraded it to subtract that, which is the benefit currently obtained by the gas credit card, to arrive at the 18 cents per kilometre figure.

So very specifically, it would be over and above the gasoline credit card provision. This would be an expense-related item to cover the costs of the operation of the automobile for matters other than which is currently being provided.

MR. PURDY: Just to add to Mr. Kowalski's point, with the 15,000 kilometre limit I think a lot of members from larger constituencies will use up those 15,000 kilometres in less than a year.

MRS. CRIPPS: Oh, way less.

MR. PURDY: So they'd still have to have the capability of the gasoline credit card.

MR. HYLAND: There is that as well as — you have the 15,000 in your constituency, plus the additional into the city. But I think it's important that we then won't have to tinker with extra things, like one time we talked about steering, tires, and these kinds of repairs. That will partially cover those, and it's considerably better than what we had before.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions? Mrs. Embury?

MRS. EMBURY: No, thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As I understand Mr. Kowalski's intent, it is that the motion would be put, the matter explained, and then left for consideration for the next meeting.

MR. KOWALSKI: No. I made the motion for today, Mr. Chairman.

MR. HYLAND: Did you put a starting time on that?

MR. KOWALSKI: Yes. Effective April 1, 1984.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I assume that what we're going to have is Mr. Clegg working out a text to cover the intent, so it may be incorporated into an order of the committee. It's going to have some effect on our estimates, so item 200 would have to continue to be postponed.

MR. KOWALSKI: In the explanation I gave, I suggest that we include in the estimates for 1984-85 an amount equal to that currently in the estimates for the air travel, which I think was \$173,000. It's impossible to know what the usage of this will be, but I think it's important for us to have that item clearly identified. Should it be insufficient to cover all the expenses, we can be alerted to that in the fall of 1984. Should there be a need to raise a special warrant, then it could be raised over and above that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So as a more or less arbitrary figure, we would be adding an amount equal to what is presently included in the estimates for air travel.

MR. KOWALSKI: That's correct.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, may I request clarification for budgeting purposes. As I understand the proposed program, it would allow every member of the Assembly 18 cents per kilometre to a maximum of 15,000 kilometres per year. Is that it?

MR. KOWALSKI: That's the second part. The first part is that it allows for 18 cents per kilometre for 52 round trips per year from the member's place of residence to the provincial capital, plus up to an additional 15,000 kilometres per year for travel assistance within the province of Alberta in an individual's capacity as a Member of the Legislative Assembly. So it's really twofold. The one known reality is the maximum of 15,000 per member. One could budget for a maximum figure on that. The unknown at this point in time is whether or not all members would make use of the 52 trips per year, because only time will tell. But that would be the maximum that would be permitted.

MR. STEFANIUK: I wonder if it would be wise then, Mr. Chairman, to identify for purposes of the record the exact dollar figure which we are adding to the budget so the appropriate adjustment could be made. The amount which has already been approved for air line travel is \$172,290. The proposal is to add another identical amount for surface travel.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I take it that the motion is that this now be approved in principle and that Mr. Clegg be asked to prepare an appropriate order for approval by the committee at its next meeting.

MR. KOWALSKI: And the Clerk recognize the parameters I've given with respect to some of the items and with a request that within four to six weeks, the administrative concerns that might be raised with respect to it be brought back to us so we can rationalize and make decisions on that.

MR. STEFANIUK: Yes. And I gather that those concerns relate to the frequency of submissions, and so on.

MR. KOWALSKI: Correct, and the type.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So we have three parts to the motion. The first is that the concept be approved in principle; the second is that Mr. Clegg be asked to draft an appropriate order; the third, that the Clerk be asked to raise with the committee any administrative considerations which the committee ought to decide upon in relation to the proposal. Is that correct? Is there any further discussion?

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, I assume that the approval in principle includes the adjustment of Code 200 in the general administration budget by \$172,290.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm trying to keep this simple. Now I have four parts to the motion.

MR. STEFANIUK: I need this for the record.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I just thought I would use another motion. There's a fourth part to the motion, which is that Code 200 be approved with the addition of the amount previously mentioned, which of course matches the allowance included for air travel.

Having regard to that four-part motion, are you ready for the question? Those in favor? Opposed? Carried.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, that motion did include the approval of Code 200, which is now considered complete.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, that was the fourth part.

We come to item 5(c). You have a considerable amount of supporting material there. As you will note, this material is made up first of all by particulars under various headings, and then each category is shown as a total. The first item is Input Code LO606, Code 200, travel expenses. It provides for \$30,640 for travel to and from six meetings per year for seven members, and relates to the Members' Services Committee. As I understand the first item of the breakdown, the \$1,000 refers to travel for committees that takes place while the House is sitting. Is that what "intra" means?

MR. BLAIN: No, between sittings.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, it's "inter" then. "Intersitting committee meetings". Intra means within, and inter means between.

MRS. CRIPPS: I'd like to make a comment on travel outside the province, especially to other countries. I didn't realize it was on page 1 and on page 2.

MR. PURDY: This is for different committees, Shirley.

MRS. CRIPPS: I know, but I'm talking about committees in general.

MR. PURDY: Maybe I should explain what happened here. I asked the Clerk if he couldn't give us a proposed budget of what it would cost for this committee to go to Victoria, Toronto, or across Canada to look at other Legislatures' Members' Services Committees and how they work. This is a proposal. I think Doug has worked on the figures of what it would cost.

MRS. CRIPPS: I'm sorry. I'm on the wrong page.

MR. PURDY: This is page 1.

MRS. CRIPPS: I'm not on the right page, because I'm talking about intercountry.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Purdy, your proposal is that you want to recommend and get approval of the Members' Services Committee for an opportunity for the members of the Members' Services Committee to visit other Legislatures in the 1984-85 fiscal year, to ascertain what they're doing. You're suggesting that there be two of these overview trips taken. You have identified Regina, Toronto, Quebec City, and Victoria, but are they the four you are recommending, or are they just there as an example?

MR. PURDY: They are there as an example of the budgetary figure.

MR. KOWALSKI: What you really want is some provision in this budget to have it done.

MR. PURDY: Yes.

MR. HYLAND: On the first part, you have six meetings and seven members travelling at 18 cents a kilometre. Then further down, you have 10 members and two staff on both the proposed trips.

MR. STEFANIUK: You have Edmonton members; that's the reason for it. In that first item — Mr. Blain may want to correct me if I'm wrong in this — for the \$1,000, we're dealing with the regular meetings of the committee taking place at times when the House is not sitting and considering which members have to travel in from out of Edmonton.

MR. BLAIN: That's correct.

MR. STEFANIUK: Whereas the travel to other destinations in Canada would be by the entire committee and would affect the Edmonton members as well.

MR. BLAIN: Plus the two staff members.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there any further discussion concerning Code 200 as it relates to the Members' Services Committee?

MR. BLAIN: I might make a comment, Mr. Chairman, if the committee permits. Throughout these committee budgets, you'll find that in budgeting for airfares I have budgeted for standard economy fares. You may consider these figures to be high. However, let me point this out to the committee. I cannot budget realistically on seat sales, excursions, charters. But any committee that has had experience with my arrangements will know that I have always shopped very carefully for the best air line bargain available. Fortunately, I have — Mr. Kowalski will substantiate that on our overseas trip, when we examined all options and came down with a Wardair travel plan.

MR. KOWALSKI: Yes, we sat in the luggage compartment.

MR. BLAIN: So these fares, when you're considering them, are based on standard economy fares. But in the event, we may very well be able to take advantage of charter fares, special fares, excursion fares, seat sales, or anything else that is going.

Also, at the times these trips take place, I have no way of knowing whether there will be a fare war on or whether there will have been a substantial increase in air line fares.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there any comment, motion, question regarding page 1?

MRS. CRIPPS: I appreciate the information given. I don't know whether to make it a motion or just accept it as information, but I think consideration must be given to using excursion airfares where possible, where lead time permits. Comparative pricing must be done.

MR. STEFANIUK: I can assure Mrs. Cripps that that is done in all instances, not only committees but wherever Legislative Assembly funds travelling. Providing there is a seat sale, an excursion fare, or a charter available, those seats are taken advantage of,

whether it's in committees, in general travel, or Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. We do not, under any normal circumstances, go beyond the lowest available fare at the time. We are making every attempt to contact members well in advance of any travel that is foreseen, in order that we might take advantage of those excursion fares. Sometimes, as Mr. Blain points out, it is impossible. There are no excursion fares available. For example, if anyone were travelling right now, in the Christmas season, there are no seat sales. A committee, or anybody, may find itself in a position where travel must be decided on on very short notice. Providing some of the requirements of excursion fares, such as 14 days advance booking, cannot be met, then we must resort to the normal economy fare.

MRS. CRIPPS: Given that commitment, I won't make the motion. Otherwise, I would want to make a motion that that undertaking be . . .

MR. STEFANIUK: If we were not doing that, I suggest that we would be subjected to criticism by other authorities, including the auditors.

MRS. CRIPPS: Fine.

MR. STEFANIUK: We're very conscious of that, I can assure you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just for record purposes, it might be well to have a record of Mrs. Cripps' expression of principle, and we could come back to it after we finish dealing with page 1, under Code 200.

MR. HYLAND: The Clerk answered part of my question, related to purchase of tickets. When we know a long way ahead, especially a parliamentary thing, but we don't always know who is going to go, can those tickets be purchased without a name on them?

MR. STEFANIUK: No. Excursion tickets must have a name attached to them, and they're not transferable. That's the difficulty with some of the seat sales. What we attempt to do, wherever possible, when we're buying that kind of ticket is to also buy the cancellation insurance to protect ourselves against a potential cancellation. At one time we had an example of the Speaker having contemplated attending an executive meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, which was a long distance from Canada. We bought his ticket, along with cancellation insurance. He could not go because the House went into session, and our total cost was \$100, which was better than losing the whole thing or potentially paying the full economy fare.

So we are taking advantage of that kind of thing. I reiterate that we have been very, very conscious of this. There was an occasion when some business arose that would have taken me to Montreal. However, I was travelling to Toronto on my own, at my personal expense, and I offered to make the trip to Montreal at the differential between the Toronto and Montreal rate, which was the only thing that was charged to the Legislative Assembly, having already committed myself personally.

So we're extremely conscious of it.

MR. HYLAND: What you need from us is that we make up our minds where we're travelling ahead of time. I remember that when I went to Quebec City a couple of years ago, we phoned the booking agent — I forget where the tickets were from — because somebody had said that you go to Barbados, or I forget where, for very little extra money. At that time we were told that if we had done it far enough in advance, we could have flown there and saved the government money by paying the stopover charge. It's something that seems unbelievable, but that was the case.

MR. STEFANIUK: It works. On some of these arrangements, I've heard that for very little extra money — I'm talking in the area of \$50 — if you were flying Vancouver/Montreal, you could make a stopoff in Mexico.

MR. HYLAND: In this case, we would have saved \$100 a ticket.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, I want to react to the points put forward by Mrs. Cripps. I recognize entirely and completely that frugality has to be the watchword that has to be followed. When it comes down to air line bookings, I'm extremely satisfied, in the limited amount of experience I've had in dealing with people in the Clerk's office, particularly Mr. Blain, that the greatest degree of diligence is used.

I would caution, however, that one should not go overboard on these things. I want to relate one example to all members. Mr. Blain was not an accompanying member on a very important trip that the select committee on surface rights took several years ago to visit with various officials in California and then wanted to go to Gillette, Wyoming, to visit one of the largest open-pit mines in the world as part of our review of surface mining. We ended up in Denver, Colorado, with a charter from Denver to Gillette — on the case of frugality, booked passage on an air line known as U.S. Air. One walked onto the tarmac to transfer from the plane from Los Angeles, took one look at the air line and decided, hey, there has to be a second consideration. Having gotten on the charter air line, we were immediately told by the pilots that we had to leave all luggage behind because there was not enough power in the airplane to lift 10 people. As it turned out, the aircraft took off and took about seven minutes to get up to 1,000 feet. The luggage was on the ground and was delivered the next morning. I simply give that as an example that frugality is important, but safety is of more paramount concern.

MR. BLAIN: I was there. I was just a day ahead of you.

MR. KOWALSKI: Oh, you were. We should have left you behind, then.

MR. BLAIN: Unfortunately that was the only feeder line from Denver to Gillette.

MRS. EMBURY: Mr. Chairman, may I interrupt, if you don't mind?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think it's time you did.

MRS. EMBURY: Unfortunately I have to cancel out of the rest of the meeting, as I'm off to a funeral here in Calgary. I really regret that I'm not able to participate in more of the agenda, because there are a lot of interesting items still left.

In closing I want to say briefly that I support what Mr. Kowalski just said about expenses. If we are approving in principle trips to other Legislatures — and I heartily endorse that — I'm quite confident that we're all aware and we've all stated that we are very cognizant of the expenses. I think we should be defending the principle and not worrying about the actual — you know, the small amount of money that could come up because of changes in air prices and things like that. I heard it from the Clerk, and I'm quite sure you're aware of that.

In signing off, I'd like to wish everybody a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thank you so much for letting me participate by telephone this morning.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mrs. Embury. We heartily reciprocate your good wishes.

MRS. EMBURY: Bye for now.

MR. BLAIN: There's one other comment I might make, Mr. Chairman. In committee

travel particularly, and I'm sure in much other travel, the timing of the travel will be very, very largely dependent on the decision of the host when to receive.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. Are you content with page 1 under Code 200? Is it your wish that we should approve these page by page, or would you rather we did it at the end when we have the summary?

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, may I point out that under the heading Element, which is at the top right-hand corner of the page, these are broken down by committee. In this case, the first four pages cover the Members' Services Committee. Perhaps you would care to review them in that fashion, by committee. In any event, these costs will ultimately be spread to other budget items.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that your wish? Do we do it by committee?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 2, provision of refreshment: 12 meetings, \$35 a meeting. Are you agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 3, the estimated indemnity and expense allowances.

MR. HYLAND: Just nine members.

MR. BLAIN: The chairman doesn't claim; he's full time.

MR. HYLAND: On other committees — heritage trust fund — Mr. Notley is allowed to claim; any cabinet minister who would be on the committee is allowed to claim.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, cabinet ministers wouldn't. I don't know what Mr. Notley's practice is, but he's being paid for full time, the same as a minister.

MR. KOWALSKI: He has claimed. Well, it's a question that should perhaps be raised with him.

MR. HYLAND: Maybe that's a question that should be — maybe you're entitled to claim too.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, I'm not going to claim.

MR. HYLAND: But there's a difference between not claiming and being entitled to claim.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's academic, though, if I don't do it.

MR. HYLAND: I think that leaves others in a different spot. We should find out if somebody that is full time is . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you're being paid for full time and you're attending a committee meeting, it seems to me you're being paid double for that time. Okay?

MR. HYLAND: It's something that can be checked.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 4 is the summary, the total for Code 200, members' services. Are you agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. PURDY: I would so move.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Moved by Mr. Purdy and everyone agreed. It is so ordered.

MR. HYLAND: May I ask one question before we start Legislative Offices? I looked through this, and I didn't see — maybe it's included in this — the search committee for Ombudsman.

MR. BLAIN: No, it's not included. The reason is that it's taking place immediately. It is anticipated that the committee's tasks will be completed by the end of this fiscal year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Continuing with Code 200 and now adverting to the Legislative Offices Committee, the first page.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to raise a global question with respect to all of these. It deals with the manner in which the items have been included in previous years' estimates. It's my understanding that the number of dollars set aside for legislative committees is essentially a very minimal one put into the annual estimates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It was \$100,000.

MR. KOWALSKI: Is the request being made at this point to try to identify what the anticipated expenditures are going to be in the fiscal year so we don't have to go back for a special warrant on it?

MR. BLAIN: Just to refresh your memory, the reason for putting in \$100,000 as what I described as a realistic token is that I had very little knowledge of what would happen in the forthcoming fiscal year. However, in this particular fiscal year I have a great deal of knowledge of what will occur. This estimate covers, at the time of its preparation, all known probabilities for the fiscal year '84-85. I think it is far more desirable to submit an actual estimate than to submit \$100,000 when we are already aware that in excess of \$400,000 will be spent in the coming year. It may very well be far in excess of \$400,000 if another committee should be struck at the next session.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Legislative Offices, page 1, are you content?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 2. That's perhaps not directly a committee expense, but it certainly has to be covered.

MR. BLAIN: Yes it is, Mr. Chairman, in this particular committee. Because of their function, the expense for auditing the Auditor General's office is directly chargeable to that committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 2, okay. Page 3.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.



MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 4, the indemnity.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. PURDY: May I be excused?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 5, the wrap-up. Is there a motion.

MRS. CRIPPS: I'll move.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Moved by Mrs. Cripps, \$33,315.50. Are you agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Carried. If I understand correctly, if Mr. Purdy leaves we are without a quorum.

MR. PURDY: I'm sorry; I have to go to Priorities.

MR. KOWALSKI: What's the required number for a quorum?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Half.

MR. BLAIN: One-third.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it a third? Okay, so we're all right.

MR. PURDY: I apologize, but this meeting has gone on for some time too.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MR. PURDY: If I don't see you people, have a good Christmas.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Now we're at the Heritage Savings Trust Fund committee, page 1.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 2, hospitality. I have a question there. I'm sure it permits of an easy answer. This item on page 2 is calculated on the basis of 24 days, but on the next page we have an item calculated on the basis of 49 days.

MR. KOWALSKI: Half or more of the meetings are held in the Legislative Assembly, where coffee is available.

MR. CHAIRMAN: While the House is in session.

MR. KOWALSKI: Even if it isn't in session, coffee is always available anyway. It seemed to me that the item here, Mr. Blain, simply deals with the provision of coffee.

MR. BLAIN: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So are you content with page 2? Page 3.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 4, the wrap-up at \$116,950, is there a motion? Mrs. Cripps?

MRS. CRIPPS: No, not me. Alan.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Hyland?

MR. KOWALSKI: So move.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you agree with the motion?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Carried. Now going to the Public Accounts Committee, page 1.

MR. HYLAND: Is this a new one, Public Accounts conferences?

MR. CHAIRMAN: It has to be two members going to . . .

MR. HYLAND: The annual meeting?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think it happened this year as well, didn't it?

MR. BLAIN: Yes, this is as a result of the membership of all Public Accounts committees in the Public Accounts Committees Council. Last year was the first instance, but it will be an ongoing program.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think Mr. Martin and another member went.

MR. BLAIN: The chairman, one member of the committee, and the Clerk of Committees went.

MRS. CRIPPS: What does this mean? It's on a number of them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's just carried forward. It was photocopied that way. No other questions regarding page 1 under Public Accounts Committee? Page 2?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 3, the total.

MR. KOWALSKI: I so move.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The total, \$4,559, moved by Mr. Kowalski. Are you agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Carried. Now the Senate Reform Committee, page 1.

MR. HYLAND: They must be secretaries.

MR. BLAIN: The Senate Reform Committee, by resolution, had agreed to employ a public relations co-ordinator to take care of public relations, some research and

resource, and to assist in writing the report of the committee. I felt that this would generate some requirement for clerical support, and I recommended to the committee that we consider one-quarter of a man-year for that purpose.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it agreed?

MRS. CRIPPS: You're talking about a quarter of a year being worth \$35,000.

MR. BLAIN: No. Page 1.

MRS. CRIPPS: It says, public relations co-ordinator.

MR. BLAIN: That's right, but we're not talking about the public relations co-ordinator. We're talking about the clerical assistance.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, I think I'd like somebody to clarify for me what the traditional response and role of the Members' Service Committee has been to the request for some of these legislative committees. I have a real problem, recognizing that a legislative committee is going to hire a quarter-time person. I'm looking at this now on the global thing. My question comes back down to a very specific. I really have a concern about a committee of the Legislature hiring what's referred to as a public relations co-ordinator on a fee-for-service basis. These are committees of the Legislative Assembly; they're all colleagues, all duly elected. I have to trust that the chairman and the committee members have looked at them to be very important.

I guess my basic question is: have any of these committees turned these requests down in the past, or do we just endorse them?

MR. CHAIRMAN: There has been no dispute between the Members' Services Committee and other committees. But as Mr. Blain pointed out, this is the first year in which we aren't putting in a global figure. The committees then incur their expenses, and as long as they're approved by the chairman, they're paid. This year we're budgeting, and we have two choices: we either rubber stamp what the committee says, on the footing that they were approving their own expenses in the past without our intervention, or, since we're including the items in the estimates, we second-guess them.

MR. BLAIN: There's one other factor too, Mr. Chairman. The authority for the committee to do this resides in the motion striking the committee.

MR. KOWALSKI: The motion of the Legislative Assembly.

MR. BLAIN: Yes. I don't quarrel with any decision this committee may take. I only say that this is a committee of the Legislative Assembly; therefore it's a microcosm of the Assembly, and the Assembly speaks through the committee. I don't think anyone will disagree with that. The motion striking the committee gives the committee authority to expend funds for various purposes, of which this is one.

MR. HYLAND: This is additional. This isn't that assistance be provided out of the Clerk's office.

MR. BLAIN: No. It will be provided from committee funds.

MR. HYLAND: And this will be a different quarter-time person.

MR. BLAIN: That's right. The proposed public relations program is such that it could

quite well be done by the committee staff, except for the time involved. There's only so much we can do with the permanent staff, and therefore the permanent committee staff is fully occupied with the administrative and financial support of the committee.

MR. HYLAND: This is a 10-hour person in addition to the one that appears in number seven.

MR. BLAIN: That's correct, because of the clerical work which will be generated by this public relations program.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, it would seem that we have no other choice but to endorse whatever is being advocated by the chairman of the . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: We are the vehicle by means of which these estimates reach the Assembly for approval.

MR. BLAIN: Mr. Chairman, might I say that in relation to all other committees — in this particular case this is a special committee; therefore, the authority for the special committee is the motion striking it. For the standing committees, although there are no specific terms of reference, I consider that the same approach applies. They are committees of the Assembly and, by their very existence, are entitled to make the same decisions as a special committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't suppose it does any harm for us to look at the items anyway, just in case second thoughts arise. It makes us like a senate, I suppose.

MR. BLAIN: I would personally be very grateful, because of my input to it, if it were examined by the committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Are you content with your review of the several pages dealing with the Senate Reform Committee?

MRS. CRIPPS: I'd like to raise two points. My original concern about the cost of airfares resulted because I looked at the airfares indicated on page 2. I did some checking with travel agencies this morning and found that if excursion fares can be used, those travel costs can be cut by almost 50 per cent.

MR. BLAIN: That's right.

MRS. CRIPPS: That's the reason I raised the concern on travel. In this kind of committee, where plans are made far in advance of the travel, I think it would be possible to use excursion fares. That's one page I had some questions about.

The other is page 7. I'd like an explanation of how a public relations co-ordinator, quarter-time consideration, can possibly cost \$29,000. That's over \$100,000 a year.

MR. BLAIN: No, Shirley. The public relations co-ordinator is not quarter time; it's the clerical support which is quarter time. The public relations co-ordinator is full time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The first page is the clerical support. We haven't come to the . . .

MRS. CRIPPS: You said overall.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right.

MR. BLAIN: I'm glad to have the opportunity to explain that. The public relations coordinator — employed, as I said, by resolution of the committee — is here five days a week, the normal workday; if necessary, a 12- or 14-hour workday, at the committee's discretion. There is no overtime paid, no paid holidays.

MRS. CRIPPS: That answers my question.

MR. HYLAND: Just one quick comment; I can't resist it. I notice that the living allowance is \$250 a day out of Canada and \$125 in Canada. I notice that we happen to set our own living allowance at \$70 a day.

MR. BLAIN: That's quite true, Mr. Hyland. Your normal living allowance if you come here is \$75 a day, but if you travel with the committee your living allowance is whatever it costs you to live.

MR. HYLAND: Whatever it costs the committee — right.

MRS. CRIPPS: And that's an estimate only.

MR. BLAIN: That's right. I might add one comment in relation to your looking at different travel agencies. Without identifying myself, I checked with three separate travel agencies the standard economy rates for Australia, because that seemed to me to be a very high figure too. It was explained to me that that is indeed the case. Although we say direct Edmonton/Canberra — which is true; it is Edmonton/Canberra — we must also look at a flight to Sydney, plus a feeder flight to Canberra. I'm sure you're very familiar with that.

MRS. CRIPPS: It's \$102 difference between Canberra and Sydney. I got that this morning.

MR. BLAIN: Yes, that's true. It's not a great distance, but you're looking at 10 people.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, may I just comment on a flight such as Edmonton/Australia — wherever in Australia. I'm not sure what the flight time is, but I'm sure it's many, many hours — 17 or 18 hours.

MR. BLAIN: Yes, 18 hours.

MR. STEFANIUK: I think what must be considered — going back to what Mr. Kowalski mentioned earlier — is the reasonable comfort and expectations of a member of the committee. Should he be allowed a stopover? I think it is general practice in the case of flights that are that long that somewhere along the line, he needs to stop overnight for a breather. There is the time adjustment. What this does to people physically is just incredible. So all those factors considered, we may be into an economy fare for that kind of flight. To expect someone to fly for 18 hours and arrive at their destination and immediately begin to work is probably unreasonable.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's less a question of comfort than it is to be fit for work when you get there.

MR. BLAIN: We can look at this in every instance, but if you'll note the time frame for some of these trips — 10 days is allowed for the Canberra trip. It may very well be. As you know, most excursions and charters have conditions attached — a 14-day minimum. We may be able to find someone with a seven-day minimum at the right time . . .

MRS. CRIPPS: They are seven; I checked.

MR. BLAIN: ... if it fits in with the travel plans and the reception by the host, et cetera.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, may I just raise one other matter with respect to this overseas travel or out-of-Canada travel, in fact out-of-Alberta travel. Mr. Blain, do you know if the chairman and members of the Senate Reform Committee considered the alternative of perhaps inviting someone from Canberra, Cologne, or London to visit Edmonton and appear before the committee rather than the committee going over there?

MR. BLAIN: No I don't. I'm not aware of that. The instructions that were given to me and the discussions I held were based on this, but that's a very good point. It's also a very strong professional recommendation that in many instances it's much cheaper to have someone come to the committee than to have the committee go to them.

MR. KOWALSKI: I appreciate that, and I guess the only alternative a Member of the Legislative Assembly has is to raise that, within the context of the debate or discussion in the Legislative Assembly, with those members who are on the committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Especially when the estimates come up.

MR. KOWALSKI: Correct.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So we have the summing-up for the Senate Reform Committee on page 11 of the material relating to that committee at \$292,761. Is there a motion?

MR. HYLAND: I'll move.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any further discussion? Those in favor? Opposed? Carried. Now, we have an overall total for Code 200, which is shown on your foolscap summing-up sheet at the end. If I understand these figures correctly, it's \$481,905.

MR. BLAIN: That's correct, Mr. Chairman.

MRS. CRIPPS: That's on the basis of a more realistic estimate than we've had in the past.

MR. BLAIN: That's correct, as I've explained to you. If I could repeat myself without boring you, we wouldn't look well at all to put in \$100,000 knowing that this amount is already required.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, and we're just inviting a special warrant.

MR. BLAIN: Nor can I guarantee, of course, that no special warrant will be required.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Depending on what our forecast of committee activity might be, how it fits in with what happens. So that has been approved.

MR. STEFANIUK: I don't think we had a motion on the overall figure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I thought we did.

MR. BLAIN: Mrs. Cripps said "agreed".

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, I had a motion by Mr. Hyland.

MR. STEFANIUK: We had a motion on the Senate Reform Committee.

MR. HYLAND: That was Senate Reform.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, I thought we had a . . . I mentioned the figure.

MR. HYLAND: I can make the motion for the whole thing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Mr. Hyland on the \$481,905 for Code 200. Those in favor? Opposed? Carried.

MRS. CRIPPS: I'd like to make my motion, Mr. Chairman. The motion should read: that in travel by legislative committees, consideration be given to the use of excursion airfares where possible — that is, where time and conditions permit — and that comparative prices be obtained for that travel.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could we inject the word "continue" in that motion, because that in fact is the present practice; otherwise it looks like an innovation.

MRS. CRIPPS: Okay. That consideration continue to be given . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: . . . as in the past, to obtaining excursion airfares, with insurance, where applicable . . .

MRS. CRIPPS: . . . where time and conditions permit, and that comparative prices continue to be obtained.

MR. BLAIN: May I ask a question? Is there a reason why the motion applies only to committees? Should it not apply to all Assembly travel?

MRS. CRIPPS: Okay. Change it to Assembly travel.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All Assembly travel? Okay. Is there any further discussion? I take it that this is a confirmation of principle.

MRS. CRIPPS: That's right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Carried.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, before we leave item 5, I believe that with the conclusion of item 5(c) the committee's review of the estimates for 1984-85 is complete. For the record, could we perhaps have a motion to approve the estimates of the Legislative Assembly for 1984-85, subject to such adjustments as were made by the committee today.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, while that motion may be very much in order, I would

sure like to know what the bottom line now is as a result of all our adjustments and discussions this morning.

MR. STEFANIUK: We haven't prepared the summary sheets, because these items have been pending.

MR. KOWALSKI: I wonder if I might suggest . . .

MR. STEFANIUK: We've prepared summaries for various components as decisions were made.

MR. KOWALSKI: Because of the very excellent work in terms of advancing the estimates of the Legislative Assembly for the 1984-85 fiscal year compared to last year, in terms of a whole series of reasons, I am . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: That wasn't a question of service; that was a question of an election [inaudible] events.

MR. KOWALSKI: I'm just really pleased with the way we've done it this year, and I recognize that there were other circumstances last year. I would very much like to have the package reassembled and perhaps meet in a month's time, or something, and give it the last go.

MR. STEFANIUK: I have a difficulty with that, Mr. Chairman, in that the estimates are usually required for printing very early in the new year, and it's time we submitted them to Treasury.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We could possibly have a telephone . . .

MR. HYLAND: When is somebody scheduled to go to Priorities with it?

MR. STEFANIUK: These estimates do not go to Priorities.

MR. KOWALSKI: Correct.

MR. STEFANIUK: They are transmitted directly by the Speaker to the Provincial Treasurer. We have been asked to have our estimates in the hands of the Provincial Treasurer even prior to this date, so we are already late.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But it seems to me that since we have approved each item, we have in fact approved the total. To approve the total in addition to that, although it has been customary, is really a matter of form, not of substance. Without any further motion, I think we have approved all the items.

My suggestion would be that at the next meeting, which could perhaps be a telephone meeting, we might put that motion to the committee by way of formality and that in the meantime, the estimates could go to the Treasurer. Do you agree?

MR. STEFANIUK: I have some figures, as submitted by the Director of Administration, in front of me. As you can see from the general summary sheets which are in the books, the estimates as presented showed a requirement for \$11,637,457. With the revisions that had taken place up to the last meeting, the requirement was \$11,857,753. As of today, we are required to add to that figure the amount which was added under general administration for transportation, which is \$172,290, and the amount just approved for committees, which is \$481,905.



MR. KOWALSKI: I get a rough figure of \$12,522,000 when you add today's two approvals for \$482,000 and \$173,000 to \$11,857,000. I guess the basic question I would have is, is it comparative to the actual for last year?

MRS. CRIPPS: What was the actual last year?

MR. STEFANIUK: We don't have an actual except back to 1982-83. What we have for '83-84 is a forecast, and on the submissions we were showing that forecast as \$11,193,599. But that figure is inaccurate in that it did not foresee particularly some of the committee activity which we have been directed by the House to undertake since these estimates were formulated. These were prepared in September. So the fall sittings and the direction given relative to two major committees, the one searching for the Ombudsman and the other on Senate reform, which has already been established and has begun its work — the expenses to be incurred by those committees in this current fiscal year were not foreseen when we came up with the figure of \$11,561,000, and that will have to be adjusted now as well.

MRS. CRIPPS: What about Heritage Savings Trust Fund? Was that included in that estimate?

MR. STEFANIUK: In the forecast.

MR. BLAIN: The forecast included in today's estimates?

MR. STEFANIUK: No, for last year. When we submitted this original proposal to the Members' Services Committee in September, did that proposal foresee the Heritage Savings Trust Fund?

MR. BLAIN: No, because I wasn't aware of it at that time.

MR. STEFANIUK: You see, under committees, when we gave you the original proposal, our forecast input for 1983-84 was \$246,000. Now our forecast input for '83-84 is \$346,000.

MR. BLAIN: And it may very well be higher. Again, I don't yet know.

MR. STEFANIUK: The simple answer is that we will have to be looking for a special warrant to cover us in our committee activity for the balance of this fiscal year. Then the comparison of the proposed estimate will include the dollars granted by special warrant.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As I see it, the situation we are in is that there is not a valid basis of comparison between the current fiscal year and the one for which we're budgeting.

MR. STEFANIUK: We anticipate having to apply for the special warrant very, very early in the new year, for the very simple reason that we will be getting to the stage where we have exhausted our cash. Therefore we'll need the warrant to carry us.

MR. BLAIN: We'll have a very substantial requirement, because of course we'll have to fund the Ombudsman search completely, there'll be considerable activity by the Senate committee in the balance of this fiscal year, and there has been and will be more activity by the workers' compensation committee in the balance of this fiscal year. So I suspect that that will add up to the neighborhood of \$150,000.

MRS. CRIPPS: I have a question. You said there would be considerable activity by the Senate Reform Committee this year.

MR. BLAIN: Yes.

MRS. CRIPPS: Is the budget we've received for the Senate Reform Committee, as proposed, their total budget as you understand it — would the activity that they undertake this year be deleted from the amount?

MR. STEFANIUK: What you approved today is the '84-85 budget.

MR. BLAIN: What you've been provided with today is the budget for the cost of their activities in the new fiscal year. The cost of their activities in the current fiscal year will be described to support the application for special warrant.

MRS. CRIPPS: Fine.

MR. KOWALSKI: So basically it's unknown to determine what this year's is, but it will probably be in the neighborhood of 11.5, 11.6, or 11.7 for the '83-84 fiscal year.

MRS. CRIPPS: You said probably 11.7?

MR. STEFANIUK: Probably. I see it being closer to what Mr. Blain has just given us: \$150,000 in the current fiscal year. I see it being closer to 11.7.

MR. KOWALSKI: I just wanted to feel comfortable with those figures. Then looking at projecting into 1984-85, one of the major cost increases will be the implementation of a specific committee budget of \$482,000 added on to that. These percentages are not particularly important to me, but there is a perception that sometimes occurs with looking at some of these percentages.

MR. STEFANIUK: As you see, the original submission was for an increase of .65 per cent, less than 1 per cent. However, the House having made its decisions in respect of special committees, that is obviously distorted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This committee is obviously concerned with frugality and economy. In view of the specific funding we're now formally approving for other committees, it seems to me that perhaps we've reached a point where we should separate from the funding for other committees, the funding for the Legislative Assembly and this committee, since those are the only things concerning which we have real jurisdiction. We have no jurisdiction with regard to other committees, and it seems to me that we should seriously consider setting up the figures in such a way that we have two categories: one relating to the Legislative Assembly itself and its administration, plus the costs related to the activities of the Members' Services Committee, and the other category would be all the other committees of the House, since within the authorization given them by the House, in effect they set their own budgets.

MR. KOWALSKI: I would certainly strongly endorse that, Mr. Chairman; I really, really would.

MR. BLAIN: That's an excellent point, Mr. Chairman, and it's a point that I had already considered with Mr. Clegg on the grounds that the Legislative Assembly Act says that this committee shall prepare a budget for the operation of the Legislative Assembly and

the Legislative Assembly office. The question we had some difficulty with: does the Legislative Assembly office include committees? It certainly would include funds expended on behalf of committees, but does preparing that budget automatically prepare the committee budgets? I'm very gratified to hear you say that, because it was a point that was exercising my mind.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't think we need a motion to that effect; I think we'll just go ahead and set it up that way.

MRS. CRIPPS: You mean that the committee budgets will just be shown independent of the Legislative Assembly budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Except for this committee, because we have jurisdiction over our own budget and also of course with regard to the administration of the Assembly and services to members, but we don't have jurisdiction over the budgets of other committees. It seems to me that we should separate those items and totals for which we have jurisdiction and responsibility from those for which we do not.

MR. STEFANIUK: As part of the overall submission, Mr. Chairman, we also include certain items which are statutory and over which the committee has no control. For example, members' indemnity is an item which stands for an increase of 4.61 per cent. The committee has virtually no control at all over that item. Yet over those items which we do control, such as general administration, the proposal was for a decrease of 2.3 per cent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, can I ask two additional questions, please?

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right.

MR. KOWALSKI: Included here is the dollar figure for the life insurance coverage.

MR. STEFANIUK: Yes.

MR. KOWALSKI: That's been done. Okay. Number two is a clarification of the last point you made. Under the rules of the Legislative Assembly Act, in reading the rule in terms of the adjustment of members' indemnities, my interpretation is that there will be zero per cent in January 1984 on the basis of the cost of living parameters.

MR. STEFANIUK: If the cost of living index was less than 5 per cent, then there will be no increase. However, that is cumulative. For example, if the cost of living increase in the year ending 1983 was 3 per cent, and there should be an additional 2 per cent in the cost of living in 1984, then an increase will be forthcoming in 1985.

MR. KOWALSKI: The way it sits right now is that there should be zero per cent in 1984.

MR. STEFANIUK: We haven't yet got the cost of living index.

MR. KOWALSKI: My next question: who determines this?

MR. STEFANIUK: We receive the information from the Treasury.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay?

MR. BLAIN: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to thank you very much for examining the committee's budget, because I've worked at it very hard. I'm grateful that it was examined carefully and that you support my conclusions. Also, for your information I have a very heavy schedule for the rest of the day, and I'd like to be excused at this point.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's just one thing. Have the figures which we were just given under Code 200 for committees other than this one been approved by those other committees?

MR. BLAIN: Yes they have.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I see. Thank you.

MR. BLAIN: So I take it I may be excused?

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. That covers item 5.

Item 6: 6(a) was an item raised by Mr. Purdy. He's not here, but it also arises from Minute 359 of this year. Perhaps you'd like to refer to that for a moment. The supporting material under 6(a) refers to workers' compensation coverage of people who are in the service of the Legislative Assembly. You'll see that there's a so-called directive by the Public Service Commissioner dated June 21, 1976, which apparently is still in effect. Under item 2 of that directive, sub-items (1) and (2), my interpretation is that neither of those applies to constituency office staff. In other words, I don't see this directive as being applicable to constituency office staff.

MRS. CRIPPS: So you mean they're not covered.

MR. STEFANIUK: They're not covered under workers' compensation, because they are fee-for-service contractors.

MRS. CRIPPS: That master/servant relationship is reprehensible.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's the time-honored, 200-year-old expression.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, you will recall that the discussion at the last meeting related to the question of whether or not constituency office personnel were covered by workers' compensation. We felt at that time that they were not, and we have confirmation of that now.

The next question arose relative to provision of special insurance coverage for constituency office personnel who may be required to travel from the constituency to Edmonton in the program that was proposed by the members of the committee. We have encountered something of a difficulty with that particular proposal relative to providing insurance coverage for a fee-for-service contractor. That difficulty relates to their status as fee-for-service contractors in the eyes of Revenue Canada. At the moment we have a very simple and clean-cut arrangement with fee-for-service contractors: they are self-employed. The moment that we begin to provide any kind of benefit for them, we would anticipate that Revenue Canada would regard them as public servants of the province of Alberta, in which case, if we were to regard them as public servants, we

would lose the benefit of many of the rates which are paid to the fee-for-service contractors in constituency offices. Those fees at the moment are considerably lower in many instances than the fees we would be required to pay were they to become public servants.

The net effect of that would likely be a deficiency in the budgets available to each Member of the Legislative Assembly for the establishment and operation of a constituency office. The minimal fee which is payable under the arrangements which are presently held between the public service of Alberta and the Alberta union of public employees, which applies as well to excluded employees, is \$7.13 an hour. In many instances we are contracting employees in constituency offices at considerably less than that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It seems to me that the definitions used by the federal government in regard to who is public service and who isn't are not applicable to arrangements made by the Assembly except insofar as they may affect income tax deductions at the source. So I don't think that definition really causes us any problem or does us any good.

With regard to this workers' compensation directive, I think we should look at what it actually says. The second page, under 6(a), says that the provincial government is not responsible for workers' compensation coverage in the following cases. That's the provincial government — I assume what is really meant there is the Workers' Compensation Board — is not responsible. In other words these are exceptions, but our constituency office staff do not come within either of those exceptions. As I mentioned in the beginning, those exceptions are not relevant.

The first exception, sub-item (1), says: "a person hired on Contract or Fee for Service [basis] is an Employer or the worker of an Employer in a firm . . ." They are not either employers or workers of employers in a firm, so that exception does not apply to constituency office staff.

Item (2) says: "Where a person hired on Contract or Fee for Service is considered to be 'self-employed . . ." They are not self-employed either, so they don't come under the second exception.

So in effect what arises from this directive is that the directive tells us two categories of people who are not covered by workers' compensation. Neither of those categories applies to constituency office people. If there were to be any conclusion reached from this at all, it would be that they are covered. But I don't think you can draw that conclusion, because it only says who is not covered; the directive does not say who is covered.

MRS. CRIPPS: With your explanation I really have a problem, because if I have a constituent who has a gravel truck, for instance, and is self-employed, he must be covered. He not only must be covered, he must have a credit in the compensation office before he can get paid for the work he has done.

MR. HYLAND: He may be covered.

MRS. CRIPPS: No sir, he must be. They don't . . .

MR. HYLAND: Not any more. He may be.

MRS. CRIPPS: No. If he hasn't got a credit account in the workers' compensation office, then the company he is working for must withhold compensation.

MR. HYLAND: Oh, okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dues.

MRS. CRIPPS: That's right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If they don't, they may have to pay twice.

MR. HYLAND: We removed that legislation two years ago . . .

MRS. CRIPPS: I don't care.

MR. HYLAND: . . . and then there was a big hassle about it. In any case, if he's a single independent operator, he has the choice.

MRS. CRIPPS: No he doesn't. I went through that whole hassle this summer, Alan.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In any case, with respect, Shirley, I don't think many constituency office staff people are hauling gravel.

MRS. CRIPPS: Well, regardless, my point is that what's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But my suggestion would be that we go beyond this. I don't think we're going to be able to settle this here this morning. We're just a bare quorum anyway. My suggestion would be that we go beyond this and ask the Clerk to take up with the Workers' Compensation Board the question of compensation coverage for constituency office staff. There may be other factors arising from that which we may have to consider and of which we are presently not aware.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, on your interpretation of sub-item (2) of item 2 in this directive, relative to constituency office personnel being considered self-employed, our contract with those people in fact regards them as being self-employed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I question that because they accept direction. A self-employed contractor decides his or her own hours and method of work and so on, whereas these people are really serving in a clerical or secretarial capacity and are accepting direction as to how and when their work is done from the member whose office they work in. So they are not independent contractors in the ordinary sense.

MR. STEFANIUK: I realize they're not that in the ordinary sense.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This second thing here, as Shirley points out, would cover gravel truck operators, for example. So what we really have here is a directive that says who is not covered. It doesn't tell us whether constituency office staff are covered. My suggestion to the committee would be that we ask the Clerk to explore the matter further directly with the Workers' Compensation Board. Then we'll report to the committee. Depending on when the next meeting is, if we can send you a report ahead of time you'll have had a chance to consider it before we include it in the support items for the next meeting. Is that agreed?

MR. KOWALSKI: Agreed, Mr. Chairman. I think it would also be in order, pending a resolution to this problem, which appears to be irresolvable . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not really.

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, okay. Perhaps it would also be in order, though, that a memo be

sent to all members advising them, as the current practice is, that their office people would not be covered by WCB benefits in the event. So at least it would be clarified.

MR. CHAIRMAN: May I suggest that that's not conclusive from this and that such a memorandum might await at least an initial discussion by the Clerk with the Workers' Compensation Board.

MR. KOWALSKI: I'll defer to your legal analysis of the matter.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no. If he says you're not covered, we're taking a meaning out of this thing which it won't support.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, I think we need another lawyer; then we would have three opinions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sometimes you can get five opinions from three lawyers. I've given two at a time myself, and ask the client to take his choice.

Can we go on to committee orders, item 6(b)? There was a question of retroactivity there. It isn't resolved by the supporting material, but perhaps there's something further. I wondered whether Mr. Clegg had expressed himself on this point, and if so . . .

MR. STEFANIUK: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No?

DR. GARRISON: Mr. Chairman, there was an exchange of memos with Mr. Clegg, and those memos were given to the committee at the last meeting.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh yes.

DR. GARRISON: The gist of it was that this order, which was approved on October 26, didn't have a retroactivity provision in it, and the previous order that was approved that same day did have one. Mr. Clegg indicated that that was simply an oversight. He indicated also that it wasn't really necessary to put a retroactivity provision in here, but it would be neater if one were in there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For consistency.

DR. GARRISON: Right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So where does that put us? We have no text before us at the moment on the basis of which we can amend this order by adding express retroactivity. So we should have such a text available for the next meeting.

DR. GARRISON: The clause was in the previous order, which was passed at the same meeting. It simply said: this order is retroactive to April 1, 1983, the beginning of the fiscal year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So does that mean that we add a section 3 to the order and say: this order is effective as of April 30, did you say?

DR. GARRISON: April 1.

MR. CHAIRMAN: April 1, 1983. Can we deal with it in that fashion?

DR. GARRISON: I think that was explained in the memo.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you look under item 6(b), you'll notice there are two sheets. One has the usual formal introductory wording for an order, and the second one, by way of an appendix to the first, is the order itself. If you now agree, what we could do is add a section 3 to the order itself by saying: this order is effective April 1, 1983. Is there a motion?

MR. HYLAND: I'll move.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there any further discussion? Are you agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is so ordered. Now, item 7.

MR. HYLAND: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Agreed to what?

MR. HYLAND: Agreed that we supply it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In my mind there was a bit of doubt here — I hesitate to use the word "confusion". Mr. Appleby, in his memo of October 25, said simply that funding for coffee was "not provided under presently existing guidelines". In the second paragraph, he proposes to use his communications allowance for coffee. Then there was reference in the supporting material, which Mr. Appleby attached to his October 25 memo, to the promotional allowance. Perhaps we should sort it out. It would seem to me that although we have melded three allowances together — the constituency office allowance, the communications allowance, and the promotional allowance — perhaps we might put this under the constituency office allowance, because it seems to be part of the ordinary cost of operating a constituency office unless you're going to export the coffee around the constituency.

MR. HYLAND: If we start — and I know that between my secretary and I, we've been paying for coffee out of our own pocket. If everybody takes it out of their communications allowance — I don't know what it costs to make up a cheque, but I suspect that your administration cost of preparing the cheque is going to cost you more than what you're putting in for coffee. It's probably cheaper just to supply it to the constituency offices wherever and get it over with, and do it as a cost to the office.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Maybe the Clerk could tell us whether administratively this could be included in the operating costs of the constituency office.

MR. STEFANIUK: It depends on what commitments. I can't make a general statement, because the commitments are different in each office, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Suppose it were included in office supplies, which include erasers and ball pens and paper and stuff like that.

MR. STEFANIUK: Office supplies are requested from the head office, if you like, and we ship those supplies and charge the cost of them to the constituency office. They are rarely, if ever, purchased at the local level.



MR. CHAIRMAN: In other words, the member doesn't run out to the nearby stationer's to get himself a supply of ball pens.

MR. STEFANIUK: That's right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But we don't want to be stocking coffee here, do we, and sending it out?

MR. STEFANIUK: No we don't.

MR. HYLAND: All those supplies aren't out of general service; they're all against constituency office?

MR. STEFANIUK: That's right.

MR. HYLAND: So in some cases you'd be better — except you get into that same thing of the cost of the cheque — just to buy them locally and bill once a year or something.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You know, it seems to me we'd have to word this extremely carefully. Otherwise we're going to have wine and cheese parties held out of the communications allowance, outside the constituency office or in it.

MRS. CRIPPS: I personally can't see that coffee is a big enough expense item to warrant inclusion.

MR. KOWALSKI: I agree, and I'd like to move that we defer this item for future resolution.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could I attach to that motion a very respectful suggestion that some members of the committee might wish to discuss this with Mr. Appleby? So it's moved by Mr. Kowalski that the item be tabled for the time being. Is that agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. HYLAND: No, but that's okay; I'm outvoted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sorry?

MR. HYLAND: I said "no", but that's okay; I'm outvoted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's open for discussion. We don't have to put the question. What would you like to say about it?

MR. HYLAND: We've had this from Frank for how long?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Months.

MR. HYLAND: Why don't we either just throw it out or do it, one or the other.

MR. KOWALSKI: We've only had it for one meeting, in all fairness, Alan. It's dated October 25, 1983.

MR. HYLAND: It seems like it was more than that. Maybe he's talked about it for

longer than that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If there were some tidy way . . .

MR. HYLAND: What about the suggestion of it being just written down as one of the expenses towards a constituency office?

MR. CHAIRMAN: As the Clerk points out, the supplies all come from here; they're not bought locally.

MR. HYLAND: But they don't necessarily have to, do they?

MRS. CRIPPS: They send in bills, don't they?

MR. STEFANIUK: Yes, occasionally they do.

MR. HYLAND: So you could do it either way.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So could it be dealt with on the basis that it would be paid for locally and billed along with other constituency office expenses?

MR. HYLAND: You have a lot of these outfits whose business is to supply a coffee machine and coffee. Some of the prices are pretty reasonable. One bill once a year, and it would be done.

MR. KOWALSKI: Perhaps, Mr. Chairman, can I withdraw my motion and make the motion that Mr. Hyland undertake a review of this matter and report back to the committee at the next meeting.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We can't really conscript him for that purpose.

MR. KOWALSKI: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But if he agrees . . .

MR. KOWALSKI: If the members here agree to it, he will be.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Every one of these things involves tax dollars and the scrutiny which applies to tax dollars. What responsibility, for example, will the Director of Administration have when these bills come in? Does she count cups of coffee and say: my gosh, in Pincher Creek they couldn't possibly have drunk that much coffee; it would have floated the whole town.

MR. HYLAND: It's the same thing the minute you write in for note pads. Does Ken do more doodles on note pads than I do, so he goes through twice as many?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right now he's writing on the table. That saves paper.

MR. KOWALSKI: Do what I do. Every time I go back to Barrhead, I take two pots of coffee and a thermos and use it for the rest of the week.

MR. HYLAND: That's because I don't drink coffee upstairs, so our allotment doesn't . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: On the other hand, it could be an appreciable expense item.

MR. HYLAND: I'll find out what the costs are.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's been moved by Mr. Kowalski that Mr. Hyland look into this matter and report back to the next meeting. Are you agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is so ordered.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mine is a pound a month.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Number 8: Legislative Assembly envelopes. The support material is a memo from Mrs. Pratt to Miss Blaney dated August 19, 1983, with attachments. What it involves is provision on the envelopes we supply to members for each member to put in his or her name and/or return address apart from the Clerk's office, which is now the return address.

I must say that the use of the Clerk's office as a return address has uncovered certain usages of envelopes which we might otherwise not have become aware of. As I see it, there's nothing to prevent the present kind of envelope from being provided with a separate return address.

MRS. PRATT: We usually put the return address stamp individually on each envelope. I just thought it would be nice to have something that said "Member of the Legislative Assembly" printed there. It's no big deal.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The only thing is that in cases where that was overlooked, there wouldn't be any return address unless the post office considered Legislative Assembly as a sufficient return address.

MRS. PRATT: But if the name were typed in, the mail room knows which room each member is in.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, but I'm saying suppose . . .

MRS. PRATT: Oh, suppose the name weren't.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Suppose it isn't; suppose we provide the blanks with no return address on the assumption that it will always be provided, and occasionally it isn't. Then those things would go possibly to the dead letter office.

MR. HYLAND: Maybe some people write a lot more letters than I do, but two years ago I got stationery printed up with Cypress constituency on it, and I'm still using it. I suppose if you're writing 200 or 300 letters on three or four subjects five times a year — but if one wants personalized letterhead, I think you can get it through your communications allowance. If you're writing a lot of letters on various subjects, your population should be higher so you should be able — you know, if you want to personalize it, there should be sufficient funds out of communications allowance to do it.

MRS. CRIPPS: I'm just looking at the letterhead that is included for our inspection here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Envelope.

MRS. CRIPPS: The envelope. It appears to me that you would still have the return

address regardless of whether or not the member's name is included. If the member doesn't bother to include their name . . .

MRS. PRATT: It still says Legislature Building.

MRS. CRIPPS: That's right. So I can't see any real problem in its going to the Clerk's office if I didn't include my name above there. It wouldn't make any difference really, would it?

MR. MANDELBAUM: That's exactly the point I wanted to make.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I overlooked that; I'm sorry. Is there a motion?

MRS. CRIPPS: Is there any difference in cost? I presume we would use up all the letterhead we have.

MRS. PRATT: I was wondering how much we had.

MR. STEFANIUK: I would hope, Mr. Chairman, that the motion would include that, if there were to be a new envelope decided upon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just for new orders.

MR. STEFANIUK: Yes, that when present stocks are exhausted . . . The costs? Yes, because all members and the office of the Legislative Assembly and so on use one envelope in common. If we were to provide a special envelope, then the quantities of each type would obviously be lower and the costs would increase at least slightly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there a motion? Do you want to deal with it or drop it?

MR. HYLAND: The cost difference isn't going to be that great in those kinds of numbers anyway.

MRS. CRIPPS: You're talking now of difference in cost. You're suggesting that the members would type in their name; it wouldn't be preprinted.

MRS. PRATT: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Or stamp it in.

MRS. CRIPPS: Or stamp it in.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And where they didn't, [inaudible] likely come to that.

MRS. CRIPPS: I'm easy on it.

MR. HYLAND: Make the motion then, Shirley.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think it should be assessed on the basis of whether or not it's going to be a convenience or advantage to the members. If it is, it's what we as the Members' Services Committee should be interested in. If it isn't going to make any difference to the members, then we can drop it.

MRS. CRIPPS: I would like more input from members personally. I can't see that it's . . .

MR. HYLAND: I would doubt if it would make a difference of a tenth of a cent an envelope, if that.

MR. KOWALSKI: We're talking here about just allowing a readjustment of the printing on the envelope so that person's name could be printed in?

MRS. PRATT: Plus it says "Member of the Legislative Assembly".

MR. CHAIRMAN: It would be a directive; we'd have to follow it in our administration. Suppose we were to ask Mrs. Pratt to ask some of the members whether they would like that change, and perhaps she could report to the Clerk and me. According to the answer, we could bring it up or not bring it up at the next meeting. Is that all right?

MR. HYLAND: If you're going to go that route, maybe we could say that if members want it that way let's go with it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Instead of bringing it up again. All right. The opposition has been asked about it, and I don't think they have any objection. They're not troubled either way as far as I can understand. So it's been agreed that Mrs. Pratt will ask the government members and will report back and, according to the consensus, we'll change or not change as has been proposed under item 8 of today's agenda.

Subscription rates for Hansard and Votes and Orders: these rates have not been changed since 1972. We're still charging \$15 for a Hansard subscription.

MR. HYLAND: How many subscriptions do we actually have out?

MR. STEFANIUK: Four hundred and thirty-four.

MR. HYLAND: It's not a best seller, is it?

MR. KOWALSKI: I agree we should study the review of it, and ask that we defer it for a decision.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Suppose we prepare a — I'm not sure I have all the supporting material. Oh yes, there's the Clerk's memo to me of September 29. Do you want to defer it? There isn't going to be any Hansard put out between now and probably sometime in March anyway, so should we put it on the agenda for the next meeting and move it higher up?

MR. STEFANIUK: The only difficulty is, Mr. Chairman, that we take subscription rates on an annual basis.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, that's right, a calendar year basis. It would seem to me that . . .

MR. HYLAND: How much does Ontario charge?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We haven't got Ontario here, have we?

MR. STEFANIUK: Yes we do.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Where is it?

MR. STEFANIUK: Third paragraph.

MR. HYLAND: No matter what you charge for it, it nowhere near covers the cost.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No question. It would still be taxpayer subsidized. Ontario is \$50. If we were to double, we'd be equal to British Columbia, Quebec, New Brunswick, and Yukon.

MR. HYLAND: I'll move that we double it. We're still not going to make that much difference on it, but . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: For some members who provide Hansards, it will come out of their communications allowance. But the total cost isn't going to make any real difference to the taxpayer. It's really just changing pockets to some extent, that's all.

There's a motion by Mr. Hyland that a Hansard subscription be increased to \$30. Would it be part of that motion that the new rate would apply to all new subscriptions received henceforth?

MR. HYLAND: You'd better not say "new subscriptions"; you'd better say "subscriptions".

MR. CHAIRMAN: All renewals. New and renewal. We'd have to send out notice to the existing subscribers.

MR. KOWALSKI: We're going to have a vote first, aren't we?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, I'm just trying to get the motion clarified. Is there any further discussion? Those in favor of the motion by Mr. Hyland? Opposed? Two to one. Under the circumstances do you want the resolution to stand, or would you prefer to leave it open until we have a larger . . .

MRS. CRIPPS: What's your rationale, Ken?

MR. KOWALSKI: If there are only 434 people in the province of Alberta who are interested enough to read Hansard, I would like to encourage them more to read Hansard. One way of encouraging is not by raising the price. No matter what price you charge, it's still going to become a deficit funding on behalf of the Legislative Assembly.

MR. STEFANIUK: I should point out, Mr. Chairman, that since writing the memo to you, it has come to my attention that we've run into an additional problem with Canada Post, who have taken the view, in light of the fact that the first responsibility of the Legislative Assembly is not to publish, that we are compelled to pay first-class rates on mailings henceforth and we no longer classify for fourth-class mailing. I advised you of some correspondence that had been exchanged on that subject. Relative to Hansard, you will note that the memo says that we have a deficiency even in the postage. We have a deficiency in excess of \$5,000 for postage alone in the case of Hansard, and that deficiency is likely to increase in light of Canada Post's current view. The decision is obviously that we just feel it's incumbent on us to bring this situation to the attention of the committee. If the decision is to subsidize wholly, in part, then fine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What's the present bulk mailing postage per issue per number?

MR. STEFANIUK: It works out to very — well, we're now up against first class.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I know, but what's it before that?

MR. STEFANIUK: We were into fourth class.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And that was how much per number?

MR. STEFANIUK: Oh, very considerably less.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Eleven cents, is it?

MR. STEFANIUK: Something like that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I thought it was 11.

MRS. CRIPPS: First class would be over a dollar, wouldn't it?

MR. STEFANIUK: Thirty-two cents.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MRS. CRIPPS: The weight — it's heavier.

MR. STEFANIUK: Yes, the weight.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It depends on how much the members talk. If they make very weighty remarks . . .

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Chairman, on that point of postage, could consideration be given to sending it out by courier anywhere possible? Wouldn't that be far cheaper?

MR. KOWALSKI: It would be more money.

MRS. CRIPPS: Or is that more expensive?

MR. STEFANIUK: That would probably be more expensive.

MRS. CRIPPS: It would be more expensive.

MR. STEFANIUK: I wonder, Mr. Chairman, in light of the latest problem which has appeared, if we might be given an opportunity to provide some further facts and figures as they relate to current costs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Hyland has a motion passed, and he's entitled to stick with it if he wants to.

MR. HYLAND: How do I get it off the floor, though? I guess I have to make another motion to rescind it. Okay, I'll make that motion. You won, Kowalski.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it agreed?

MR. KOWALSKI: Agreed.

MRS. CRIPPS: I'm opposed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, it's rescinded.

MRS. CRIPPS: Can we ask you to negotiate further with Canada Post? For the life of me, I can't see how they can classify that as first-class mail.

MR. STEFANIUK: We've tried.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Apparently they are doing it with all the provinces and the House of Commons, as I understand it. I'm not sure about that.

MR. STEFANIUK: The only advantage with the House of Commons, of course, is that the federal members have a franking privilege. If they want to send individually, then it can be distributed at no direct cost.

MRS. CRIPPS: Who have you contacted in Canada Post?

MR. STEFANIUK: The Edmonton authorities.

MRS. CRIPPS: I would suggest you contact the Ottawa authorities, because . . .

MR. STEFANIUK: They have very simply said to us in that regard — because we have said to them: you are not doing it in other provinces, why are you singling us out? What we've done in effect is caused them to take a look at the other provinces and say: ah, they've been getting away with it; we'll stop them too.

MRS. CRIPPS: I think it should be carried further.

MR. STEFANIUK: It may be an item that you may want to take up at the annual Speakers' conference.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. KOWALSKI: Good idea.

MR. STEFANIUK: And make some submission on behalf of all the provincial legislatures.

MR. HYLAND: I don't know what good it will do, but it's worth a shot in the dark.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But suppose that we could by correspondence initiate the formation of a common front to include the Clerk of the House of Commons. Would you like us to try that instead of waiting for a conference?

MR. HYLAND: If we go first class, that should make it take a couple of more days. It usually does.

MR. STEFANIUK: What, first class? Try special delivery.

MR. HYLAND: I should tell you this. I had a suit mailed out of Medicine Hat; it took four days to get to Bow Island.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So this item is deferred pending receipt of further information from the Clerk and a possible approach by the Clerk to see whether other Clerks would make common cause in this regard.

Okay. Reclassification of Hansard Editor: that's one of those items that has been deferred and redeferred. A motion by Dr. Reid was passed at the September 20 meeting,



I think, that the senior management positions of the Legislative Assembly be considered at the next meeting after the budget process is completed — and that was done today — but that the Hansard Editor item, which was thought to be perhaps a little bit more urgent, might be dealt with even before the budget process was completed. So in keeping with that resolution, we included it on this agenda.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, I hate to see — you know, it bothers me to put it off again, but there are only four of us. We've got four members that attend missing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have four members here and there are six away.

MR. HYLAND: I was looking at the ones that attend.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Suppose we move it higher up on the agenda for the next meeting. We could, if you wish, make it the third item, in other words the one following — yes, we could include it in business arising out of the minutes.

MR. HYLAND: There should be more time now that the budget's done.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MRS. CRIPPS: Is this a retroactive thing, or is it a 1984 . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: It depends on how you do it.

MR. HYLAND: We budgeted to allow for it, didn't we?

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, we can discuss it.

MRS. CRIPPS: It isn't imperative that we do it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, it's just that it's one of those anomalies where we have support staff being paid more than management. So is that agreed?

Is there any other business anyone wishes to raise?

MR. HYLAND: I have one. It's parking at the airports. There was an approval, I understand, in the last session's Members' Services, but there was no way that we could charge parking at an airport. Nobody would charge to the Assembly. I asked the Director of Administration to look at the possibility of the Park N Jet at Calgary. It says, I think, that they would charge to a corporation but they wouldn't charge to individual members. It would be one bill back to the Assembly. I'm just wondering where that stands. Is it still in the minutes that the Assembly will pick that up, or would that be a new issue to consider?

MR. STEFANIUK: The whole issue was dropped.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Clerk tried every which way to get this through and ran into a great lack of co-operation.

MR. HYLAND: Well, apparently this — at least in that case, it says: development corporation of Calgary, concerning the availability of parking pass for use by Members of the Legislative Assembly . . . confirms the availability of parking pass for use by corporate accounts. It indicated that he would not be willing to establish accounts with individual members. That may be something we can consider at the next meeting.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The problem has been to get it individualized.

MR. HYLAND: I would assume at a place like that they're willing to run a charge account but members would have to sign a bill. That's the way it would be individualized.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Whom did you speak to?

MR. HYLAND: Charlene spoke to somebody at Steinbloc developments.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Which airport?

MR. HYLAND: Calgary. There's no way to do it in Edmonton. I understand the city won't bill; the same with the parking thing at Calgary. It was just an idea I had that possibly private enterprise instead of government, as the other two are, is willing to make a little money. It appears that they would be in commercial accounts. So it's maybe something we can discuss at the next meeting.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Is it agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other business?

MRS. CRIPPS: If you were planning to look at other legislatures, I'd appreciate a lot of advance warning on planning.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I wasn't initiating anything like that.

MR. KOWALSKI: We'll have to determine that.

MRS. CRIPPS: Yes, okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there any other business?

Date of the next meeting: what are your instincts? Vacations in January and February?

MRS. CRIPPS: You must be joking.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I had a smile on my face.

MR. HYLAND: That must be when you're going away.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, do you want to clear this agenda? In terms of the items, there are some small items . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Did I miss one?

MR. KOWALSKI: No. It's just that the immediacy of some of these things — it would seem to me the biggest item is really the one dealing with classifications.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, there's the compensation; there's the accident insurance for constituency office staff. I think maybe that was part of an item I might have overlooked, such as on travelling to Edmonton.

MR. KOWALSKI: If it's the general feeling of members of the group that there's some immediacy to resolve these other items, I'd be quite prepared to come to Edmonton on the morning of Tuesday, January 3 to clear them up.

MR. HYLAND: I don't know if you're going to have many answers on that.

MRS. CRIPPS: I would too.

MR. KOWALSKI: You'd be prepared?

MRS. CRIPPS: Yes.

MR. HYLAND: I'll be in Toronto.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Should we try for that date? If that doesn't work, we'll get other options as we telephone each member, and then try to meet at the maximum convenience.

MRS. CRIPPS: That's a cabinet day, so you have to meet fairly early in order to accommodate Dr. Reid.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'd have to start by 8:30 I expect. Eight o'clock?

MR. KOWALSKI: I was going to make the suggestion 9:30. Five o'clock in morning already is early enough — well, I don't know if they're sitting in the morning on that day or not. They may or may not.

MRS. CRIPPS: Maybe we can find out.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let's start between — would you be content if between now and the end of the month, and as soon as possible within that time, we get in touch with all the members of the committee and try to arrange for a time as early as practicable in January.

MRS. CRIPPS: But the 3rd is a preferred date for me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right.

MR. HYLAND: The 4th is no good for me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What about the 3rd?

MR. HYLAND: Well, I'll have to talk nice to my wife, because I was supposed to babysit that day.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, so we'll try everybody on the 3rd, and if that doesn't work, we'll get the nearest date that suits a maximum number. Is that all right? Is there a motion for adjournment?

MR. KOWALSKI: I so move.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Kowalski. Agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. KOWALSKI: Merry Christmas to all.

MR. CRIPPS: Merry Christmas.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Merry Christmas to all of you.

[The meeting adjourned at 11:36 a.m.]