

[Chairman: Mr. Amerongen]

[8:04 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: First of all, have you had a look at your copies of the minutes of the last meeting, November 28? Is there a motion?

MR. PENGELLY: I so move.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Carried.

We have some items to complete in regard to the estimates. There's a subsidiary item that I'm going to refer to. It's just a matter of clarification; that's all. It's not a change. The main item is the budget of the caucuses.

We have a resolution, which was moved by Mrs. Cripps, that all three be treated exactly the same on a percentage basis, and another resolution, which was moved by Alan Hyland, that all three be voted on by summaries, which I think we've done previously, rather than by individual codes.

MR. PURDY: Mr. Chairman, I also passed a motion that we ask the two other caucuses, who are both represented on the committee anyway, to come before Members' Services to explain the reason for the 5 percent increase and 4.2 for the Official Opposition.

MR. HYLAND: I guess I should have brought this up before the minutes were moved. Is "summaries" the right word in my motion at 85.150? Shouldn't it be . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could you say by totals?

MR. HYLAND: Yes. I think it should be by totals. "Summaries" would mean that we tinker with this page, and that wasn't the intent. The intent was the bottom line.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. So would you agree to open up the resolution to approve the minutes, on the motion of Mr. Hyland?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, do you agree that resolution 85.150, moved by Mr. Hyland, be

amended by striking out "summaries" and putting in "totals"?

MR. HYLAND: I think that's the right word — "global"?

DR. REID: Global total.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you want to say "globally"?

DR. REID: I think that was the word we used last year. Wasn't it "global budget" of each caucus?

MR. HYLAND: "Summaries" isn't the right word.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you want to say that they be voted on globally rather than by individual codes? Is that sufficiently specific?

MR. HYLAND: Yes, that should do it.

DR. REID: I think everybody knows what it means anyway.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any discussion of that resolution? Is it agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Anyone contrary? Carried.

I should mention that Dr. Reid has to leave at half past eight.

DR. REID: I think things function without me, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is an item I'd like to deal with while he is here. It affects the salary of the Clerk, and it needs to be dealt with in camera. So if you care to, we can go to that item right now rather than interrupt our discussion of the estimates.

MR. PURDY: Mr. Chairman, I'd also like to give notice that I have to leave at about 9:15 or 9:20 to catch the 10 o'clock airbus.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That sort of reinforces what I said.

MRS. EMBURY: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate what you're saying, but if we could only just move along. If we're going to discuss an item like that and we want to go in camera, that surely means that people will have to leave. When the opposition members have come right away, couldn't we carry on?

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's in the hands of the meeting. Both items are important for full participation.

MRS. EMBURY: They were good enough to be here on time, and I think it's only fair that we let them make their presentation and then move on to the other item.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it your wish that we deal with the caucus budgets first?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Is there any discussion?

MR. PURDY: Mr. Chairman, since I made the motion, I'd like to ask both Mr. Gurnett and Mr. Speaker if they could explain the reasoning for 4.2 and 5 in the budgets. That was the reason I made the motion before, but I thought it was unfair to pass any budgets without their views. There could be some underlying circumstances of why the increase is necessary, that this committee is not aware of.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Speaking on our behalf, with the current situation there's a salary increase across the board of 3.5 percent to government employees that's being put into effect. To keep ourselves and our heads above water in the current budget, we're hoping that through the additional funding . . . I guess by special warrant there's an amount of money that goes into a fund that can be allocated. We're not sure we're eligible for that. We sent a memo through requesting that, to pick it up in the current fiscal year. The coming fiscal year means that we have to pick it up within our global budget. That's 3.5 percent that we just haven't got. Somewhere we have to squeeze it around to try and rearrange things to make it work. That's the first reason.

The second is that I put a freeze on all salaries in our area two and a half years ago.

People have not received a raise in two and a half years. We just put a freeze on. I said, there isn't any money, and that's the way it is. We're attempting in every way to live within the budget. The staff has co-operated. They haven't beefed or complained or anything. I just felt it was about time that maybe we show a little bit of compassion and try and make a request of 5 percent to meet some of the increases that I certainly think they deserve.

In a quick nutshell, that's the reason for the 5 percent. It's not because we want 5 percent more money. It's to meet some of those ongoing commitments that as an employer I think we should try to do. Throughout the public service there have been some increases, and we want to do it. We can't run a deficit budget in any way through our office, and we don't intend to do that. That's something I won't stand for either. That's the box we're caught in.

I understand that your recommendation this year is a 1 percent increase, while the 3.5 percent . . . I know a bit of the arithmetic I'm using is not quite accurate, but most of what we pay out is for salaries. That 3.5 percent doesn't really translate to 3.5 percent of the total budget. I understand that. It's somewhere between 2 and 3 percent, I would think.

So that's the reason for it, Mr. Chairman. We don't like to make the request any more than anyone else. But it's an obligation I felt I had as an employer, and that's why we've submitted it. It wasn't just to get 5 percent extra. That isn't the reason for it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think the Clerk has some relevant information on the question of the increases.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, since the last meeting of this committee the government has announced a general cost-of-living increase to be applied to the public service in its entirety. It comes into effect at various dates. I think it's retroactive to April 1 in some instances, to June 1 in the case of management, and to August 1 in the case of senior officials. In light of that announcement we drafted a resolution which we had hoped the meeting would consider during its deliberations today. The resolution basically intends to authorize the administration to adjust all expenditure codes pertaining to salaries of permanent, project,

temporary, and contract employees by 3 percent so that we may be in a position to give effect to that general cost-of-living increase to all employees of the Legislative Assembly, which of course includes all caucus employees. We had hoped that that would perhaps receive your favourable consideration some time during this meeting.

I simply bring it to the committee's attention, Mr. Chairman, so the committee might be aware of the manner in which we foresaw that we might deal with application of the cost-of-living increase.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This deals, of course, with the budget for the fiscal year we're discussing. For the present fiscal year I think there was a special warrant of \$45 million. As I understand it, those increases are being put through automatically. Either way they wouldn't be a burden on your budget, as I understand it.

MR. STEFANIUK: For the current year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Or for next year.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Not for next year either?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. If this resolution is adopted, the estimates will be amended across the board.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Are you talking about a 1 percent increase for all the caucuses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Three.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Three.

MR. HYLAND: Ray is on something different.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Just so I understand. I don't know the background history of the meeting.

MR. HYLAND: We haven't set any of the caucuses, Ray. No percentage increases . . .

MR. R. SPEAKER: I was under the impression that all you were going to do was give 1 percent flat across the board or something. Is that an incorrect . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's in addition to that 3 percent.

MR. HYLAND: No. We haven't set the thing yet.

MR. R. SPEAKER: I'm sorry. I'm not aware of . . .

MR. PURDY: When we figured all the figures out, ours was a .1 increase.

MR. STEFANIUK: I think what Ray is talking about is that the government caucus came in with a proposal that calls for a 1 percent increase. He wonders whether the committee is going to apply a 1 percent increase to all budgets.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, I see.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, for clarification. If I understand the motions that were approved at the November 28 meeting, the one moved by Mrs. Cripps basically said that the budgets of the three caucuses be treated exactly the same on a percentage increase basis. My understanding is that the percentage increase basis is .1 percent, not 1 percent.

Secondly, in the explanation just given to us in terms of the increases that are being allocated for the fiscal years 1985-86 and '86-87, we needn't be concerned about those increases in these caucus budgets. They will automatically be built into the global budgets. As an example, the government caucus does not have that inflationary increase you're talking about.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Okay. So what we will be talking about is that 3 percent inflationary one on the salaries. When you set that base, then you're talking about .1 percent added to that for whatever our global gross expenditures would be for next year. Is that what's happened?

MR. KOWALSKI: Essentially. I'd just reverse it. The .1 is on the base last year. The 3 percent will kick in automatically on whatever those salaries were.

MR. HYLAND: So you'll get the 3 percent.

MR. R. SPEAKER: We don't get .1 on the 3 percent.

MR. KOWALSKI: No.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, perhaps the Clerk's explanation missed something out. The time at which increases to the staff of the Legislative Assembly, including caucus staff, will kick in will be the same as for government employees. In other words, it will be retroactive to the specific dates of the same groups within the government staff.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right.

DR. REID: That will have to come out of the \$45 million special warrant.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For the current year.

DR. REID: That will establish a new base for salaries which will be roughly 3 percent higher than the base that is in the documents.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If this resolution which the Clerk is distributing is adopted, that will be built into the estimates for the next fiscal year.

DR. REID: As a baseline.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Then you add the .1 percent on that.

DR. REID: Yes, that's right. The .1 is a global thing. In other words, what we will do is put the global budget up by an amount that will allow for the retroactive 3 percent increases. That will become the baseline global budget for each caucus. Then whatever increase is allocated on that global budget will be on that.

MR. R. SPEAKER: All right. Gail brings my attention to contract employees. Mr. Stefaniuk has also mentioned contract personnel. If that's taken care of, then that's fine. But they've asked us to make a special application for it by memo, which we've done. So it doesn't kick in automatically for us it seems. That's why we raised the question here as well. If it does kick in automatically, then we have the response.

MS BARON: For '85-86.

MR. R. SPEAKER: This is for '85-86.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Clerk has just distributed the text of a proposed resolution which I think includes your contract employees.

MR. R. SPEAKER: If it does kick in, then we're okay.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, relative to contract employees I think I should clarify that no cost-of-living increase will kick in automatically for those employees; rather, there's a contract in effect. What we're asking for in this resolution is approval of a global budget for salaries. But contracts will have to be amended to give effect to any sort of salary adjustment, and those contracts will have to be amended on an individual basis.

DR. REID: That's what I was trying to clarify. What we will adjust is the global budgets.

MR. STEFANIUK: That's right, but it doesn't automatically affect contract employees. It's the contracts themselves which will have to be amended. As I explained to Mr. Speaker, I felt that the initiative for amending any contracts should be taken by the caucuses, because they may well decide, in their own wisdom — having just hired an employee, for example, at what the caucus may have considered a competitive market rate, they may not wish to effect an adjustment at the same time it is being effected for other staff, or they may not wish to give it the retroactivity which applies to permanent staff.

MR. HYLAND: But if they or the employees initiate it, Mr. Clerk, this motion, if we pass it, will give you the ability to deal with it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Exactly.

MR. STEFANIUK: It will give us the ability to adjust the budgets so that we can deal with it. That's all it does.

MR. HYLAND: Yes.

MR. PURDY: To move things on, Mr. Chairman, I move that the resolution be accepted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Which one? This proposed text?

MR. PURDY: The proposed text.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Can we do that?

DR. REID: I think we have to approve the estimates first.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It seems to me that we're still on the estimates.

MR. PURDY: Not necessarily.

DR. REID: The previously approved estimates.

MR. HYLAND: We'll have to pass it twice if we pass it now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We can do it either way, but our thought was that the logical thing would be to approve the estimates first and then superimpose this amendment on them.

DR. REID: The word "previously" is in there.

MR. HYLAND: In the second line.

DR. REID: The way this is worded, it would have to follow the approval of the rest of the estimates. This would have to be passed as a last item.

MR. PURDY: Okay. I can see your point.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If that's sufficient discussion . . .

MR. HYLAND: We still have Mr. Gurnett to hear from.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I know. If you're content with that discussion of the Representative Party's budget, perhaps we could go on to the Official Opposition.

MR. GURNETT: Mr. Chairman, I'll turn it over to Bill Dryden, who is our chief of staff and who prepared our budget, to give some background to the changes there.

MR. DRYDEN: On Mr. Gurnett's behalf, the main reason for our increase is that it was your decision of a year ago, in the last calendar year, to strike fee-for-service employees. We've had as many as four full-time people in the Official Opposition on fee-for-service, where there are no employee benefits. But when you made them, especially the two aides to the two MLAs, including George Oleksiuk, Mr. Martin's

EA -- going with that were increases that pushed about 2 percent of our budget from those sources. We have no more fee-for-service employees other than people who work on a contract consultancy basis. Those of us who work in the aide category are now all code 5 employees under approved categories, with all the employee benefits that come with it, and the package is large. We never used to cover that.

Both those positions were previously working for about \$2,000 a month, and they paid their income tax and everything else from that amount. It was a rather small amount of money. So when we changed their status in line with the direction, which I believe in all honesty was a good one on their behalf . . . The means I was originally hired under was fee-for-service. I found it not only an annoyance, but I didn't like being a full-time employee and yet under that form of service. We also increased their salaries, Mr. Oleksiuk's somewhat substantially, to reflect the fact that he is the senior person in the office. Mr. Gurnett's aide, Mark Craft, got about a thousand dollar increase over what the previous person had, and then the employee benefits.

There have also been some staff changes. We previously had two secretaries, one at a ministerial level. We now have three secretarial persons. One is a receptionist at a very low level, but when you balance the three against the two, you have an increase in wages of about \$4,000 to \$5,000. That receptionist is on an hourly wage basis. If we can't afford to pay it month to month, we can simply let that person go.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there any further discussion or any questions?

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, in view of what has just been explained by the Clerk and the understanding we now have about the increases being built in by the motion we are presumably going to pass shortly, does the Official Opposition still require this? You mentioned some increases, but can they be absorbed out of that increase in the amount that will be available in the total salary allowance in the global budget?

MR. DRYDEN: If I may reply, in discussing which of our employees would be covered by the

3 percent cost-of-living increase, I understand from Mr. Eliuk that it's only one. Does this motion change that?

DR. REID: This motion states fairly clearly all four categories.

MR. DRYDEN: Then I have to ask the director of administration: does this now cover all our people in code 5 — like me, for example?

MR. ELIUK: The motion as it's presented here would, but the original news release on the 3 percent adjustment didn't.

MR. DRYDEN: Okay.

MR. ELIUK: This motion is only giving a provision for adjusting by 3 percent all salaries, including the contract, not covered by the news release.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In other words, as I understand it, the government caucus estimates as presented provided for a .1 percent increase. If that is passed, then in the case of the government caucus this 3 percent would come on top on that .1 percent.

MR. DRYDEN: The other question I have is: are we compelled to apply that 3 percent to all employees that are covered under this?

MR. R. SPEAKER: Just for salaries.

MR. DRYDEN: That's our internal decision.

DR. REID: That's an internal decision of the caucus. The principle we established three years ago is that we around this table did not monkey with and allocate the resources given to each caucus. It was on a global budget basis, and from there on each caucus was to decide who they employed, how many of which, and what they paid them.

MR. DRYDEN: Then to answer your question: this resolution would cover our increase.

MR. R. SPEAKER: The retroactive part of it, just so I'm clear on that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's for the current year?

MR. R. SPEAKER: The current year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's being provided out of the \$45 million.

MR. R. SPEAKER: We can apply for that without any problems?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Again, with your contract employees, you'd have to amend the contracts retroactively.

MR. R. SPEAKER: I understand that.

DR. REID: I think we'll require a resolution to do it, though.

MR. STEFANIUK: The moneys which have been provided to look after the increases which are retroactively effected in the current fiscal year have not been designed to look after contract employees. So if adjustments were to be made at this moment to contracts, the funding would have to be found within the existing budgets of the caucuses. This resolution deals only with 1986-87 estimates; it does not attempt to deal at all with the current fiscal year. The fund which has been set up, in the amount of \$45 million I believe, does not take into consideration contractors.

MR. R. SPEAKER: What steps would have to be taken to have that happen?

MR. STEFANIUK: It seems to me, Mr. Chairman, that in order to increase the amount of moneys currently available to the caucuses or any branch of the Legislative Assembly which pays contractors, there would have to be perhaps a resolution of this committee to give effect to it, and the funding would have to be sought, I imagine, by special warrant if it could not be found within existing budgets.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry; I didn't give a correct answer to Mr. Speaker's question. It seems to me that if we're going to deal with that, it's going to be a somewhat involved resolution if we're going to take into account what the Clerk mentioned a few moments ago about some contract employees having perhaps started on contract recently and the salaries provided in those contracts being considered rather up to date and up to market. In those

cases you perhaps wouldn't want to give them the 3 percent.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Because we've been around for quite a while, we have Gail, Mark, and Donna, who have been there for a number of years and would be affected by that decision if we didn't do something, or other employees are getting it and they're not.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This raises a somewhat involved...

MR. R. SPEAKER: It's not complicated in the sense that that decision would have to be made by us as employers through a contract; it would just be the facilitating resolution from here, which you would submit to the respective minister, who would have to go in turn and get an additional special warrant for contract employees.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's the thing; we'd either have to get it by special warrant or find some funds under present appropriations for the current fiscal year.

MR. ELIUK: Excuse me, Mr. Chairman. With respect to the \$45 million salary contingency fund, from my conversations with our budget analyst at Treasury, we would have to determine which contracts were to receive this 3 percent adjustment. In so doing, we would determine the total amount of money we would apply for through salary contingency to cover that increase.

MR. R. SPEAKER: And we've submitted our memo to you.

MR. ELIUK: The reason I asked for that submission was in order to determine if you want all your contract people to receive that 3 percent adjustment.

MR. R. SPEAKER: So it is possible that through the present mechanics you can oblige the employees we have with this retroactive pay. It's possible.

MR. ELIUK: It's an application to salary contingency, and as with any application, it's very unlikely we'd be refused. If we were, then we would have to revert to an application by

special warrant. That's a very unlikely occurrence.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, if it were turned down, there is the possibility -- and this is what I was just discussing off the record with the Clerk -- that because of the lack of a fall sitting, there may be sufficient funds within the total budget of the Legislative Assembly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Quite.

DR. REID: It may be possible to transfer those by a resolution of the committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's it.

DR. REID: I think we can cover the dollar amounts, but it's going to require some computer work to check back on what amounts are involved in dollars rather than in percentages.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have two different things on the table, it seems to me: one is adjustments with regard to the current fiscal year, and the other is the estimates for the coming fiscal year. We were mainly on the latter, the budgets and estimates for the coming fiscal year. Perhaps we can clear that out of the way and then get back to this further point that Mr. Speaker has raised in regard to contract employees. Is that satisfactory?

MR. KOWALSKI: Perhaps I'm a bit confused. I thought they were both the same.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No.

MR. KOWALSKI: Which one do you want to deal with now?

MR. STEFANIUK: Estimates.

MR. KOWALSKI: For '86-87?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right.

MR. KOWALSKI: Fair game; we'll take that one first, and then we'll go on to the next one.

MR. STEFANIUK: Dealing with the estimates is contingent upon these two previous resolutions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Quite; within the context, of course, of the two resolutions that were adopted at the last meeting, I suppose.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, I move that the government members' offices be allotted \$919,769, an increase of .1 percent.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Perhaps I'd better do it more formally. Those in favour?

MR. R. SPEAKER: A point of order. I'm not a member of the committee, but I just raise this as a point of order. I think passing that isn't quite accurate when you say the number, because the number will be adjusted with that 3 percent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That will be looked after by this, Ray.

MR. HYLAND: The reason we can't change the number is that we've got to make this motion do all the others that we passed before. We have to do it that way.

MR. R. SPEAKER: As long as it's understood.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The effect of the motion that has just been moved by Alan Hyland, having regard to what was done at the last meeting, would be that you're really dealing with all three budgets at the same time. Having once decided on the percentage increase for one budget, then under Mrs. Cripps' resolution that same percentage will apply to the other two.

MR. HYLAND: But we have to pass a motion each to do it, don't we?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I suppose formally you could, but if you read them both together, the consequences would be the same. The language compels that result. Are you clear on the implication that if this motion that has just been moved by Alan Hyland is adopted, then although you may wish formally to pass motions with regard to the other two caucuses, you will

in effect have bound yourselves to the same percentage with regard to those other two caucuses by virtue of the resolution moved by Mrs. Cripps at the last meeting, where she said the same percentage would apply?

MR. PURDY: Mr. Chairman, I have a problem with Mr. Hyland's motion where he puts in the dollar amount at .1 and the implication of Mrs. Cripps' motion of November 28 to do the same with the other two parties. We don't have the arithmetic for that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Then we'll need further resolutions.

MR. HYLAND: Have we voted on it officially?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No.

MR. HYLAND: Can I withdraw it and change it?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's withdrawn.

MR. HYLAND: I'll now try another motion, which says that all caucus budgets will be increased by .1 percent over the 1985-86 estimates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there any discussion of that motion? All those in favour? Opposed? Carried.

MR. HYLAND: Does that cause a problem?

MR. STEFANIUK: I think I know the intent, Mr. Chairman, but I think the wording causes a slight problem in that I believe Mr. Hyland said "increased by .1 percent over the 1986-87 estimates."

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, '85-86.

MR. STEFANIUK: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Maybe you used the wrong numbers. If that's the case, then he uttered a verbal typo and we'll correct it.

MR. STEFANIUK: All right.

MISS CONROY: He said it correctly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He said it correctly? Good. That motion has been adopted. Now, do you feel you need individual resolutions with regard to the individual caucuses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't either.

MR. HYLAND: I don't think we can, because I said "all caucuses," didn't I, Ann?

MISS CONROY: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. PURDY: Mr. Chairman, I now move that we adopt the resolution put forth by administration regarding the 3 percent increase.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The one that has been circulated?

MR. PURDY: Yes, for '86-87.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you ready for the question on that one? Just so that it appears on the record, I'll read it:

Moved by Mr. Purdy that the Administration be authorized to adjust pertinent expenditure codes of previously approved estimates of expenditure for 1986-87 to reflect a 3 percent cost-of-living increase in the salaries of all permanent, project, temporary and contract employees of the Legislative Assembly and that the Administration be further authorized to effect consequential adjustments to estimates representing employer funded benefit plans.

As a matter of fact, those will not be the only consequential adjustments, but the others — the Canada Pension Plan, unemployment insurance, and so on — are required by statute anyway.

On that motion of Mr. Purdy's, all those in favour?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Opposed? Carried.

I think we're ready for an omnibus motion.

MR. STEFANIUK: You've got to do that in camera item first, because . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, that's right. I have some discussion to raise in regard to the salary of the Clerk, and I would like to ask all staff persons present to leave the room, please.

MR. HYLAND: I move we go in camera.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Moved by Mr. Hyland that the next part of the meeting be in camera. Is it agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[The committee met in camera from 8:42 a.m. to 9:24 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We've had some discussion about the increases, the merit increase of 3 percent and the cost-of-living increase of 3 percent in regard to the annual amount which was fixed by this committee some years ago in regard to the salary of the Clerk. I think we're ready for a motion in regard to the merit increase effective June 1, 1985, as was extended to other deputy ministers.

MRS. EMBURY: Mr. Chairman, I'll move that the Clerk receive a merit increase of 3 percent retroactive to June 1, 1985.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any discussion? Is it agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Carried. There's the further question of the cost-of-living increase, which in the case of other senior personnel was retroactive to August 1, 1985. Is there a motion in regard to that?

MRS. EMBURY: I so move, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That the Clerk be granted a cost-of-living increase of 3 percent retroactive to August 1, 1985. Is it agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any other motions relating to the estimates? We passed this one;

that was Bill Purdy's. Now we need a wrap-up motion, as I understand it, unless there are some other motions with regard to the next fiscal year.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, by way of background with respect to the motion that I now want to move, it deals with the constituency office allowances, the ones that currently have an allocation of \$14,700 per year. I'm talking about the current fiscal year, 1985-86. Perhaps I should move the motion and then explain it. The wording I have for the motion I want to move is:

Subject to availability of funds within existing allocations to the Legislative Assembly for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1986, I would move that the constituency allowance be adjusted upwards by 3 percent for the time frame August 1, 1985, to March 31, 1986.

The intent of this motion is to basically say that the constituency allowance, which is currently \$14,700 per year, be increased 3 percent for the time frame I've identified — August 1, 1985, to March 31, 1986 — and that the funds for this increase come from within the global budget allocated to the Legislative Assembly. That's going to put a considerable amount of pressure, I think, on the Clerk and the director of administration to, number one, ascertain the source of those funds.

I can recognize that in all likelihood the first response might very well be that we won't know if we're going to have any surplus of funds until the final printout at the end of the fiscal year on March 31, 1986. I don't have — and I guess members of the committee are not sure at the moment where the printouts would be indicating where funds have been spent, what the expended funds are, and where they might be. But by way of help in ascertaining where there might be a sourcing of these funds, I might point out the availability of dollars that have currently been approved under the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund allocation. I am not sure what the total level of expenditure has been to date. I don't think it's near the amount of dollars that have already been approved. I suspect that there might be a substantial amount of dollars still existing in that fund. It would not be my intent as the chairman to have more than several more days of meetings to deal with the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust

Fund report for the current fiscal year, so there might very easily be an opportunity to transfer funds from there to cover the intent of this particular motion.

I'm asking for the support of the committee for this motion, recognizing that the constituency allowances have not been adjusted in recent years and that, secondly, we have staff to deal with there as well. I would not want them to be the forgotten few as a result of previous motions we've already dealt with this morning.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before we discuss it, I'm just talking about the text of the motion. I have some difficulty with that word "availability." As Ken pointed out, the actual availability can't be firmly established until March 31. Then, of course, it would be too late to do any good for the constituency office staff, who up till now have been left out of the increase that's available to other staff.

Ken, I wonder if you might consider the inclusion of a modifying expression in that resolution in regard to availability, where you might say, "presently indicated availability" or "availability according to present indications."

MR. KOWALSKI: I have no difficulty making an adjustment to the motion to have it read, "subject to presently indicated availability."

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think that might help us a little bit from an administrative point of view.

MRS. EMBURY: Mr. Chairman, you partially clarified it, but I just want to make sure that we understand. The purpose of this motion, I gather, is to see that our constituency secretaries receive the same 3 percent as other people. This is the only way we could do it, because they don't come under the other resolutions we passed. Someone might also say to us, I guess, "Well, why are you increasing the whole constituency office allowance rather than just the salary of the secretaries?" I believe your thinking on that was that it's a much simpler way to do it. It would have to be on an individual basis, because the salaries are all different amounts.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It would be just about an administrative possibility to do it and a drafting impossibility to find an appropriate text I would

suggest.

MRS. EMBURY: Thank you. I just want to make sure your explanation to others is clear.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is another factor: it seems to me that rents are going up.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, if I might just ask a question to clarify the committee's intent in respect of constituency office staffing, is it the intent of the committee that a 3 percent adjustment in the payments to constituency office personnel be granted outright, or is it the committee's intent that any adjustment be effected as a result of adjustments to individual contracts?

MR. KOWALSKI: No, the intent is to adjust the \$14,700 upwards by 3 percent for that time frame, and each MLA would have to deal with the situation with their constituency office on an individual basis. I think we've got so many different permutations and combinations that the follow-through . . .

MR. STEFANIUK: Right, so there is discretionary power given to the individual member similar to what we have done with the caucuses with respect to contract employees.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right, but the funds are being made available.

MR. KOWALSKI: It would be absolutely horrendous to follow through on the first two. You people would go bananas.

MR. STEFANIUK: There have been adjustments made recently by some members, Mr. Chairman, within the limitations that presently exist in constituency office budgets.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm one of them. There is another thing I think we should keep in mind in regard to the resolution: some other staff have received two increases, 3 and 3, and here we have only one 3 percent. The fact that it's calculated on the total allowance will help to accommodate a possible 3 and 3, if that's what the contracting parties in regard to constituency office services agree.

MR. HYLAND: My question to the Clerk is that

there are — I forget what — 60 offices, and we budget for 79 or thereabouts. To put overall in the budget, there isn't the money to do the job for the offices that are there. There should be sufficient moneys in the budget to carry us in this six-month period or whatever it is.

MR. STEFANIUK: Mr. Chairman, we will have to look at all the areas of the budget which will not be entirely spent; that is of the current year's budget. We had a directive earlier in this meeting for another adjustment, and I believe that was for contract employees within the Legislative Assembly. We were directed to look at effecting the increases for contract employees that had been granted for permanent staff. We were asked to look at current budgets and what Dr. Reid said earlier. So we will have to assess the budget overall, project surpluses, and then project perhaps the additional funding which may be required to handle increases to be put into effect this year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So this resolution will apply to the remainder of the current fiscal year. Did you put a date in it, Ken? I don't remember one.

MR. KOWALSKI: August 1.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Are you ready for the question on the resolution?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Carried.

MR. STEFANIUK: Might I just ask for one further clarification, Mr. Chairman? I'm wondering if it is intended, in light of the retroactive date which has been included in this resolution, to prorate the 3 percent increase for the period August 1 to March 31 as opposed to applying a 3 percent increase for the entire fiscal year's budget.

MR. KOWALSKI: No, the intent is to prorate it back to . . . It's based on those months from August 1.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It becomes effective as of August 1.

MR. STEFANIUK: Good. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll arrive at a monthly rate and multiply the monthly rate.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, I would like to raise another motion. It deals with the estimates for 1986-87. The motion I want to read deals with three allowances: the communications allowance, the constituency allowance, and the promotional allowance. The motion I'd like to raise is the following:

That the communications allowance, the constituency allowance, and the promotional allowance be increased 3 percent for the 1986-87 fiscal year and that the estimates for 1986-87 reflect this motion and, further, that the base for calculating the constituency allowance for 1986-87 be calculated on the readjusted base approved by the committee on December 12, 1985.

Just to explain, the motion . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Maybe you should do it in two motions.

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, that's a possibility. What the motion basically says is that our estimates should reflect that for the 1986-87 fiscal year the communications allowance, the constituency allowance, and the promotional allowance be increased 3 percent.

The second part of the motion says that the base for calculating the constituency allowance not be the \$14,700 but be the readjusted base we approved a few minutes ago.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In other words we add 3 percent to the current amount, and then we add 3 percent to that 103 percent for the next fiscal year.

MR. KOWALSKI: That's correct.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is on the basis of assuming the 3 percent to be effective for the whole current fiscal year. Otherwise, you're only getting part of it from August 1.

MR. KOWALSKI: In reality it won't be 3

percent for 1985-86. It will be a prorated amount based on eight months out of 12, two-thirds, so it is 2 percent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just to be absolutely clear, we start off with the three allowances as they are for the current fiscal year. We add 2 percent to that amount, and the resulting total is then increased by 3 percent or the individual allowance is increased by 3 percent for the next fiscal year. Is that right?

MR. KOWALSKI: The second part of my motion just referred to the constituency allowance, not the other two.

MR. HYLAND: Not the other two. Just the new motion refers to the other two. The first motion didn't. Right?

MR. KOWALSKI: In terms of dealing with the communication allowance and the promotional allowance, whatever the bases are for 1985-86, as of April 1, 1986, they will be increased 3 percent. In terms of the constituency allowance the base that will be calculated in determining the figure for April 1, 1986, will be the \$14,700 plus the 2-point-some percent plus 3 percent above that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you content that you can do that calculation, Charles?

MR. ELIUK: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Are you ready for the question?

MRS. EMBURY: Mr. Chairman, before we vote on it, I want to state that I am opposed to the motion and will not be voting for it. The reason is that I would be willing to carry on with the increases we've just designated for the secretarial help in the constituency offices, but I'm not prepared to increase the other two allowances at this time.

MR. HYLAND: I think somewhere along the way we have to increase it and this is as good a way to do it. In the next year in communications, postal rates are going up. They have gone up more than 3 percent since we increased it. So I think it's time that we do it in the new budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other discussion? Those in favour of the combined motion? Opposed? Carried.

Now, are we ready for a wrap-up motion?

MR. HYLAND: Can we do a wrap-up motion when we don't know the numbers?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, because it's based on the changes as approved by the committee. But before we do, there is something which I discovered yesterday morning that I would like to draw to the attention of the committee. It's on page 6 of your estimates. You'll notice that there's a 1.2 percent change in the first item on that page. Do you see a 1.2 percent increase in the first line? All I want to do is correct a misapprehension that that might give rise to.

When the directive came out from personnel with regard to adjustments that took place as of June 1, it was first interpreted as being a merit increase. Subsequently there was another opinion — the thing is not totally clear — that it would be a market adjustment. Someone got the impression that it would be a market adjustment. So the words "market adjustment" are what were put in the final text, but it's not. It's a merit adjustment. So if you change that word, it will be correct. Is that amendment agreed to?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Carried. Is there a wrap-up motion?

MR. HYLAND: I'm not sure how to word it, but I would move that the budget for the Legislative Assembly be accepted as presented to us and the adjustments made thereto. Is that clear?

MR. CHAIRMAN: As presented, with the adjustments made by the resolutions of the committee.

MR. HYLAND: Is that good enough?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that satisfactory to everyone? Is it agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Anyone contra?

MRS. EMBURY: Mr. Chairman, I would like to just . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: You didn't put up your hand to be contra?

MRS. EMBURY: No, sorry.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Carried. I wanted to say "carried" before you did something else.

MRS. EMBURY: Right; sorry. I just wanted to thank the administration very much for the preparation of this budget. I was looking back over my estimates of before and was surprised how quickly I totally got lost in that process. This has really been a nice way that it's been presented. As one member of the committee, I sure appreciate it. So I'd like to commend the staff for their assistance in the preparation of this budget.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's unanimous; even the chairman voted.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, there are now going to be some readjustments that have to be made. Perhaps at some time in the future . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The amending sheets will definitely be sent to you.

MR. KOWALSKI: Okay. That's what I meant.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you have any queries about the amending sheets, could we have them very suddenly? By and by they'll go to print.

MR. ELIUK: Mr. Chairman, I believe the adjustments will be made very quickly because of the fact that on December 20, I believe, we have to appear before the Treasury people.

MR. CHAIRMAN: To do what?

MR. ELIUK: This is my understanding, so we have to have the estimates . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: But not for approval.

MR. ELIUK: No, but they're going to be looking at our budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, but you're not there for approval. The approval is done by this committee.

MRS. EMBURY: They're merely presented, I think.

MR. CHAIRMAN: They can ask you questions, but they can't change anything.

MR. HYLAND: I want to raise something about the printers with our system. I don't know if the ones in this building are the same, but a couple of the ones we have in the Ag Building seem to not always work right. The staff over there talked to me yesterday, and I've got a short memo. They briefly outlined the problems with them and said that Sheila has been exceptional in trying to make them work, but they seem to be breaking down. They don't perform properly and stuff like that. I'm wondering if there's anything we can do to find out what's wrong with them, why they're always breaking down. We seem to go through more paper because they don't feed right. They feed cockeyed and stuff like that. I think they need to be looked at.

I told one guy a few months ago, "I think this is a lemon." He said, "We don't make lemons." He was back again yesterday, and I said, "Well, six months later you still haven't changed my mind; I think we've got a lemon." At least yesterday he didn't argue that they don't make lemons.

MR. ELIUK: I discussed the problem with Sheila yesterday and asked her to prepare for me — and I'll share that — a list of all those problems, because there are obviously some recurring problems. A large portion of them are related to the machine itself, and others are perhaps operator related. I want to know what the problems are. If they're related to hardware, we'll definitely be getting back to NBI and asking them to resolve it.

MR. HYLAND: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any discussion of the next meeting date?

MR. HYLAND: Can't we have it at the call of the Chair?

MR. CHAIRMAN: As you wish. We switched to Thursdays because of cabinet.

MR. HYLAND: If we assume that, at the call of the Chair.

MRS. EMBURY: Mr. Chairman, I guess there's one thing I would like to raise on behalf of some members. I realize that the 8 o'clock meeting was set at least once for the convenience of some of the committee members, but there has been some question. Could we not meet later on in the day? From noon on or something. Is that possible?

MR. CHAIRMAN: My convenience is not the question. I'm here anyway. I think that members from farthest away are the ones who should be given the first consideration.

MR. HYLAND: Three or four of us can save \$175 a day if we meet later on in the day.

MR. PENGELLY: If it's early, we have to spend one night here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'll try to keep you posted, as I do, and if you see items that we need to meet about — I may call a few of you and ask if you feel we need a meeting. There's the Fleming report, which we should deal with. You may want to devote a whole meeting to that. We have another two senior staff meetings scheduled before we're going to be ready to report to you on that.

MR. HYLAND: Shouldn't we be good until February?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, I should think so, unless something unforeseen comes up. I'll keep in mind to try to call the meeting for two in the afternoon, if you like.

MR. PENGELLY: Or 12:30 or 1 o'clock. Al, can you make it by 12:30?

MR. HYLAND: Yes, without getting up at 4:30 in the morning.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. We'll phone all of you, as usual, and we'll try to make the starting time somewhere between twelve and two. Okay?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'd like to wish everyone a very happy Christmas and a blessed and peaceful New Year.

MR. HYLAND: The same to you.

MR. PENGELLY: And you, sir.

MRS. EMBURY: The same to you and to everybody else.

MR. KOWALSKI: I share it.

MR. HYLAND: In this business I don't know if it's ever peaceful, though.

AN HON. MEMBER: It can still be wished, though.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Alan, peace is interior. You can't have it exteriorly.

[The meeting adjourned at 9:51 a.m.]

