

[Chairman: Dr. Carter]

[9:38 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okey dokey. Have Kowalski and Bogle had their second muffin yet?

Okay. We're going to deal with some of the budget today. Around about 10 o'clock or so we have access to both Gary Garrison and Blake McDougall. Then at 11:15 you're going to have lunch: soup and a sandwich. We'll pick it up and keep on working, and we won't go any later than a quarter to 12. Be back here, if you can, on Monday afternoon at 1:30.

We've made contact with various committee chairmen, so we'll try to get them in here for Monday afternoon or Tuesday morning, hopefully Monday afternoon.

Later this morning we're also going to do a quick review of the exact wording of Members' Services orders.

Clerk, maybe we can start with General Administration, please.

DR. McNEIL: I'll just ask the members how they wish to proceed. Maybe best would be to go page by page, as we've done in the past?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

DR. McNEIL: The summary there on page 1 indicates a 5.6 percent overall increase.

Are there any questions on page 2 related to the salaries, wages, and employee benefits? What you see reflected there are the various market and merit adjustments that have been provided this year and projected for next year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: May we go on to page 2, detail by expenditure.

DR. McNEIL: As I say, the increases there reflect the market and merit adjustments that have been given in '88 and '89 and projected in the nonmanagement group for '89-90, with a 3 percent adjustment effective April of '89 and another 1 percent in October of '89 that are reflected in those changes.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, just for clarity in terms of the way page 1 is written. You've got a B budget item in there which shows a decrease from the current fiscal year to next year. That \$21,000 has now been completed, has it?

DR. McNEIL: That's correct.

MR. KOWALSKI: It's finished. But further above it you have, then, under Supplies and Services, under 712L00, an increase of 139.5 percent in Data Processing Services. This is a separate item? Or is this just an extension of it under a different code this year?

DR. McNEIL: That's a separate item. Do you want to look at that particular page?

MR. KOWALSKI: No; I just wanted the clarification.

DR. McNEIL: That's a separate item.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. TAYLOR: May I ask a question under Wages, up 30, 34

in contributions? How many extra employees, or did I miss in my count there?

DR. McNEIL: Sorry; could you repeat that?

MR. TAYLOR: On number 1, your 711C00 and 711E00 are up 30 and 34 percent. Is that part of an employee, or just what . . .

DR. McNEIL: No. It reflects two things: the 30 percent increase in the contributions, CPP, UIC, and group life insurance, as well as the conversion of two wage employees, clerks to non-permanent status.

MR. TAYLOR: Conversion from temporary to . . .

DR. McNEIL: No, from wages. We've had two employees who have been employed on wages for over a year. I have a concern that when we employ people that long and they're working side by side with people who are either permanent or nonpermanent, those people on wages are not receiving any benefits of any sort. And we've had difficulty retaining that kind of person. So these two positions, a receptionist and the accounts clerk, as far I'm concerned are really permanent positions. They've been functioning in that role for a number of years.

MR. TAYLOR: So you say it's not new hiring then.

DR. McNEIL: No, no.

MR. TAYLOR: Where were they charged before?

DR. McNEIL: They were under Wages before.

MR. TAYLOR: Under Wages before. I'm still having trouble following you. Twenty-nine thousand in '88 jumps to \$38,000, and you say no new people have been added. Where was the difference in wages charged last year then? You say the income per individual hasn't changed. Where were they charged then?

DR. McNEIL: They were under Wages last year. There is an increase under Wages. We put in some for a part-time payroll clerk. I'm not about to suggest when there might be an election, but one of the concerns we have is that if there is an election, there's going to be a lot of work required in the payroll area in terms of dealing with members who are retiring, leaving, as well as dealing with new members in terms of signing them up. So we put some funds in the Wages budget to handle that overload situation.

MR. TAYLOR: You can't do that for the next term. In other words, because you think there may be an election, you've put another \$9,000 in the budget.

DR. McNEIL: That's right.

MR. TAYLOR: Jesus, you could argue that for every year.

DR. McNEIL: Well, we're just trying to anticipate potential problems.

MR. TAYLOR: Don't forget the Husky upgrader was announced seven times before it came about.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, it may be the same thing here, and then we won't have to expend the funds.

MR. TAYLOR: Yeah. But I still don't think a way of budgeting properly is to think there might be an election and put it in. What say it happens next year? Do you take it out?

DR. McNEIL: Well, we would take it out. If the election happens in '89-90, we'd take it out for the next fiscal year. All I'm trying to say is that we're trying to anticipate potential situations, and dealing with members at that time. There'd be very few of us around, but we would anticipate there's a heck of a lot of work in the payroll area and the benefits area to handle at that time.

MR. TAYLOR: Don't get me wrong. I can see being prepared, but I always thought what we did, especially this government, was pass a whole bunch of councils confiscating more money when everybody was away on holidays.

MR. CAMPBELL: That's just a malicious rumour.

MR. TAYLOR: When you come back from holidays, there's always a list.

MS BARRETT: What's your problem with this, Nick?

MR. TAYLOR: I just don't see that as a proper method of budgeting. On the possibility that there's an election, you raise the salaries.

DR. McNEIL: We're not raising the salaries though.

MR. TAYLOR: No, but you're transferring it in.

DR. McNEIL: If you look on page 4, under code 711C, Wages, what we have there is a part-time payroll clerk. We've allocated \$20,000. And we're anticipating . . .

MR. TAYLOR: That's what I'm asking. Where was that \$20,000 before?

DR. McNEIL: It did not exist before. That's what I'm saying.

MR. TAYLOR: You didn't hire anybody new, but it didn't exist before.

DR. McNEIL: This is for peak periods. We're trying to deal with a situation where we're going to anticipate a need.

MR. TAYLOR: But the part-time payroll clerk is a new person, isn't it?

DR. McNEIL: On Wages, yes. We don't have that person.

MR. TAYLOR: That's what I'm trying to . . .

DR. McNEIL: If we have an overload situation, if there's an election and we need to process documentation for X number of new members, we would at that point hire a person on wages for a month or two months or whatever.

MR. TAYLOR: Okay, now I understand. You were telling me

that you already have him.

DR. McNEIL: Oh no, we don't have that person at all.

MR. TAYLOR: There's what I couldn't understand. So you're just going out . . . But if there's no election, that money will be spent anyhow.

DR. McNEIL: I doubt it.

MR. TAYLOR: It would come back in.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
Barrhead.

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, Mr. Chairman, and to the Clerk, there is a principle involved here, and it was raised in the overview late yesterday afternoon when the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon said, "Well, we should eliminate a budget for a particular party, because that party's not going to exist." And a response came back that said, "Well, we don't know that." Now, the argument being used here is that you've got some money built in here because there might be an election. The fact of the matter is that nobody knows that. Nobody knows that. I can assure all members here this morning that there will be a provincial election within the next 22 months, and if you look at the phraseology, that would take it through the rightful legal mandate of a government. But there is a mechanism that exists, and surely one of the principles of budgeting is not to put moneys into a budget in anticipation of something. You can't do that; that's why we have a mechanism called a special warrant. It was only this week that the Speaker came to the government and said, "Look, we need some adjustments to certain budgets and will you put these adjustments in there," and those special warrants were approved. Of course, they've all been made public, and there is such a mechanism. If there is to be an election sometime within the next 22 months, and if there is a need by the Legislative Assembly general administration for certain dollars, then those dollars are committed and a request is made to Executive Council by way of a special warrant.

The point the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon is making is a very valid one, that if we're being asked to approve dollars now in anticipation of something -- you can't make decisions in anticipation of something. You have to make them in the reality of what is. There is a mechanism through the special warrant, and I think the point raised by the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon remarkably is a valid one.

MR. HYLAND: That's twice in two days you and he have agreed.

MR. KOWALSKI: Scary, isn't it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is the committee's pleasure?

MR. WRIGHT: Well, except that there's going to be an election, isn't there?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Who knows? Well, if there's an election and the funds are not there, and if the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon and the Member for Calgary-Egmont get defeated, then we will just wait in line until there's enough money and staff available to process what needs to be done.

MR. TAYLOR: It's never embarrassed you before to pass a special warrant for anything from presents for visiting firemen to a new irrigation ditch. So what the hell's the difference for a payroll clerk? I've done a lot of budgeting, but you can't go wrong padding for probabilities. It might be a big snowfall. It might be this; it might be that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

I think, committee, that's enough discussion on it, therefore if you want to take some action on it . . . If not, then let's move on to another topic.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, could I . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry, Westlock-Sturgeon. Are you going to make a motion, please?

MR. TAYLOR: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I thought you asked for action.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you.

MR. TAYLOR: I move that we delete the \$20,000 part-time payroll clerk on page 4 in anticipation of an election.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think the motion is without the last line in it.

MS BARRETT: Well, I'm going to speak against this motion. I think the more votes that can be conducted by committee as opposed to decisions made by cabinet, the better. I mean, after all, we always speak about making more and more votes available for consideration of all MLAs or at least representatives from all political parties in the Legislature. So I speak against the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Other members wishing to speak to the motion? A call for the question?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour of the motion, please signify. Opposed? The motion carries.

We assume, then, that page 2 is all right. Page 3 was fine. Page 4 is the one that has just been amended.

All right. Page 5.

DR. McNEIL: Page 5 just reflects the various benefit calculations following from the wage and salary rates set in the earlier pages. We have a change reflecting the change we've just made.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. If you'd like to turn down the corner or use some magic symbol on the corner of the sheets that are to be adjusted, we'll probably come back another time.

Page 6.

DR. McNEIL: These are various conference fees for memberships and training dollars allocated to the staff.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 7, Travel Expenses, Supplies and Services. Explain what that one is, David.

DR. McNEIL: This is a conference where we've sent our director of administration and, in the future, will likely send our EDP co-ordinator, assuming that that's approved for this conference. This is an international conference where the individual is able to keep current on the latest developments in information technology.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Agreement?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. TAYLOR: I'm disappointed in the committee. Nobody asked whether it was a Mickey Mouse club.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let's see if they can bring us back hats.
Page 8.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: General agreement.
Page 9, photocopiers.

MS BARRETT: Can you approve one for the Official Opposition in here? Ours is a dud.

DR. McNEIL: I think that's under Official Opposition for some reason.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, for some reason. Okay.

MR. HYLAND: You've got the advantage, Pam. You've only got half as much paper around there.

MS BARRETT: I suppose.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 9. Agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 10.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And 11?

DR. McNEIL: This is the increased maintenance relating to the members' accounts payable system and the new equipment that's been purchased there. This system is in the testing phase now; it'll go in place April 1. Because it's more sophisticated equipment, this is the increased maintenance cost.

MS BARRETT: So how do you get a fax machine for \$280?

DR. McNEIL: That's repair and maintenance on the equipment. That's not for purchase.

MS BARRETT: Oh, that's repair and maintenance as well. Okay.

DR. McNEIL: This is all repair and maintenance.

MR. HYLAND: Is this . . . Oh, this is maintenance. Okay. I was thinking of the cost, but that came out of last year's budget, didn't it?

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Yes. A question to the Clerk relating to photocopiers and faxes. Is there any study or any experience that shows that if everybody has a fax in their office, the photocopying goes down. In other words, a lot of photocopying is to distribute copies. Does the fax just add right on top of it or does it . . .

DR. McNEIL: I'm not aware of any, but my guess is that it would not likely reduce the amount of photocopying.

MR. TAYLOR: Just curious.

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, just to provide an illustration to the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon. In fact the reality, my experience is, is that it goes up because you've more paper that you can then photocopy.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, right.

MR. TAYLOR: It always does, I guess.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But then how much of the mailing goes down? But the cost goes up because of the courier . . .

MS BARRETT: No. Courier services go down a lot.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Agreement on page 11?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Agreed on 11.
Page 12?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All agreed, page 12.

DR. McNEIL: Page 13 reflects the fact that we're now being charged by PWSS for printouts that we were not previously charged for. And they show \$6,000.

MR. WRIGHT: Printouts of what?

DR. McNEIL: Printouts of monthly financial reports, accounting reports, members' statements, things like that. We receive a large volume of printouts every month from PWSS or Treasury with mainly financial information. Previously that was just provided free of charge. It's not provided free of charge anymore.

Now, we have cut down on the number of printouts we were receiving. We reviewed the whole set of printouts and reduced the number of copies in some instances and eliminated some reports. This \$6,000 increase reflects what we believe we need.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's user pay.

DR. McNEIL: It's user pay. Yeah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Agree to page 13?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. On page 14, that stays the same?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Fifteen. Down by 50 percent should be all right.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. General approval to that section when the adjustment is made. Westlock-Sturgeon, agreed?

MR. TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. The motion is to approve the whole section, taking into account that one motion. All those in favour? Opposed? Thank you.

All right. Where to next? Item 3.

DR. McNEIL: The House Services budget. I think the easiest way to do this is to go through the individual accounts rather than . . .

MS BARRETT: You're going to House Services now?

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

MS BARRETT: Why? Aren't we going to do MLA Administration? I thought we were going to do MLA Administration too.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I thought we were going to skip MLA Administration.

MS BARRETT: Oh, it doesn't matter to me; I don't care. I just thought we would go 1, 2, 3, and then jump into 9 or something like that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah, we're going to 3.

MS BARRETT: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Section 3.

DR. McNEIL: House Services budget. Including this special warrant, our A budget is expected to decrease by 5 percent. Adding the B budget item for the CPA regional conference, the overall expenditure is going up by 11.3 percent. That's a one-year cost, and that's something that's strongly committed to at this point.

MR. CHAIRMAN: [Inaudible] copies of that conference agenda.

DR. McNEIL: On page 2 the adjustments there reflect the movement of an individual from contract to permanent and the various market and merit adjustments that have been provided this year which were not budgeted for last year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, if I'm in the right part, is the contract position we're talking about . . . I remember back in Members' Services a few years ago we had a go-around about a contract position relating to Law Clerk. The person then wanted to go to contract. Then a few years later we were changing it back to a permanent position. Is this the same thing, or is this a different person?

DR. McNEIL: It's a different person.

MR. HYLAND: A different person. So this then will be a permanent position, not a contract anymore.

DR. McNEIL: Correct.

MR. HYLAND: Salarywise are we still in the same picture; i.e., incomewise and benefitwise and that sort of thing?

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

MR. HYLAND: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Additional questions?

MR. WRIGHT: This is a Law Clerk?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Three, page 2.

MR. WRIGHT: And who is the person?

DR. McNEIL: Mr. Ritter.

MR. WRIGHT: And he's going on to be permanent? Can I ask if . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: He is already on permanent. It's reflecting the decision that was made earlier this year.

MR. WRIGHT: By your administration?

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

MR. WRIGHT: And did we ever sort out the problem of his not being a member of the Bar?

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

MR. WRIGHT: In what way was that sorted out?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, partially it was sorted out by a matter of a complaint that was brought against and in terms of the resolution of that issue. It dealt with that side of it, and in terms of other parliamentary jurisdictions there's no requirement to be a member.

MR. WRIGHT: It was always agreed there was no formal re-

quirement. It was just undesirable.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In your opinion.

MR. WRIGHT: In my opinion, Mr. Chairman, you have a non-lawyer advising members on their legal rights.

DR. McNEIL: You have an individual who's not a member of the Bar advising members on their legal rights -- not a nonlawyer.

MR. WRIGHT: True, true. There are lots of nonlawyers around who are not members of the Bar, but for everyone else we require that people giving legal advice be members of the Bar. It's a bad precedent, in my view, but . . .

MR. TAYLOR: You're getting to sound like the school-teachers, Mr. Wright. One organization is trying to run everything. Lawyers are split into two; you can be a lawyer without being a member of the Bar.

MR. WRIGHT: No, I just don't think we should have one rule for ourselves and another rule for everyone else. Anyway, I made the point.

MR. TAYLOR: Esso is full of lawyers giving advice that aren't members of the Bar.

MR. WRIGHT: That's right, but they're not giving advice to people except in relation to company matters. But one of the duties of the Law Clerk is to give advice to members privately about matters to do with their duties as they see it.

MR. TAYLOR: I don't see any difference.

MR. WRIGHT: I mean, if it was just a case of the Law Clerk advising the administration on their functions and advising the Speaker and so on, then there's no requirement in principle, of course, in the rules, but one of the functions of the Law Clerk is to give general legal advice. That's not in-house advice; that's to assist the members in their personal capacity. Anyway, I've made the point.

MR. CHAIRMAN: With due respect, even when one has the full qualifications, the advice isn't always exactly right on, either.

MR. WRIGHT: It could be completely lousy, I agree. And the advice . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: We find the same difficulty -- and I'm sorry to say it with the member present -- with respect to Members' Services orders. So there's no guarantee that because you've got degrees or qualifications, whether it's you or me, we're always going to be right.

MR. WRIGHT: That's just so obvious that it's hardly worth stating, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I think in light of the conversation it is worth stating.

MR. WRIGHT: It applies to doctors and applies to everybody

that qualifications aren't a guarantee of anything. It's just that we make it the rule for everyone else.

MS BARRETT: One question. What prevents Michael Ritter from becoming a member of the Bar? Why can't he be a member?

MR. CHAIRMAN: His choice.

MR. TAYLOR: He's one that doesn't want to be identified with the birds he flies with. That's all it means.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's his choice. It's a very conscious decision on his part that he does not wish to be so.

MR. WRIGHT: This can be interpreted as an attack on the individual. It's not that, Mr. Chairman. It's an attack on the principle of the thing: that we shouldn't be employing to give legal advice to members people who are not qualified to do that. If they qualify in the legal sense, we require in law if they step outside the door. That's all.

MR. CAMPBELL: Mr. Chairman, you know, really this qualification comes in many ways, and certainly we've experience in some in this committee. My limited experience with this profession is that you usually have to hire one to check and see what the other one did while he was there.

MR. TAYLOR: And another one to challenge the bill the first two give you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay; additional comment? Are there questions with regard to page 2? Do we have agreement with page 2?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 3, Pages.

DR. McNEIL: The only change here is the \$10,000 in wage funds for secretarial/clerical support for the conference workload.

MR. TAYLOR: This is a classic example of the 'yinging and yanging' on the election. If there's an election, there are no pages.

DR. McNEIL: I beg your pardon?

MR. TAYLOR: If you have an election, there'll be no pages, or very, very little . . .

DR. McNEIL: This is a fiscal . . .

MS BARRETT: Well, go ahead and move to strike it. Let's just see this.

MR. TAYLOR: I'm just trying to say, the consistency of the thing . . . This is consistent.

MS BARRETT: Well, you're the one that introduced the inconsistency.

MR. TAYLOR: This is assuming -- why are you so excited? Wait another month and the NDP will disappear from the polls entirely. You don't have to have an election tomorrow.

MS BARRETT: You're dreaming in technicolour, dollink.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. The question, Westlock-Sturgeon, is whether there will be a session or not this year?

MR. TAYLOR: No, I'm just saying that this is fine; this is correct budgeting. But earlier, when we were trying to anticipate an election by putting money in -- if you were anticipating an election, you would be dropping the pages this time, so let's leave them in.

DR. McNEIL: Just a comment. That \$20,000 in the earlier budget was not just for an election. There are peak periods during the year that put a lot of pressure on payroll: income tax and so on. So a portion of that funding was to deal with those contingencies as well.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay; we dealt with that one.
Page 3. Agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 4. Questions?

MR. TAYLOR: I'd like to ask a question on the Security Force. Is this just more of the same staff we already have there?

DR. McNEIL: There are no additions.

MR. TAYLOR: There's no change in security?

DR. McNEIL: It's the same staff, but what we did last year was change their hiring arrangements. They had very little benefit coverage, and they did not have any disability coverage, which was a major concern, given the roles they play and the potential for injury. So the increases there reflect the need to improve their benefits, especially in the area of disability coverage if they're injured on the job.

MR. TAYLOR: I just bring it up because I thought we were overhauling the security system. That's going to appear somewhere else, is it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's right. As I mentioned, the report is supposedly due in next week.

MR. TAYLOR: Would that mean that we'd come back and change page 4?

MR. CHAIRMAN: It depends what the final solution would be about which of the three areas are covering the security: Solicitor General; Public Works, Supply and Services; and the office of the Speaker. So this is a stand-pat situation: no new employees.

Agreement on page 4?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 5.

DR. McNEIL: Everything there just follows from the previous things on the previous pages.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 6.

MR. TAYLOR: There you are, hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona, a 38.9 percent increase to the Bar Association. We are paying our dues.

MRS. MIROSH: So we're lucky, then, if he doesn't want to belong, right? It saves us 250 bucks.

MR. BOGLE: Under the Memberships column, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, \$13,500. Is that constant with the figure for the current fiscal year, or is it an increase? I see it's transferred from another area, so I can't tell.

DR. McNEIL: It's a slight increase. It was \$11,500 previously. That should be reflected there but it's not. That just reflects an increase in the fee, and sometimes it reflects a change in the pound-to-dollar conversion too. It jumps up and down.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay for page 6?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's been communicated to me that it's time for a coffee break. Would you like to stretch your legs for a few minutes, grab another muffin?

[The committee recessed from 10:14 a.m. to 10:25 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. We're on page 7, the matter of travel and all.

MS BARRETT: I just found the one I want: the CPA general conference. That's it.

MR. WRIGHT: You don't have a spouse.

MS BARRETT: It doesn't matter; I'll take you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That way you save money.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, I wanted to ask a couple of questions relating to the international seminar planned for Zambia. I see we're recommending one delegate and spouse for 10 days for \$14,084. I wondered if the Chair could share with the committee the relevance of this conference or seminar, the importance of it, in that the general Commonwealth Parliamentary Association conference is in Barbados.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The international seminar has sort of been reinstituted, and the first one is to be held in Zambia in June. The next one is scheduled to take place in Canada in 1990. When I saw the general information brochure or letter go out from London, I decided that we would put in at least -- they were soliciting applications, because not many are called and few are chosen. So that's how we placed this one into the budget. It's scheduled for June, and at that time I thought perhaps the House would be going in earlier and there was the

slightest chance we might be out a lot earlier and, therefore, wouldn't be necessitating the absence from the House of one member.

When I was in Newfoundland two weeks ago at our national Table officers meeting, it came to my attention that Newfoundland, in particular, had been very keen to go to this particular seminar. I don't think there's going to be a whole bunch of places awarded Canada, and because of us going into the House a bit later than I had anticipated, I have really decided it'd be in our best interests to withdraw in favour of Newfoundland. So I'm glad you raise it.

MR. BOGLE: A further point, Mr. Chairman. Last year you, as Speaker of the House, and I attended the Commonwealth parliamentary conference in Australia. The year before, the members for Cypress-Redcliff and Innisfail attended. That was the first opportunity I'd had to attend a Commonwealth parliamentary conference out of Canada, and I thought it was a tremendous experience and one which members should have an opportunity to participate in. It really showed the nature of the Commonwealth. It is an entity that is held together, of course, by traditional parliamentary process, but when you see the links between the various countries from the continents, all corners of the world, working together on a multitude of issues, it is really a remarkable thing.

I also noted that some provinces send large delegations; others send very small delegations. I think Quebec had six delegates at the conference. A couple of provinces sent only one. I came back from that conference with a strong view that we should be looking at increasing our contingent. Members may recall that prior to our cost-cutting measures we did have a budget for three members. I think that in addition to the Speaker, two members should have the opportunity to go.

Therefore, I would like to move that the CPA international seminar in Zambia, with a budget of \$14,084, be canceled and that the appropriate dollars be added to the CPA General Conference scheduled for Barbados so that we could have three delegates plus spouses involved in that particular activity.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On the motion, Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, that seems reasonable.

You know, I don't understand why you're not going to go to Zambia though. The House should be out by then, right? But mainly just to defer to Newfoundland?

Okay. The other thing is this. Being a single person, I recognize that if you have . . . For instance, let's say you've got three delegates going to CPA General Conference, and one of them is single; then there's no spouse coming along there. Then that would also leave room for another MLA. So I don't mind what you're proposing; I just think, you know, it should provide for -- in the instance of single people, if they go, then why couldn't another single MLA go or another MLA without a spouse go? Do you see what I mean? It's the same dollars.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: I think there's only one problem with what the Member for Edmonton-Highlands has said. In these calculations it's true that it accounts for two airfare tickets, but it accounts for one hotel room. And we wouldn't want to start

rumours like that.

MS BARRETT: But I mean that's a minor, minor difference in the cost, Alan.

MR. TAYLOR: You've handled that story before, haven't you.

MS BARRETT: I am not proposing to bunk in with anybody. I'm just saying that I think there are single MLAs here, and you know, if you're going to change this budget, then surely it doesn't cost very much more to add an additional room if you've got two single MLAs and two couples going. Do you get my picture?

MR. TAYLOR: I wish you and Hyland would conduct this study during coffee time rather than when we're in a meeting.

MS BARRETT: All right; I'll go get married then.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You don't have to be that radical. [interjections]

MS BARRETT: Good. Bob Elliott says it's okay. So come on, vote yes.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, under this element of Travel Expenses, while we are asked to approve the number of members plus spouses -- and we have had a discussion in past meetings about spousal travel and whether that was appropriate or not -- it goes without saying that the Speaker has flexibility. So if indeed there is a situation where a member does not have a spouse and has been selected to attend a conference, the Speaker has certain latitude in what else could be done with the dollars, within the dollar framework. But I don't want to lose sight of the importance of budgeting for delegates plus spouses.

MS BARRETT: No, that's fine, if you're really sure that the Speaker has the power, given the way this is phrased.

MR. BOGLE: Ask the Speaker.

MS BARRETT: All right, Mr. Speaker, rule.

MR. WRIGHT: Well, Mr. Chairman, it could be the case that a member would be willing to go and actually pay for the room, if that's the problem.

MS BARRETT: Okay.

MR. BOGLE: For instance, I am aware that one of our sister committees decided internally that there was a greater interest in one conference than another. Therefore, they did some imaginative work without increasing their total budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In light of the conversation, there is indeed flexibility. Right.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman, maybe this has been covered some other time, but what is the principle of selection?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The principle of selection has been that we keep track in our office as best we can as to which members have gone on various conferences. We have this sheet with

various lines. We look to where someone has been getting travel through the Legislative Offices Committee or Public Accounts or something like that, so we try to spread it around. Contact is also made with each individual caucus to see if that causes any problems. So that scorecard continues.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, just a . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is this the same giggle as before or another one?

MR. HYLAND: No, this is a different one, just to support additional members going. You know, there were times when we all wondered who was going and if it was getting moved around enough. After going to the one I did two years ago, we're probably one of the very few provinces that move the delegates around to these meetings. Indeed, because you didn't go, I was allowed to be the head of the delegation for Alberta, which was unusual. Most of the other delegations are led by Speakers, and nobody else gets a chance to say anything. But it showed that at least in our system individuals can get to go, whereas in some of the other groups it becomes almost an old boys' club. Once you're in, you continue to go and go and go; nobody else gets a shot at it. At least under our system -- and this will help. With one addition we'll have more people going and, I think, more understanding of the parliamentary system when we're through.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, I think that is actually true here in Alberta. Nobody I know of has groused that it's sort of an unfair system. You know, people do get their chance, and it's fair to all caucuses, to my knowledge.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And I must say that it's my understanding that under the present Premier -- no, I know it is -- there is no interference whatsoever. I understood that in times past there was some kind of influence that might have been given prior to 1986. But there's been none since '86.

MR. TAYLOR: My observation, Mr. Chairman, is that it has been quite fair.

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate you clarifying the position of our Premier with respect to this matter, because that certainly is correct. But I have a question with respect to the continuing discriminatory practice of the chairman in terms of allocating these slots. Will it be the intent of the chairman to continue his discrimination against certain members of this particular committee?

MR. CHAIRMAN: One cabinet minister was sent on one conference, but I'll take your plea into . . .

MR. TAYLOR: You made your mistake, though. You gave him a return ticket.

MR. BOGLE: All kidding aside, the practice that's exercised in Alberta should be followed by other jurisdictions. Ministers have ample opportunity for travel within their portfolios and do have need to be exchanging ideas with their colleagues from not only other provinces and the federal government but, on occasion, another jurisdiction in the world. The Commonwealth Par-

liamentary Association is something for private members and should continue to be.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I move that the question be called.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, if that's the agreed-upon view of the committee, I would withdraw the phraseology I used, "discriminatory practice," and recognize that the chairman is implementing the decision of the committee with respect to members of Executive Council who may be a member of this committee.

MS BARRETT: An honourable thing to do indeed.
Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question that's before us is to delete the funds for the seminar in Zambia and to add additional funds to the CPA General Conference in Barbados. All those in favour?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

Additional comments with regard to pages 7 and 8? Well, 7 is fine, so anything with regard to 8?

MS BARRETT: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right; everyone agrees on 8?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, just one little item having to do with the Sergeant-at-Arms conference, where it basically says three days. We're talking about a situation here where an individual would have to literally get in an airplane for nine hours both ways. Now, three days seems to be a short amount of time. If you just land there and . . . It's a minor point, but there is a great fatigue factor in terms of getting on an airplane, and if you're going to send the poor fellow there for three days, it should be extended by a couple, anyway, so that he can get his feet on the ground and acclimatize. It would be retrogressive for a matter of a few dollars to take something away from it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that agreed? Hang on. Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: Yeah. I think we should watch that, because I remember when I went to Hong Kong, it was cheaper to go two days early. We saved about three times what the hotel rooms cost in airfare. So we should check that, because it might be a lot cheaper to pay his room and board for a couple of extra days or whatever than it is to try and move him in at that kind of a rate.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. There's agreement on this or . . . Sorry; Calgary-Glenmore.

MRS. MIROSH: I think the lodging and meals there are really expensive. I think that should probably be doubled.

MS BARRETT: No, the lodging in London comes to about \$200 a night in Canadian dollars. That part is right on. But you're right about the meals.

DR. McNEIL: I'll adjust those figures.

MR. HYLAND: Oscar doesn't eat much.

MRS. MIROSH: It depends what kind of hotel.

MS BARRETT: Well, you can get it pretty nice for \$200 a night in Canadian dollars. It's not quite the Ritz but it's, you know, Chateau Lacombe quality, if you know what I'm saying. It's pretty good at that rate.

MR. WRIGHT: How does Parliamentary Counsel get so lucky as to go to Yellowknife?

MS BARRETT: Yeah, right. Jeez.

MR. SCARLETT: It's their turn.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. A suggestion has been made by Rod that the money from the Zambia we'll put into the extra delegate to Barbados and also to help flesh out this one for the London one.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you.

MS BARRETT: I have a question for page 9. Now, is this a government car that's being insured?

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

MS BARRETT: I thought the government didn't pay insurance. I thought they were self-insuring.

DR. McNEIL: Well, there's a transfer provision; that's all. They are self-insuring. They charge the Assembly for that insurance.

MS BARRETT: Okay. I didn't realize that, but okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay for page 9?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 10.

DR. McNEIL: It just reflects the transfer from one account to another.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Agreed with page 10?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 11.

DR. McNEIL: The increase here relates to the maintenance on new equipment in the House Services area, both the computer typesetting equipment and microcomputers.

MS BARRETT: Are those laser printers?

DR. McNEIL: No.

MS BARRETT: We should get laser.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Agreement on 11?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have laser printers on some of the other stuff, don't we? In *Hansard*?

MS BARRETT: Oh, you do, eh?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Now, on page 12; minus 12 percent overall.

MR. CAMPBELL: What's this Sessional Laundry Service? What does that include?

DR. McNEIL: That includes all the pages, security staff, House staff, Speaker -- the shirts and all that stuff; laundry and dry cleaning of all that.

MS BARRETT: We ship it out, right?

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

MR. WRIGHT: What happened before?

DR. McNEIL: That's what [interjection]. Well, no; it's been cleaned before. It's just that the estimate last year was too low in terms of what we actually spent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's another one of those things. It's taking more because there are more of those darn shirts -- stuffed, starched shirts.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, this is a question that deals with the item dealing with ACCESS Network, and it's not with the dollars. I would like to know what your view is on the experience of using ACCESS. You will recall that the previous Members' Services Committee had momentous go-arounds in terms of how we were going to deal with the filming of what was going on in the Assembly and what have you. Are we having a pleasant experience with what's been happening in the last year? Is it a negative experience? Are we going to be coming back to this matter again, or have we basically got something resolved for the next fiscal year with respect to what has been happening?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm not aware of any problem with it. It seems to be fine.

MR. KOWALSKI: In other words, it's working fairly well with the dollars we've got in here, because if I recall the arguments of the past, the \$5,800 seems to be a rather good buy, if I can use that expression, compared to the alternatives.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's my understanding, that it's all fine, unless you've been hearing otherwise.

Taber-Warner and then Westlock-Sturgeon. On this point?

MR. BOGLE: Well, I was on the same general subject matter, ACCESS. While I have no complaints with the quality of the service, I still am troubled by the principle that we are paying ACCESS to do what they've been mandated to do. I mean, they're operating as an educational network. They're providing a service to many, many Albertans through cablevision. In a normal situation ACCESS is either buying the material, and therefore paying for it, or in some circumstances they are receiving the material at no cost.

But in this situation we're backwards. We are paying ACCESS to do their job, and I continue to be troubled by it in principle. The \$5,800 is not significant. But when you look at the budget ACCESS receives -- and the vast majority of that comes via the taxpayer through grants from the government -- and we have to vote moneys through the Legislative Assembly so they can do their work, I find it very difficult to accept in principle.

MR. TAYLOR: Can I add, really, partly a comment on the hon. Member for Taber-Warner and partly a question? My understanding is that ACCESS and CKUA are a combination of public funding and private donations.

MS BARRETT: That's correct, absolutely correct.

MR. TAYLOR: Consequently, if you cut them off here, it means you're just making it more difficult. So I don't see anything wrong with paying ACCESS for this. It's not like CBC, in other words; it operates partly from private donations and partly public. So therefore I think it's fair enough.

But the second is more a question. They do a videotape. Is this distributed to the cable stations? Maybe somebody could explain. Is it just one tape that goes into the library? Just what happens with the taping?

MR. SCARLETT: The tapes are distributed to the cable companies. That's the cost.

MR. TAYLOR: Do they in turn also make broadcast news? Do the *Herald*, the *Journal*, and whatever it is subscribe to their service?

MR. SCARLETT: That's different. QCTV does the coverage in the House live. Each of the television stations can use clips from QCTV, or they have their own cameras in the House.

MR. TAYLOR: But ACCESS is also covered?

MR. SCARLETT: No. QCTV gives the feed to ACCESS for taping. ACCESS then distributes those tapes.

MR. TAYLOR: So they don't sell the tapes?

MR. SCARLETT: No.

MS BARRETT: To whom do they distribute them?

MR. SCARLETT: Plus it's also the time on the satellite system.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. I've got Edmonton-Highlands, Taber-Warner, and Edmonton-Strathcona.

MS BARRETT: Yeah. I would just add to Nick's comment. He raised the point that I was going to make about ACCESS

also getting nongovernment money to survive. The other thing is that if we didn't pay this, would we still get the service we're getting from ACCESS? I wonder about that. We're not talking about the basic cable here, the live showing or repeat broadcast of question period. It is another matter, and if we wanted that service, we'd probably have to pay somebody else a lot more. Is that correct basically?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't know.

MS BARRETT: Can anybody guess?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Maybe we could come back to that, check back to them.

Taber-Warner

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, there's two points for clarification. First of all, ACCESS has its own channel, and the tapes are used in their entirety on their channel. I think it's correct that other networks have the right to take clips and bits and pieces for their own stories if they wish, but the network channel is used — in my constituency, for instance, it goes on — I believe it's 11 in the evening, so you can watch question period in its entirety. That's point number one.

I believe that if we check back we'll find that at one time, when one of the cable companies here in Edmonton did the taping, initially there was no charge to government at all. Then a proposal was made when they were in the process of transferring that service over to ACCESS, where ACCESS wanted a sum of money. But initially the service was provided because it was doing two things: it was meeting a Canadian content requirement by the cable companies, and it was also providing a service for their viewers.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Edmonton-Strathcona.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes. Well, Taber-Warner's right about the mandate and the principle of the thing, Mr. Chairman, but it does beg the question that the broadcast of question period is educational. Perhaps they would take a different view. If they did, then we are in effect paying them to carry a service which we think is educational. Alternatively, it really is within their mandate — I suspect it probably is — but to do it, they would probably have to increase their budget under another description, and we the taxpayers would end up paying anyway.

So I think in general ACCESS is such a good service that we shouldn't too narrowly scrutinize the precise method of their getting the money.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll still make another phone call.

All right. We have one slight typo on page 12: Speech from the Throne, \$6,300, \$6,300.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, I was wondering about this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think we can take off the 10 percent price increase.

MS BARRETT: Either that or somebody's calculator broke or something.

DR. McNEIL: The calculator broke down.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right for page 12 then?

MS BARRETT: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
And 13 and 14?

MS BARRETT: How many *Parliamentary Guides* do we order?

DR. McNEIL: One per member.

MS BARRETT: They're not cheap, are they?

DR. McNEIL: No.

MR. HYLAND: Well, neither is *Erskine May*, just to know the rules.

DR. McNEIL: This is the 21st edition of *Erskine May* that's expected to be out, I think, in October. That's the major increase there.

MR. WRIGHT: Is *Parliamentary Guide* the one that had the enormous Social Credit membership in the Assembly?

DR. McNEIL: Yes, that was it.

MR. SCARLETT: [Inaudible] legislatures.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's Canadian Legislatures, put out by the former Clerk from Ontario.

DR. McNEIL: The former Deputy Clerk or administrator in Ontario, yeah. The *Parliamentary Guide* is the one.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is the magazine type.

MR. WRIGHT: Oh, that's it. Yes, I know it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Agreement on page 14?

MS BARRETT: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 15. There's that transfer figure of . . .

DR. McNEIL: For the Parliamentary Association.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And Commonwealth headquarters, and then it's been increased. The question [inaudible].

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Agreement on page 15?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sixteen. Thank you.
Sixteen. This is the regularization that this follows on.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Page 17. What's being distributed now is the most recent draft of what the conference will be, starting in Calgary and ending up in Edmonton, and running from July 12 through to Monday the 17th. This, of course, has already taken up a fair amount of staff time.

In terms of the arrangements, we expect at least 250 delegates from across Canada and offshore. Invitations have gone out to the Speaker at Westminster, also New Zealand, and Barbados, because Barbados is hosting this year's CPA. We have also sent letters of invitation to the governors, the Speakers, and the president of the other Chamber in the states that border the 49th -- not all the way across. So we've got North Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Washington state. We've had one reply back, one declining from the States, but the Governor of Montana expressed an interest that he'll come. But what we have here basically are roughly delegations of five, six, whatever, coming from each of the provinces and Territories, plus the federal Senate and the House of Commons. And I've got a feeling that we might be expected to host more than 250 by the time we're finished, because Alberta seems to be a pretty popular spot.

Topics have not been finalized because we're waiting for additional input from the other provinces and Territories. We would be having a number of delegates ourselves, and with some of the receptions and that we'll pick up the local MLAs. You know, the stuff that's in Calgary would pick up people from central and southern Alberta, and also we'll do the turn-about when we come up to Edmonton. You see there that we have the Lieutenant Governor involved, and we also have the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Premier for the opening.

Taber-Warner.

MR. BOGLE: I wanted to speak in favour of the B budget item. It's our turn to host the conference, and I believe one of our sister standing committees has a conference that is to be hosted this year as well, which will come up later on.

I did want to build upon your last comments, and that is the involvement of MLAs. In Australia there were preconference tours in various states, and I couldn't help but notice how difficult it was for the staff of the Clerk to co-ordinate everything, because you had different groups going different places, and it seemed a logical spot for elected members to be more fully involved. Therefore, I'm pleased with your remarks and would like to see either members of this committee and/or MLAs from various areas involved in assisting in the hosting, because we want to ensure that delegates who come not only are treated well but have some very fond memories of Alberta when they leave.

I think when you're visiting with your elected colleagues from other parts of the Commonwealth, there's a tremendous opportunity to exchange ideas. I know that in our case my wife and I made friends with a couple from South Australia, and in part that's because of the sharing. He happens to represent a rural constituency with an irrigation district within it, so there was a common ground to build, and it certainly made our trip to Australia more pleasant. We're corresponding now from time to time and keeping in touch.

So I merely wanted to make that recommendation to you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, speaking in support of this B budget item, even though it may look like a large amount, we must remember that this occurs -- what? -- once in every 10 years. So in reality, though it comes in as a B budget item,

we're not hit with it very often.

In commenting on what the Member for Taber-Warner said and in looking through the suggested schedule, I found the preconference tours to be useful and interesting when I went to that conference in Malaysia. That's where you really got to meet those you were with, because you were with a smaller group. I'm sure all MLAs -- I would be willing to do it, and I'm sure all others from all parties would. If people were sent out to their area in smaller groups, then individuals could handle them with their own vehicles, et cetera. It might just take a day, but you could show people a lot of country in this province, if you're split into 10 different groups or something, in one day.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's a good idea.

There's also a spousal and offspring program that we haven't distributed.

MS BARRETT: When they get to the Leg., are you planning anything that would allow MLAs to come and meet up with the delegates? You are?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MS BARRETT: Okay. So you'll let us know about that, eh?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah, sure.

MS BARRETT: Because I think that's a nice idea, if we can come and meet people from across Canada, you know -- sister and brother parliamentarians.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. A lot of that would occur that evening at the McKay Avenue school site where, you know, they're back to the original site of the Legislature. We would have a larger guest list that night.

MS BARRETT: Oh, yeah, that's a good idea. Okay, that's what I was getting at. Something like that anyway. Good.

Everybody's done?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Of course, it also puts an extra workload on the staff. Charlene's been through this before in terms of having to be involved in the hosting. We're also trying to get some outside sponsorship for various things, looking after some of the -- Rod's been able to work with one of the breweries to get that part looked after. I'm trying to find a sponsor where we can find an extra five grand to give them all white Alberta Stetsons.

MS BARRETT: Hey, just a minute now. That's a little Calgary chauvinism talking here. I can smell it from a mile away.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's why I'm raising the money in Calgary.

MS BARRETT: Oh, that's true. I see what you're getting at. Okay, that's fine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Funny; I thought cowboy hats got worn all over the province.

Anyway, all those in favour of page 17?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Say "Yahoo!" Okay.

Now, do we have agreement to section 3 with the changes to be made? Moved by Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Yes. I have absolute agreement with everything except that I have one question and one editorial comment. The editorial comment does not apply to this section; it applies to the entire booklet. Why on earth are we still using an ancient phrase called "man-years?" Why don't we call them "staff-years," which is gender-neutral?

DR. McNEIL: Or "person-years."

MS BARRETT: Or "person-years."

MR. CHAIRMAN: Comment received; okay.

MRS. MIROSH: "Woman-years."

MS BARRETT: All right.

No, I don't know that there's a requirement, but I'd sure like to see that changed. That doesn't show anymore in the general estimates, does it? They changed the wording.

DR. McNEIL: I wasn't aware that they had. Maybe. But we'll change it to "staff."

MS BARRETT: Well, yeah. You might think it's minor, but most things have been changed to try to be gender-neutral.

MR. WRIGHT: "Staff-years" is my preference. It has to be appropriate.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, I agree; "staff-years" is the appropriate.

My question, then, is: why don't you show something for your secretary, admin officer, and clerk-stenographer? Why are these blanks? Is it just that you've added the totals and it's the totals we're looking at?

MR. CHAIRMAN: What page are we?

MS BARRETT: I'm sorry; pages 2 and 3.

DR. McNEIL: It's just the totals.

MS BARRETT: Oh, okay. Anyway, my motion to approve stands.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, thank you. Motion to approve the section with the necessary changes. All those in favour? Opposed? Carried. Thank you very much.

MS BARRETT: Okay, now we'll go to 9?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think now we're going to go over to 11. Perhaps between now and a quarter to 12 we can deal with *Hansard* and the library, but if not, so be it.

We'll start with *Hansard*.

MS BARRETT: Did you get the committee people for Monday?

MR. CHAIRMAN: All except two.

All right; section 11. David, do you want to do the overview on that page, and then Gary can pick it up from there as we go page by page on questions.

DR. McNEIL: Overall, the A budget projects a decrease of 1.8 percent. The increases in the budget relate primarily to increases in salaries and wages, negotiated adjustments, and the decrease in the Supplies and Services budget related to printing. There are a couple of B budget items that I'll let Gary speak to rather than myself. So in terms of a page-by-page analysis, starting on page 2, again it's merit and market adjustments and reclassifications.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Any questions with regard to page 2?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, mine actually relates to page 1. I just want to know how you got some of these. Like, why did freight and postage go down so much? Is it because of the wonderful world of fax machines and stuff like that?

DR. GARRISON: A lot of that was because of a decrease in subscription numbers.

MS BARRETT: Oh, oh. That's what I wondered.

DR. GARRISON: As you know, a year or so ago the subscription price increased, and our total number of subscriptions went down by about 350.

MS BARRETT: And how many had they been before?

DR. GARRISON: There were about 1,000 paid subscriptions. Now we're down to about 650. But that enabled us to hold our printing costs pretty close to what they've been as well.

MS BARRETT: Do you mind if I just go on for a moment? The subscribers that dropped off weren't institutional subscribers like libraries, were they?

DR. GARRISON: I really can't tell you. We don't handle the subscriptions in our office. They're handled in general administration.

MS BARRETT: Who can?

DR. GARRISON: Jane Pickard is the subscriptions clerk, so she would have all the details on that.

MS BARRETT: I see. That worried me; that's what I thought that was about.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll get you some information on it.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, I would like to know. The thing is, if it's individuals, we've got an individual rate that I still think is reasonable. Remember, we went through this and did some amendments, and you'd have to be quite poor not to be able to afford them. But I worry about the institutionals if it's libraries,

because that means that public access would have been decreased a lot, and that's a really important consideration as far as I'm concerned.

DR. GARRISON: My understanding is that a lot of the cancellations were government departments who simply couldn't afford to get as many copies as they had in the past.

MR. CAMPBELL: You're sure it wasn't the content?

MS BARRETT: Why, were you speaking last year, Jack?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Well, I've got Rod phoning over to check on that.

MS BARRETT: Okay, thanks. That's all.
How's life with in-house production?

DR. GARRISON: Fine. It worked very well.

MS BARRETT: Good.

MR. TAYLOR: Apropos of that, I think I would be interested, along with the Member for Edmonton-Highlands, in some sort of breakdown as to who dropped off. Is that part coming?

MS BARRETT: Yeah. Whatever we do under this vote won't make any difference anyway. If we want to change or relook at the budget price, we can do that separately.

MR. TAYLOR: I wasn't thinking of the budget. I was just thinking of a point of information that maybe *Hansard* could circulate as to how many government departments, institutions, and individuals dropped off. It's three categories. Would that be very easy to do?

DR. McNEIL: We'll develop a list.

DR. GARRISON: It might take a while, but I'm not sure how long.

MR. TAYLOR: We're used to it. There's not going to be an election for a year anyhow.

MS BARRETT: Well, I'm not sure that you need it in all that detail. Nick, the person who handles it will be able to give us a broad idea, and if we find out that, for instance, there's a lot of public libraries, then I think we have to look again. If it's mainly departments that have access through more central means, like if they just cut down to one or two subscriptions from eight, then I don't think it's a problem.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. The information's requested, and some of it's on the way.

MS BARRETT: Nonetheless, I think we've got a motion to approve the whole thing, and I agree with it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. On page 2 there's a word to be changed, from "man-years" to "staff-years."

MS BARRETT: Yeah. That's throughout the book, right?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MS BARRETT: Okay; thanks.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Everything's fine on page 2: are you in agreement?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Page 3: any comments on that page, Gary?

DR. GARRISON: Well, the reason for the increase on page 3 under Wages is that if you look at the last three years, the number of hours the House has sat per sitting day has increased dramatically. There were 3.8 hours per day in 1986, 4.1 in '87, and 4.3 in '88. Our costs in the wage area are very closely tied to the number of hours per sitting day, especially when you get into very late nights, because you're into overtime rates basically. So it's more than just an add-on quality there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Agreement on page 3?

MR. WRIGHT: Can you just explain that? I agree with the numbers, Mr. Chairman. I can see overtime, but apart from overtime the payment is tied to the length of time we sit?

MS BARRETT: Because it takes that much longer. If you're sitting longer, you've got to write out more copy, edit more copy.

MR. WRIGHT: True, true. But aren't the people on salary?

MS BARRETT: No.

DR. GARRISON: These are wage people, people who are paid by the hour, and the number of hours they work is directly related to that.

MR. WRIGHT: I see, of course, if they're on that sort of contract. But how many of your staff are?

DR. GARRISON: We have a total of 21 people. One of them is a contract person, a fee-for-service contractor, five of them are full-time, and the rest are on wages. So that would be -- I believe that's right -- 15 people on wages out of 21.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And when the House finally shuts down, your staff are there about how much longer, another two hours?

DR. GARRISON: About that, yes. Of course, when the House breaks at 5:30, we don't stop at 5:30. We have people that are working right through.

MR. WRIGHT: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Yes. I'm having a bit of trouble just understanding the math of it, all the percentage changes of these, you know, relatively from 15 to 16 or whatever it is -- 24 percent -- and the warrant funding of \$13,800. Wasn't that paid anyhow to some of the salaries above? In other words, is that \$13,800 to

an entirely new individual, or was the \$13,800 scattered out amongst the 15 other things up above?

DR. GARRISON: It was spread out among everybody, just the overall cost of . . .

MR. TAYLOR: It was. So actually the percentage change is really not that. If you would have spread that warrant funding amongst them, the percentage change would be only in the 8 percent category rather than 16 percent?

DR. GARRISON: That's about right.

MR. TAYLOR: These people are not receiving a 19 percent raise, really.

DR. GARRISON: Oh, no.

MR. TAYLOR: Let's say they're really receiving only about an 8 percent, because of . . .

MS BARRETT: That's why it says 8.2 at the bottom. When you compare last year's real . . .

MR. TAYLOR: I was just having a little trouble following the math as to where.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Approval on page 3?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 4. It pretty well follows along. Agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 5, Staff Development.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
Page 6.

MS BARRETT: Oh, another lucky person who gets to go to northern Canada, huh? Gee.

DR. GARRISON: Not in the winter though.

MS BARRETT: Wouldn't matter. No difference between here and there right now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Agreement on page 6?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 7.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 8.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And page 9.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ten: repair and maintenance.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Eleven.

DR. GARRISON: As I mentioned earlier, this reflects the open tendering process that we went through last fall, and the prices under the printing there are the prices of the new contract for 1989.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Page 12.

MS BARRETT: I just want to ask one question on page 12. What do you have to do to maintain software? That's just programmed, isn't it?

DR. GARRISON: Yeah. Well, it's standard practice that software always has to be maintained, especially if it's custom software, which is what this was.

MS BARRETT: You mean like fine-tuning a program?

DR. GARRISON: Basically, that's what it is, yes.

MS BARRETT: Really? Okay, great.

MR. TAYLOR: I'm just kind of puzzled that on page 11 in printing of mailing covers, you've dropped \$3,100; it says it's not necessary. Then the remaining services jumped \$6,000 there. Are we going backwards here or . . . In other words, it looks like we saved money by dropping mailing covers, and suddenly our mailing services jumped \$6,000.

DR. GARRISON: The mailing services, that's what we would pay to someone to put labels onto the issues that get put in the mail.

MR. TAYLOR: But the old mailing covers -- and the labels then, because we don't . . .

DR. GARRISON: Well, the old mailing covers were an extra sheet that was printed and put on the outside of each issue. That's the \$3,100 on page 11.

MR. TAYLOR: Yes.

DR. GARRISON: On page 12 you've got addressing of mailing covers, \$5,725. That was done at the Terrace Building, the data centre. That was how we got the actual addresses printed on each mailing cover. In addition, there is a charge for attaching these mailing covers to the outside of the *Hansard* issues.

MS BARRETT: So in fact you were spending something like \$9,000 to do all this, and you can bring it down to \$6,000.

DR. GARRISON: That's basically it, yeah.

MR. TAYLOR: I see.

MS BARRETT: Makes sense.

DR. GARRISON: Well, once we use up the existing stock of mailing covers anyway.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right.

MR. WRIGHT: Can you just say what you are searching for on the on-line computer text searching?

DR. GARRISON: This is a service we instituted on a trial basis in 1988, I guess partly as a result of a user survey we did the year before. This is basically a service that's not just for *Hansard*; it's for anybody who wants to search *Hansard*.

MR. WRIGHT: Oh, I see.

DR. GARRISON: There's an item in the B budget that covers this. I don't know if you want to discuss this now or later, but it's basically a service to anybody.

MR. WRIGHT: Of *Hansard*; that's what I wanted to know.

DR. GARRISON: Yeah, a search of anything that was said and printed in *Hansard*.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay? Pages 11 and 12 are now approved. Page 13. Is there agreement on page 13?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 14.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Fifteen.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sixteen takes us to B budget items.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, before we get on to that, just to say here that one of Gary's staff did a lot of work in circulating a letter to us and getting t-shirts and sweatshirts. I think the whole office should be commended, because from what I've heard of those who received them, MLAs and staff, it built some enthusiasm around this building, this organization, that we haven't had before.

MS BARRETT: I agree.

MR. HYLAND: I think it really did a lot of good, and I would hope that he would forward that on to her.

MS BARRETT: So thank Mary.

DR. GARRISON: Oh, I sure will; I'll pass that on to Mary. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Okay. Page 16, B budget. First one, on-line search project.

Gary.

DR. GARRISON: This was touched on a little bit earlier. As I mentioned, in 1988 it was the first time this was available anywhere. It started as an experimental project to enable anyone to search for key words through the whole *Hansard* text for the session. Since it was an experimental thing, it wasn't really a part of the A budget at that time, so we put it in the B budget as basically a new service. We did a survey following the spring sitting. There were 44 users, and the general response to the survey was that people were very, very appreciative and they wanted us to continue it. We have been looking at ways to recover the cost by charging the users, but that's a very complicated matter and it's still under review. So in order for this to continue in 1989 or at least beyond March 31 of '89, we would have to have some indication from this committee that funding for it would be forthcoming or it would be supported in the future.

MS BARRETT: Oh, I speak strongly in favour of this sort of thing. This is where you really get savings from having computers. This is where the big savings come in, because individual persons searching for information . . . I mean, you're paying the people, whether it's people in a caucus or people in the library or people in *Hansard*, a lot of money on an hourly basis. Right? We should be, anyway, paying them a decent living wage. If you can use a computer that you've already got for 12,000 bucks a year to do that job, you're insane not to. So I just think that if ever there was a B budget that really needs to be approved, this has got to be it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Can the Chair take that as a motion from Edmonton-Highlands?

MS BARRETT: Yeah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On the motion from Edmonton-Highlands with regard to 1, the Online Search Project, page 16, further discussion?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's a call for the question. Those in favour of the motion, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Okay, B budget Online Search Project is approved.

How about if you just wander up on your own and grab your lunch and come on back. We might as well do that. Let's grab it quickly.

[The committee recessed from 11:22 a.m. to 11:26 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: B budget, item 2, Production of Orientation and Public Education Materials.

MR. BOGLE: I'd like an explanation, Mr. Chairman, of the three elements listed: MLA Orientation to the Legislative Assembly -- I assume that's aimed at new members -- 2, Legislative Assembly Office Overview; and 3, Related Printed Material, for \$25,000.

DR. GARRISON: Okay. The first one, MLA Orientation to the Legislative Assembly, would be suitable to help orient new members to the Legislative Assembly in general, but it would

also, as I see it, be useful for showing to visitors who come to the building, for circulating through schools in constituencies or any constituency group: basically to anybody whom we want to tell about the Legislative Assembly. As some of you probably know, there really isn't anything like this in existence right now. Visitor Services gives tours. They've got a few slides, but they really don't have anything that's very complete, a professional package, something that could be used in situations outside the Carillon Room or wherever they give their presentations. So that's basically how I would view that particular item, 1.

Number 2 would be a similarly general thing aimed at a general audience, but again it would be the kind of thing that would describe to members as well as to the public exactly what the Legislative Assembly Office is and what we do, because, as you know, a lot of people don't appreciate that we have this organization called the Legislative Assembly Office, which really isn't a government department, and it's really not the Legislative Assembly either. It just seems to me there is a need in general for educating the public as to what the Legislative Assembly Office is and what it means to have a parliament and have parliamentary independence from government per se.

Number 3, the \$1,000. Basically, that's put in there so we could produce handouts to give to people who view the videos. In the paragraphs above here there are references to a *Hansard* video. It's basically been produced now, but there are just some final touches being put to it, so very shortly it will be available. I had hoped it would be available to show everybody before we got to this point, but the storm and a lot of other things caused a delay. The printed material would simply be things like articles from Under the Dome on how *Hansard* works or what the Sergeant-at-Arms does, that kind of thing. It's reading material that people could take away after they had seen the videos.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

DR. MCNEIL: Just to add to what Gary said, this thrust really comes from the directional plan that was drawn up in '87, in which one of the areas of development that was noted was for public education and orientation. So these reflect the kind of thrust this directional plan identified, that the Assembly should do more of that and develop more of a profile as a separate entity. So this is, I guess, reflective of that direction.

MR. BOGLE: Well, I'd like to move that this B budget item be struck down and that over the next year Dr. Garrison come back and spend some time with our committee and go over the need for these particular areas so that we can more adequately address it, rather than trying to do so during the regular budget process. It may be that there is, in fact, a need to expand the service as originally identified in the directional plan. I note that the existing material was done as a pilot project and that it was paid for out of the existing budget. But I think it's a lot to ask the committee to approve this at this point in time, because I don't think we've got the time to go into it in enough detail. I would like to see it brought back and explained to the committee in a fuller sense. We can question it, and we might have areas where we can add to it and ensure that it's an even better product in the end, but I think that takes time, and we don't have it during the normal budgetary process.

MS BARRETT: Well, the motion actually worries me, because now, I mean, if you start something and then you stop midstream and you start up again another year later . . .

MR. BOGLE: No. With respect, Mr. Chairman.

MS BARRETT: Go ahead.

MR. BOGLE: Well, the directional plan asked for something to be done and asked for it to be paid for out of the existing budget. That's been done. Now they'd like to expand it. So it's not fair to suggest that we're stopping something in midstream. What was asked for has been done and paid for out of the existing budget. Now they want to expand it.

MS BARRETT: I see. Well, I guess I'm not sure that I quite agree with you, because in one sense it says it was a pilot project, but it was meant to be a pilot project that would continue and be part of, I guess, the public education process. Well, my question is: will people, visitors to the Assembly -- let's say you go to the regular tour -- be told that this *Hansard* film, when it's ready, is available for them to watch, if you're just a regular person coming in for a tour, and would that have been the case for subsequent videos?

DR. GARRISON: I believe so. I talked to Maryanne Gibson, and she is very eager to see things like this proceed. She can hardly wait to see the *Hansard* video, as a matter of fact.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Grande Prairie.

DR. ELLIOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm very optimistic about the entire concept because in the constituencies that are somewhat removed from the capital centre, there's a real problem in communicating some of the things that happen around here to groups, both adults and schools. I would say that there would be a real need for this kind of thing, and I'm most enthusiastic about the whole concept.

I have to suggest, though, that as a member of the committee, I'd sure like to see some samples and have some demonstration on the pilot type of material that we've got going, because I would want to assess what we're doing on the basis of how a rural MLA, such as myself, could use it in the constituency. This is where the focus would come, as far as I'm concerned. How can we use this material in a far-away community where students don't get here as frequently as the city students do?

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MS BARRETT: How soon would it be ready?

DR. GARRISON: The pilot? Well, the producer is at the other end of the room, as a matter of fact. Doug Jeneroux is helping produce the video. He just has a few final touches to do, and it will be within a few days.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. I've got Westlock-Sturgeon, Cypress-Redcliff, Edmonton-Highlands.

MR. TAYLOR: I'd like to speak in support of it because, similar to the Member for Grande Prairie, I think of the rural ridings. I also think of the students who are now trying to compress their visits from schools into the Legislature during question period. They all can't do that, so a tape or some other thing to show them when they come would expand and make it easier for Visitor Services, make it more fruitful for the visitors.

As far as the Member for Taber-Warner, I can appreciate the

fact that he wants to have input, but I think this is an ongoing process. I think we run into a hen and an egg process. I'd just as soon get started, and we'll see it. We'll get a chance to have input, to make adjustments in the months and years ahead. If we wait till the whole thing is approved by us now and gone through it, it's going to take a fair amount of time. If they're ready to go, I would support it. Let's get going on it and amend it from time to time in the future.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to support the Member for Taber-Warner's motion for the reason that I'd like to see what's done now before I'd want to say, "It's fine; let's go ahead with some more." Because I think we're going to have to look at it carefully and speak to it on both sides of the issues members brought up points on. One related to students in Edmonton versus school students elsewhere. That may have to be different. People coming into the Legislature versus going to a town hall meeting or a chamber of commerce meeting or something: that may have to be different.

I would feel much better about seeing what we have now and trying it out. Because most of our stuff we said we'll try for a year, and then we'll review it at the end of that period of time. I would feel better about that. It's not the amount of money that bothers me; it's just that I would hate to get the wrong kind of tapes out there or that would express the wrong feeling in various parts. That's the part that concerns me about the programs.

MS BARRETT: Okay, well, I think the concerns from both sides of the issue are fair enough and valid. How about we table Bob's motion until the last day during which we consider budget estimates for the Leg? Hopefully we'll have had a chance to review the thing by then and then make a decision. Who knows; we might all agree one way or another, and if it's this close to being concluded, why don't we just wait a few days and then make our decision?

So it's okay then? I'm going to move that we table Bob's motion until Tuesday.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Doug, is that possible? Okay. I have a motion to table. Those in favour of the table? Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

That, then, hoists this section. All right; thank you, Gary.

DR. GARRISON: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Members' Services orders, I believe.

MR. HYLAND: I was just going to move acceptance of it, but I just remembered we did that. We were just dealing with B budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, we didn't move acceptance of the whole report, other than B. We could do that.

MS BARRETT: Sure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion by Cypress-Redcliff, seconded by Edmonton-Highlands. Those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

Members' Services orders.

DR. McNEIL: Yes. Reflecting motions yesterday, there are a couple of Members' Services orders that have to be imple-

mented. I just thought it would be useful to review the text of these.

The first one relates to switching from Mutual Life to Blue Cross. The way the present order is written, it's really specific to Mutual Life, and the proposed amendment makes the order more generic. So the order says that there's a contract for extended health care, but it's not specific as to who it should be with.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. So the first one is the shorter version.

DR. McNEIL: The first one is the short one, amendment order 2. What that does is strike out Mutual Life Assurance Company of Canada in the order, and it removes the provision of the contract fee with a particular organization. So for contracts entered into from time to time, as appropriate in the order, we don't have to change the name of the company we're dealing with in the order.

MS BARRETT: Right on. Smart.

DR. McNEIL: As most of the order is anyway. In this particular part of it, we've got Mutual Life Assurance of Canada. I'm not certain why that is done.

MS BARRETT: I can tell you why. It's because we wanted the option to review them later on to see if their prices would remain competitive.

Motion to approve.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. There's the motion to approve. This is the shortest one you have here, with regard to striking out Mutual Life Assurance.

DR. McNEIL: Now, this is just the text of it. What will happen is that if you approve the text, the order will be drafted with the effective date and so on on it and signed by the Speaker today or Monday.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Taber-Warner.

MR. BOGLE: Well, my question was with regard to the effective date, and David's just answered that.

DR. McNEIL: The effective date would be as of yesterday, when the original motion was passed.

MS BARRETT: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Other discussion with regard to this Members' Services order? All those in favour of the motion to approve, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

DR. McNEIL: The next one, MSC Order 1/89, relates to extending the benefits options to former members according to the decision that was made yesterday. So what it does is enable the member to elect to continue coverage upon ceasing to be a member. The coverage extends to members' dependants, "in force at the time of ceasing to be a member."

(c) a former Member may elect to take only part of the coverage held . . . and may later discontinue coverage in whole or in part;

(d) coverage for a former Member and dependants, if com-

menced, will continue up to

- (i) 5 years after ceasing to be a Member, or
- (ii) the date the former Member attains the age of 65 years, or
- (iii) the date the former Member gives written notice to discontinue the coverage,

whichever first occurs, and may not thereafter be re-commenced.

So once the individual makes a decision to terminate one or more of the benefits, they won't have the option to come back on the plan.

And

- (e) premiums are paid by the former Member and the Crown in the same proportions as for a Member.

MRS. MIROSH: Since we're not naming the specific life insurance company, there are life insurance companies that do expand the age from 65 to 70 now. Have you checked into that at all to see if that, in fact, occurs?

DR. McNEIL: No, we haven't.

MRS. MIROSH: I'm just wondering, again, if we discussed this age 65.

DR. McNEIL: My understanding is that that is a provision of the group life coverage and the other benefit coverage that we have now.

MRS. MIROSH: We're not going to change it.

DR. McNEIL: We're not talking about just an Assembly group either. We're talking about an entire government in terms of going back to Blue Cross on the extended health care, same with the dental plan and same with the group life insurance. The other one is Alberta health care.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Other questions or comments? Parliamentary Counsel, you're okay?

MR. M. CLEGG: I have no further comments, Mr. Chairman. The only element of the recommendation that isn't actually embodied in this order is the comment about the manner of payment of premiums, either by deduction or by prepayment, but I felt that that was a matter of management and administration which did not have to be incorporated in the order as a matter of law. It would be the kind of administrative detail that we don't have in other orders. Apart from that, I've translated everything, as I understood it, that was in the recommendation which the members accepted.

MS BARRETT: It seems right to me. It looks exactly the way ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other comments?

MS BARRETT: Uh uh. Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Who moved approval?

MS BARRETT: I think Al did yesterday.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, thank you.

MR. HYLAND: I did.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right.

MR. HYLAND: When we used our recommendation, we used the term: ceases to become a Member of the Legislative Assembly. Here we're using a lot more words to say the same thing. I thought the reason why we used "ceases" -- you know, the things said here in 2.1 may be the only way that you may not continue to be a Member of the Legislative Assembly, but we use the words "resigns, chooses not to run ... or is defeated in an election." What happens if you die?

MS BARRETT: Well, obviously you're not going to want to continue.

MR. HYLAND: But it doesn't say. We don't cover death. This is why I remember us using the word "ceases." Now, those who were at the meeting longer the other day can maybe expand, but that's my concern when we break it down, saying, "What happens if the person dies?"

[Mr. Bogle in the Chair]

MR. WRIGHT: Well, do we insure dead people?

MS BARRETT: No, we don't. So if I can jump in, the reason we used the word "ceases" is because we didn't want to be referring to the circumstances under which a member is no longer a member. In other words, it was circumstance neutral. If it's okay with the committee, then I'll move that we amend the order to read:

2.1 Upon ceasing to be a Member of the Legislative Assembly, a former member may elect to ...

How's that?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Well, the Chair is troubled by one thing.

MS BARRETT: What?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is not this committee's responsibility to draft orders. We pass motions. We've done that. Our legal counsel is now back with a draft order. I'm very concerned about getting into the practice where we're trying to amend or alter ...

MS BARRETT: We do it all the time.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: And look at the difficulty we've had trying to sort through things. The Member for Cypress-Redcliff has mentioned how the motion was worded and why, because there are dependants also involved. For instance, I'm thinking of the dental plan as an example. So I'm merely expressing a caution about how we as a committee proceed in terms of drafting matters.

Barrhead wanted to get in and then Edmonton-Strathcona and then counsel.

MR. KOWALSKI: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman. Am I being recognized?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, I don't quite understand the

problem or why we're amending this. If I look at this, we're talking here about extended benefits. Is that not correct?

MS BARRETT: Yeah.

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, in the event of a member who unfortunately leaves by manner of death, there is provision for family and estate currently related under the benefits, is there not? I'd like clarification of that because, you see, in my understanding of it you would include a benefit, life insurance.

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

MR. KOWALSKI: You would include a pension thereafter for the spouse. I'm also of the understanding that there's also provision for continuation of those benefits, even for the children, for a certain period of time.

DR. McNEIL: Yes. We've just gone through that exercise, as you all know.

MR. KOWALSKI: As I recall, I'm not sure if there's an extension here for such things as Blue Cross and medicare and the like. But when a member dies, there is a package of assistance provided, a pretty general package of assistance. This one in here is for former members who don't die but just leave the service of the Legislative Assembly. Under 2.1 it covers the three options: one who resigns, presumably at some point in time in midterm; secondly, he chooses not run for re-election. That's a definitive time. Or he's defeated. That's also a definitive event. Have we not got everything covered?

[Dr. Carter in the Chair]

MS BARRETT: Except for expulsion or something like that.

MR. KOWALSKI: I'm sorry; expulsion?

MR. WRIGHT: Disqualification.

MS BARRETT: Sure.

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, if a member were to be disqualified, there obviously is a reason for disqualification . . .

MR. WRIGHT: Yes.

MR. KOWALSKI: . . . usually having to do with misconduct and/or the like.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Or ineligibility.

MR. KOWALSKI: So if a person, surely, is going to be penalized by disqualification because of misconduct, should he or she then have a benefit?

MR. WRIGHT: Exactly.

MR. KOWALSKI: I don't think so.

MR. WRIGHT: Right. Well, that's the difference between ceasing to be a member and the way it's extended here.

MR. KOWALSKI: Oh, I see.

MS BARRETT: It's a good point.

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, fine point here.

MS BARRETT: Can I interrupt the proceedings to beg leave to withdraw my amendment, Mr. Chairman, with the agreement of everybody here?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Unanimous. Thank you. Okay, that's been withdrawn.

So I have a list here . . .

MR. WRIGHT: We still haven't heard from Parliamentary Counsel on this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right. I have here Edmonton-Strathcona, Parliamentary Counsel, Westlock-Sturgeon, Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes. I had two points to make, Mr. Chairman. The first was the utility of what we're doing when we scrutinize these orders as drafted. We must be satisfied that it does embody the earlier resolution. Of course, sometimes the wording is different, and I think we're entitled to know why it's different.

As for the second point, I think probably Parliamentary Counsel would clear it up if we heard from him, and I'll defer to him.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Clegg.

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, thank you. As the Clerk explained, the question of benefits for the family of a deceased member is a separate policy issue which is addressed in orders, and I think my understanding was that members didn't wish to have this covered by this particular order. In drafting this, I tried several approaches to simplify the wording, but I had to recognize that there were three circumstances of ceasing to be a member which I didn't think were to be covered by that: one, death; two, disqualification; and three, the very rare but certainly possible case of an expulsion, which is different from disqualification. So, therefore, I thought the safest thing was to list the circumstances under which a member would be qualified as a former member, those being resignation, electing not to seek re-election, or being defeated in an election. Thereafter I referred to them as a former member, having ceased in that way to be a member. That's why I drafted it in that way, and I'm glad of the opportunity to find out, to be sure that that's what the committee intends.

MR. TAYLOR: I have a little trouble with it, and maybe I should have examined it more closely in our subcommittee. I don't think the death benefits allow the dependants or spouses to have medical insurance for five years. That's not done, so if you covered it here, you wouldn't be duplicating, and I think it should be. I also think we should try to draft this so it covers a member's death, because it seems to me that the dependants or spouse should be allowed to step into his or her shoes for health insurance because that's probably one of the most important things survivors can have. If it's a young man with a family, I think five years to the widow and dependants of being able to be

part of a group is quite important. At least I thought so when the Member for Cypress-Redcliff said that the original draft we used . . . That's what my mind was tuned to, the dependants' being able to step into the shoes in the case of death. I think that's entirely missing, so there's a hole in our system. The pension and the death benefits, I'll agree, give money, but they do not allow the widow and the dependants to step into the health insurance plan.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, may I move to table? I'd like to move that we table the two orders only in that we had previously agreed to adjourn today at a quarter to 12 and it's now about 10 to 12.

MS BARRETT: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That gives it time for the weekend. On the motion to table?

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman, on the agenda for the next meeting I would like, if possible, to discuss the letter that I guess cropped up yesterday -- unfortunately, I was unable to come to the meeting yesterday -- with regard to computer funding.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, that one. Fine. All right. So that's a different issue.

On the motion to table, those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Opposed, please say no. Carried.

So we have the notice of the other letter to come back on

computers.

MS BARRETT: Yeah.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, just one thing to help us if we table the motion or discuss the motion, because there seems to be some question. Maybe we should have a brief as to what the survivor benefits are for a member when they're . . .

MR. KOWALSKI: We'll provide that as part of the discussion.

MR. TAYLOR: Yeah. For help in our discussion. You seem to think they're covered.

MS BARRETT: Yeah. I don't see a problem in this, given what we said. But we didn't discuss in detail what you're talking about.

MR. TAYLOR: We didn't because I thought it was covered.

MS BARRETT: Yeah. No; we didn't discuss that in that sub-committee. Not at all.

Motion to adjourn.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour of adjournment until Monday afternoon at 1:30, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

[The committee adjourned at 11:55 a.m.]

