

[Chairman: Dr. Carter]

[1:37 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, I thought perhaps we would start off this afternoon by watching this video, and that takes 12 minutes. Then we can factor that back into our discussions, because that was the last item to be dealt with under the *Hansard* section with a B budget item. So, Gary, if you'd like to . . .

[The committee recessed from 1:38 p.m. to 1:50 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Committee members, we'll pause here. Page 8, subsection 9.

Thank you for coming, Calgary-Forest Lawn. As we've done before, we're having the chairmen of most of the committees come before us just to explain the differences in the budget figures. In your case, for this year you had to make comments about that extra hosting as well. So you might make some general comments, and then perhaps they have questions.

MR. PASHAK: Well, there are two parts to our submission. One has to do with the regular annual expenses the Public Accounts Committee makes. The second has to do with the fact that this year the province of Alberta is hosting the annual conference of Public Accounts Committees of Canada.

So with respect to the first part, there will be a decrease in the budget for next year, because people from Alberta will not have to travel outside the province to attend the conference because it's here.

We've also included in the budget this year, a provision that would permit five different members of the committee who normally don't attend the annual conference to be able to attend the conference here in Edmonton.

Now, do you want to just deal with that part of the budget first of all? Are there any questions about the annual general expenditures of the Public Accounts Committee?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Committee members?

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, to just cite on that, my understanding is that Public Accounts is only allowed to meet while the House is sitting. Has that been agreed?

MR. PASHAK: That's correct. There is very little by way of description of the Public Accounts Committee in the Standing Orders; it's just that there shall be a committee. So it has been the practice that the committee members themselves determine when the committee meets, and it's been the practice to date that the committee meets just while we're in session. Of course, it can't meet until after members of the committee are approved by the Legislature itself.

MR. TAYLOR: My understanding is that part of the reform in the Legislature -- the Speaker is sort of leading a reform movement now -- one of the other changes, and certainly many caucuses seem in favour of it, is many more meetings of the Public Accounts Committee. Consequently, I'm just asking whether you had taken that into consideration in your estimates so that we could have many more meetings of the Public Accounts Committee. Because, as you know, now it's a bit of a joke. Some ministers come in there and filibuster for 25 out of 30 minutes and you don't get a chance to go through the departments.

MR. PASHAK: I don't think that in presenting these estimates, it's appropriate to talk about the effectiveness of the Public Accounts. I'm not sure that's what we're debating here today.

But with respect to your question regarding whether we meet in or out of session, you may recall that the Public Accounts Committee did, a few years ago, recommend to Members' Services that we meet outside of session. We made a request for funding for that purpose, but it was turned down by the Members' Services Committee. And it's not the wish of the majority of members on the committee that we meet outside of session; that was clearly determined during the last session.

MR. TAYLOR: That's not the wish of this committee, but this budget is for the next committee that isn't appointed yet.

MR. PASHAK: That's true. But the members of the previous committee did not indicate -- in fact they indicated quite clearly that they did not want to recommend an increase in our budget request to accommodate that concern of yours to meet outside of session.

MR. WRIGHT: I take it you feel you may only present the wishes of the majority rather than any opinion of your own.

MR. PASHAK: Well, that's quite correct. The committee is clearly bound by the voting that takes place within the committee.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, I don't know if it's in order, Mr. Chairman, whether we move at this time. Or do we do everything and come back to it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll deal with this page first before we go to B budget.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, I'd like to move that the budget be increased from \$2,600 to \$18,000 so that if the next committee decides to meet more often, there will not be the argument that, sorry, it's not budgeted for; it's still in the hands of the next Public Accounts Committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair will accept the motion, but it sounds a little bit like some discussion about a certain budget item that if there might or might not be an election.

MR. BOGLE: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Member for Edmonton-Strathcona.

MR. WRIGHT: Well, it's a catch-22 situation, isn't it, Mr. Chairman, because in the committee, then, the answer to such a request is, "Well, there isn't a budget for it." So if it can be assured that if there is such a request in the committee it can be asked by special warrant, which was the solution at our last meeting for the possible anticipated expenditure requested there, then that would satisfy the concerns, it seems to me. But who can give that assurance?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Speaking to the motion?

MR. BOGLE: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: While you've had your comment on the

motion, that's -- I'll assume you just took a deep breath and you're finishing on your . . .

MS BARRETT: We're not limited to one comment.

MR. WRIGHT: I thought we could have umpteen bites of the cherry within reason.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That in itself is a contradiction, but carry on. The mover can't.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes, that's true. Well, if you say it's true . . .

But on this point it's not only of importance to this committee; I suppose it could apply to others that customarily only sit while the Legislature is sitting. It seems to me that if the Public Accounts Committee is going to have the teeth that perhaps it ought, then it should be free to sit any time within reason again. Unless we can have some kind of assurance from government itself that the possibility of a special warrant will be looked at, then we can't really intelligently vote on this motion, can we? Therefore, I'd like to hoist it in whatever manner is appropriate till we get some kind of answer to that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any discussion?

MR. TAYLOR: Yes. The only problem I have with that . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is summation on the motion?

MR. WRIGHT: This is a motion to table that I'm making.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You're now making a motion to table?

MR. TAYLOR: Well, there's no discussion then, is there?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's right. Okay.

MR. TAYLOR: To table my motion, is it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion to table.

MR. WRIGHT: So we can get the answer as to whether the special warrant would be regarded with favour should the committee wish to sit out of the session.

MS BARRETT: We can't predetermine that.

MR. WRIGHT: Exactly; that's why we want to know. Otherwise, it's a catch-22 situation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In terms of catch-22, we have a motion to table. Those in favour of tabling the motion, please signify. Opposed, please signify. Okay, the motion to table fails.

Back to the original motion which would be to increase the budget by \$18,000.

MS BARRETT: No; to \$18,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: To \$18,000 or by \$18,000?

MR. TAYLOR: No; to \$18,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Okay.

MR. TAYLOR: If I may speak, or do I close myself off if . . . Do you want to leave me to close at the end?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The rules still affect the mover; that's the problem.

Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Yeah. Well, I'll speak to the motion. I think it's reasonable under the circumstances. I don't have a history in front of me of years during which a vote for a budget was not required in the subsequent budget year, so I don't know if it's an error to do this or if history says it's most likely an error. On the other hand, it does seem to me that if we don't give them the same flexibility we give other committees, then we're predetermining their ability to decide when they want to meet. So let's vote yes.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, we have a request that has come from the committee by its chairman for a budget. We've now heard certain members of this committee argue that there should be even additional dollars placed in the budget. Talk about predetermining. That's not the role of the committee at all. If, on the other hand, we find that there's a large increase in area and we've got questions why, it's very appropriate to ask the committee, through its chairman, for an explanation. But in this case we have a request that's come to us from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts. They determined that the majority of their activities take place while the House is sitting, and it seems to me that to add to that budget and thereby recommend that the committee meet more often and when the House is not sitting would be going beyond the bounds of our responsibilities. Therefore, I'm opposed to the motion.

MR. TAYLOR: That's not the motion.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman, the hon. Member for Taber-Warner has misconstrued the reasons. The reasons are not to predetermine anything but to give to the committee, should it wish to sit out of session, the ability to do so without a special warrant.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Additional comments or questions?

MR. TAYLOR: Making the move, Mr. Chairman, is to try to establish the primacy of the committee, which is essentially back-bench or noncabinet, and to tell the committee of the Legislature that if they want more money, they have to go back for a special warrant, which means to cabinet. It gives power to the cabinet that I don't think is intended in the legislative process. Admittedly, government members or the majority party dominate this committee anyhow. So if it's thought that the committee shouldn't be meeting extra and it's going on, they can control it anyhow. All this motion is is an enabling motion to free the committee, if they decide they want to meet more, from having to go to cabinet, of all people, who are being examined in most cases by the committee, and ask for money to examine themselves. It just seems reasonable that the back bench should have the maximum amount of latitude to decide whether to sit longer or shorter. It's really nothing to do with government or nongovernment. It's to do with the members of the Legislature and this committee, who are essentially outside the cabinet, having complete freedom to examine as much as they wish or as little as they wish.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Call for the question. The reading would be: a further request would have to come back to this committee, because no committee can go directly to cabinet. It has to come through this committee. We're the ones that make the budget...

MR. TAYLOR: Okay, then, we're freeing them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Call for the question. Those in favour of the motion to increase the budget to \$18,000, please signify. Opposed? Defeated. Thank you.

Any further questions with regard to page 8? Is someone prepared to give a motion to have approval of page 8 for the budget?

MS BARRETT: So moved.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Edmonton Highlands. Those in favour of approval to page 8, please signify. Opposed? Thank you. Carried.

The B budget item in this regard you'll find just on the page prior to section 10, yellow tab. I believe, Mr. Pashak, you have... Do you have copies to break down the conference? Perhaps Rod or somebody else could distribute them for you.

MR. PASHAK: I don't have enough to go around.

MR. CHAIRMAN: They're good at sharing and co-operation.

MR. PASHAK: I might just explain, while the copies are being distributed, that the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees has an annual meeting, and it's held in a different province each year. It's held in conjunction with the conference of auditors general. We plan to do the same thing in Edmonton this year -- that is, holding a conference at the same time. We do have at least one session that is a joint session, and we also meet informally in the evenings socially on two separate occasions.

I might just say that this budget we've presented under direction from Mr. Speaker is not an extravagant budget. We tried to keep it as reduced as we possibly could but with an eye to at least putting on a function comparable to previous years' conferences. So we don't think it's anything lavish, and we tried as well to use Edmonton public facilities as much as possible, so our sessions would be held here in the Legislature. It has an advantage not only of reducing costs but it does allow people from other parliamentary jurisdictions in Canada to see what we do here in the province of Alberta. So there's an informal sharing of information, that I think is positive, in doing that.

As well, we're going to have a number of our functions at the McKay Avenue school, and wherever we possibly can we're going to distribute materials such as the Legislature Building would to the prospective attendees at this conference.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sure all members of the committee are well aware of the fact that the Member for Calgary-Forest Lawn is the president -- I guess that's the right term -- chief pooh-bah, commander in chief, for this year and, therefore, is the hosting person on behalf of the province.

MR. PASHAK: Providing that there isn't a disruption before that date.

MR. WRIGHT: Can I ask how many are expected? Perhaps it's in here somewhere.

MS BARRETT: We expect 65 delegates.

MR. TAYLOR: Sixty-five delegates? Is that what you said?

MR. PASHAK: That's correct. Sixty-five delegates.

MR. TAYLOR: Fifty bottles of champagne for 65 delegates?

MR. PASHAK: Plus their wives. And when you're looking at some of those expenditures, some involve the auditors general and their wives as well. We host some functions, and they host others. There's a reciprocity.

MR. TAYLOR: May I ask this question, Mr. Chairman? We have a *Hansard* in here for... Where the hell was it? I saw it: simultaneous interpretation. I believe they give you a printout. Yeah, there's a *Hansard* cost on page 2 of \$4,500, and farther down, simultaneous interpretation. I believe those people will give you a transcript when they're retained. That's part of their retainment price, isn't it?

MR. PASHAK: That's correct.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But not for this purpose that we need for the printing, right? Care to comment on this?

MR. PASHAK: The procedure at past conferences has been to distribute a *Hansard* of the formal sessions to all the attendees, if I understand the question.

MR. TAYLOR: I've been involved in some international conferences not using the government. But when you retain simultaneous interpretation people, they usually give you a printout. That's part of their quote, to give you the transcript of what went on. I just thought it was repetitious to have *Hansard* there also, and maybe also that *Hansard*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, it doesn't happen that way.

MR. TAYLOR: It doesn't?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. The translators give a verbal translation, no transcript.

DR. GARRISON: There's a difference between interpretation and translation. Interpretation is what you get orally, and the translation is what's done to the transcript after it's all been edited and printed. So it'll be transcribed and printed in the language spoken, and then it'll be translated into the other official language. There's two different processes there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Other questions with regard to the whole breakdown as supplied by Calgary-Forest Lawn?

MR. WRIGHT: Yeah, I had my hand up.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, yes; thank you, Edmonton-Strathcona.

MR. WRIGHT: Corkage, by my definition, is what you pay the

owner of an establishment for the privilege of bringing in your own booze.

AN HON. MEMBER: No.

MR. WRIGHT: Is there some other definition?

MR. PASHAK: I think there must be another definition, because I think it's a fee that's generally applied to the number of guests that arrive, whether they supply their own alcohol or whether it's supplied by the establishment.

MR. WRIGHT: So it's the cost of X number attending a place, whether they have drink or not, is it?

MR. PASHAK: That's right, but it's the paid-for area.

MR. WRIGHT: I'm surprised. So the \$775 on the Monday dinner is going to the Edmonton school board, is it, for the privilege of your supplying the drink yourselves?

MR. PASHAK: I'm sorry; I don't know what the detail is on that. Although the dinner is being held at the McKay Avenue school, the hotel the guests are staying at, which is . . .

MR. WRIGHT: It's a pretty small item, Mr. Chairman.

MR. PASHAK: But I'm not really sure whether that goes to the school or to the hotel that's providing the meal.

MR. TAYLOR: If I may, Mr. Chairman, it's a little puzzling. As an old-time entertainer, if you pay corkage, it means you're buying your own booze.

MR. WRIGHT: That's right.

MR. TAYLOR: But when I look at your prices here, 50 bottles of champagne at \$24 -- and they usually throw in a few anyhow if you buy that much -- gee whiz, you could almost stomp those out with your own bare feet. That should be enough to pay for corkage and all the service charge. That's usually what a hotel will charge you: \$20 for Canadian champagne or \$19 for Canadian wine or, now that we have free trade, California wine. But to have corkage on there implies that you're buying your own booze. Well, if you're buying your own booze at \$24 a bottle, I think that's traveling a little high, if you'll pardon the pun.

MR. WRIGHT: Of course, Codorniu is \$7.90.

MR. PASHAK: Partly this has been done in conjunction with the Auditor General's department. This is a budget, after all, and these are the extreme prices we could find ourselves paying. So the only thing I can do at this point is assure you that if we can substitute Codorniu for \$7.95 a bottle for \$24 champagne, we will do that.

MR. TAYLOR: Save corkage and get the wine with screw tops.

MR. PASHAK: If we can remove the corkage costs, we will do that, but this is a budget that's intended to cover any possible contingency with respect to charges.

MRS. MIROSH: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to move that we accept this B budget to host the Canadian Council of Public Accounts as set before us.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Speaking now to the motion. Does Edmonton-Highlands want to come in on this?

MS BARRETT: I just have a question, Mr. Chairman. Who drew up this budget? Was it your committee, or was it a staff person who just looked at other budgets for similar functions and sort of imitated it?

MR. PASHAK: No, it's done by the staff in the Speaker's office. It's done in consultation with me but also done with a fair amount of discretion and initiative on the part of the individuals working on the conference on behalf, really, of the Speaker's office. Because I think it should be clear to all members of the committee that although I am the chairman of the Public Accounts Committee of the province of Alberta and the president of the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees, I really do not have any legislative power when it comes to hosting this conference. The real host of the conference is the Speaker of the Assembly.

MR. TAYLOR: Aha.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But he's certain he doesn't drink \$24 champagne, not with my background. And I don't think they really want communion wine.

MR. TAYLOR: Maybe the Member for Olds-Didsbury is sneaking in a demonstration on what goes on in bars.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The other thing is that some of the factoring is done because of the Auditor General, trying to fit it together with their conference. Okay?

Grande Prairie, on the motion to adopt.

DR. ELLIOTT: Well, I was glad the motion came up, Mr. Chairman, because I thought the discussion on corkage was getting around to a distillation of ignorance, really. So I just want to speak in favour of the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there a call for the question?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour of adopting the B budget item? Opposed?. Carried unanimously.

MR. PASHAK: I'd like to thank the committee for consideration in this matter.

MR. WRIGHT: We will have your qualifications printed out and delivered.

MR. PASHAK: Well, it will be in the record, and as soon as we get a transcript of this meeting from *Hansard* . . .

MR. TAYLOR: I want to see this Medicine Hat vintage champagne.

MR. CAMPBELL: What is it, one of those bottles that, one

more, and it would make a thousand? Is it 999?

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, just to note, I've been asked by the chairman of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund to stand in when we hit that point in time in the budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it the will of the committee to deal with the estimates for the Heritage Savings Trust Fund at this moment or to finish up with *Hansard*? We've got that one last item in the B budget section with *Hansard*. The pleasure of the committee.

DR. ELLIOTT: Finish with *Hansard*.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right; thank you. Then we go further forward: *Hansard*, last page, section 11. Page 16 and in the second section. Okay?

The last item to be discussed, as far as we have record on this area, is with regard to this Production of Orientation and Public Education Materials. That was the reason for showing the video, the pilot one, today with *Hansard*.

So now perhaps you'd like to focus in on that section which has the dollar figures attached: MLA orientation, \$12,000; Legislative Assembly Office overview, \$12,000; related printed material.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman, if there is to be an election in the next fiscal year, that \$12,000 for MLA orientation, I take it, is really for the new MLAs following this election, is it?

DR. GARRISON: Actually, I explained this to some extent on Friday. But the Clerk has passed around an outline which I did up in November, which I hope everybody has. I think it should clarify that point a bit. As I mentioned on Friday, that particular item would be suitable for introducing new MLAs to the Assembly. But it would also be useful for educating members of the public or orienting new visitors who come to the Legislative Assembly.

MR. WRIGHT: Right. It's for that video tape, really. It's for the video tape, which is useful for many purposes including . . .

DR. GARRISON: So whether there's an election or not doesn't really matter.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not to you maybe.

DR. GARRISON: Well, to the production of this video.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Yeah. I wonder two things. First of all, is it proposed that the MLA Orientation to the Leg. Assembly and the Leg. Assembly Office Overview are one videotape?

DR. GARRISON: No. They'd be two separate ones.

MS BARRETT: They would be two separate ones. Okay. Each approximately how long?

DR. GARRISON: Well, we figured 12 to 15 minutes

maximum.

MS BARRETT: For each.

DR. GARRISON: The one you saw was about 11 minutes.

MS BARRETT: I don't know if we've got a motion on this, because I walked in late. Oh, okay. Then I will move that we approve this request for item 2 on the B budget. I think the *Hansard* one was really good. I'm impressed you could do it for that cheap.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Okay, I have a motion now to approve, and speaking to the motion, Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: To the motion and a question. I thought that when we left it on Thursday or Friday, the Member for Taber-Warner made a motion and that was tabled.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, that's what I was wondering too, you see. I didn't know what had happened before I came in.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, sorry. We had a motion to table.

MS BARRETT: I had moved to table Bob's motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, you moved to table Taber-Warner's motion; Taber-Warner's motion was to delete.

MS BARRETT: Yeah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, thank you. Then I cannot accept this motion. The motion on the floor, thank you, Taber-Warner, is to delete.

MR. HYLAND: The concern I have, on page 3, for example -- and this is the concern I think I tried to express the other day too.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 3?

MR. HYLAND: Page 3 of this handout. Sorry.

It was how an MLA is perceived, et cetera, and how it would fit into constituencies, being they all differ. It just makes it stronger in that on page 3, Orientation to the Legislative Assembly, number 6, it says "the individual MLA" and lists the number. And number 7, "the supporting cast: the Legislative Assembly Office," and the lowest person on that list is the "caucus and constituency offices."

DR. GARRISON: Well, this wasn't meant to be in order of priority.

MR. HYLAND: Now, I don't care what party you're in; I think that's in the reverse, and if that tune is carried through the thing, this is the concern I have with the video: how it's going to be perceived out there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you.
Gary could perhaps respond to that.

DR. GARRISON: Well, the intent wasn't to indicate any order of priority. This was simply a draft to indicate the particular

kinds of items or subjects we'd be touching upon in each particular video, in each section of the video. So there was no intent at all to downgrade the importance of caucus offices or constituency offices. Not at all.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Other comments, Cypress-Redcliff, or will that do?

MR. WRIGHT: Well, I just took it for being in the reverse order of importance.

DR. GARRISON: Leave the best till last.

MR. CAMPBELL: Mr. Chairman, I'd make a move towards maybe having a coffee break, and we can discuss it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sure. Coffee break time?

[The committee recessed from 2:25 to 2:30]

MR. CHAIRMAN: All righty. Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As a result of discussions in the coffee break, I'd like to make note of a couple of observations that I made. One is that the figure of \$12,000 per video is actually a very good price. The only reason I happen to know this is because I'm the arts critic for our caucus, so I've become quite conversant in some areas of the arts. I'm aware of the costs of, you know, having camera operators and video operators and the sheer . . . You know, you film for half an hour -- and this is very conventional -- you might only take five minutes' worth out of that to use for your final product. Take editing and so forth, I can assure you that it is a very, very cheap price. You'd be hard pressed to find cheaper; in fact, I'd be surprised if you could find cheaper under any circumstances.

The other thing is this. If we can agree and if there's consensus in this matter, it seems that MLAs would like to have a say in the type of focus that may be applied to those areas of the video that deal with our lives as MLAs. In other words, you know, we're the only ones who have the experience of being MLAs, and perhaps we could give some direction to *Hansard* when it comes to the taping or scripting of the product. I propose that the subcommittee . . . Actually, it's usually -- I don't know -- the members' benefits subcommittee of the Members' Services Committee. Anyway, I've talked to the other three members of that committee, whatever we are, and they've agreed that it would be a good idea to get together to discuss on a nonpartisan basis -- and I can assure you we have worked well together before -- to come up with some guidelines on how we'd like to see our jobs portrayed in the broad sense, not to give you such editorial constrictions that you can't function. If *Hansard* can live with that, then I think we can probably overturn the motion that was on the table and proceed with the motion to support the budget for these two projects.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, in light of the discussions that have occurred and now that we've had an opportunity to view the video that's already been prepared, showing the operations of *Hansard*, if there is unanimous consent, I'll withdraw my motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Request for unanimous consent. Those in favour?

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Opposed? Thank you.

MS BARRETT: May I revive my motion, then, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, you can make your motion.

MS BARRETT: Pardon me, yes. Okay. I'll move, then, that subject to receiving the guidelines from the subcommittee -- which naturally must be vetted through this committee, but I don't think that would be a problem -- we approve item 2 on the B budget for the two video projects and the related printed materials.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Discussion? Une question?

MR. WRIGHT: I suppose I have this question, whether Dr. Garrison would be prepared to accept such guidelines.

MS BARRETT: Good point.

DR. GARRISON: Well, I don't see why not. I'd assume they'd be reasonable guidelines, you know.

MS BARRETT: Yes. Well, we're not telling you how to, you know, show the administrative side of things, but from the MLA side of things.

DR. GARRISON: Sure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And the producer? Okay. Good.

MS BARRETT: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. All those in favour? Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, can I just ask one question? I'm assuming that because this is B budget it's, for want of a better phrase, a once-in-a-lifetime budget expenditure rather than continuation year by year and year-by-year update.

DR. McNEIL: Mr. Chairman, our objective would be to produce a video that was fairly generic, that wouldn't require yearly updates. It may after five years require some updating, but it's not an ongoing expenditure.

MR. TAYLOR: Sheldon would still look the same.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But maybe the rest of us characters will have changed.

MS BARRETT: Unless he shaves.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. It is then the interpretation of the Chair that the total budget of *Hansard* is now approved. Thank you.

Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: I was moving that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah, thank you. We'll take it as a motion

that the total budget plus B budget items is indeed approved. Those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you. Let there be no doubt.

Thank you, Gary.

DR. GARRISON: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Legislature Committees: tab 9, Heritage Savings Trust Fund. The Member for Cypress-Redcliff is vice-chairman of that committee. Section 9 is at page 4.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, the Heritage Savings Trust Fund budget is down just a little over 18 percent. As you remember, last year I think we reduced it something like 33 or 34 percent, and then we watched expenditures. We did some visits out of province as well as in province. We think we have a better handle again on the amount spent to do our work, and we don't think the amount of \$109,000 will cause us any problem in continuing to do the work of the committee properly, and that's the budget we put forward.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. WRIGHT: What is the big decrease in Professional, Technical, and Labour Services in printing due to?

MR. HYLAND: I don't have the exact breakdown, but I think it's partly the cost of the report and partly because we were meeting twice a day instead of only one meeting a day. That cut down, too, on the amount of paper, the amount of *Hansard*, and stuff like that that we needed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Any other questions on this?

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, maybe through you to the vice-chairman, the Member for Cypress-Redcliff. Do you have any problem timewise? I've never sat on your committee. Do you have problems like we do in Public Accounts trying to get through everything in the time schedule allotted to you?

MR. HYLAND: No. We sit down at the beginning, the first meeting, and approve the outline of ministers to appear before us, and away we go. If we need more time, we take it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Other questions? Motion to approve the budget of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. Moved by Rocky Mountain House. All those in favour of the motion to adopt the budget? Opposed? Carried unanimously. Thank you.

We're hopeful that the Member for Calgary-North Hill will be here tomorrow morning to deal with the Legislative Offices Committee, so we could probably finish up the other items under committees then.

I wonder if we might then go on to the Legislature Library, section 12. I'll have Blake come in.

Taber-Warner, could you come and chair for just a minute or two, please.

[Mr. Bogle in the Chair]

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Welcome, Blake, to the committee and its budget estimates. We're going to turn to page 1. I would ask if you would give the committee just a general overview and highlight any of the points you feel need to be noted

that are contained within page 1.

MR. McDOUGALL: Okay. Mr. Chairman, hon. members, as indicated in the overview, the library's A budget will maintain the existing operation and represents a 4.3 percent decrease in funding. That's shown in the summary.

Then there are recommended two B budget items, one to formally resume the microfilming of Alberta weekly newspapers that was discontinued because of limitations on funding in 1987, and a second proposal, which is a new proposal, that is related to indexing the *Alberta Report* for a period of time which isn't presently covered by commercial indexing.

So the A budget, then, represents a 4.3 decrease from last year, and the two B budgets are added on to the total. The total expenditure still represents a 1.1 percent decrease.

That's all I have to say.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thanks very much, Blake.

Now, if you can turn to page 2, we'll go through the various elements of the A budget, and then we'll deal with the B budget. So first of all, page 2. Any questions or comments?

MS BARRETT: Motion to adopt.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Question? Yes, go ahead.

MR. WRIGHT: If all the existing services are being maintained, how did you manage a decrease in expense?

MR. McDOUGALL: The main reason for the decrease in the salary area, you may recall, is that last year the library's research services unit was disbanded. When you do that, you have to allow a 90-day period of notification for the employees. Consequently, a salary allowance, budget allowance, equivalent to 90 days or three months of the total year, was incorporated into last year's salary. So the effect of that, of course, is that I was able to absorb that this year and offset the salary increases that occurred as a result of the salary negotiations.

So in summary, then, the allowances left for that 90-day period for this last fiscal year were used to offset the salary increases, and it's nullified them. That's where the money came from.

MR. WRIGHT: I see. So there's been a slight increase in the cost, then, to maintain the services.

MR. McDOUGALL: Yes. In the salaries there have been a number of settlements negotiated, of course, as part of the ongoing process.

MR. WRIGHT: Okay. I notice that the B budget allows for the resumption of the microfilming of weeklies. Isn't this something you would wish to see continued?

MR. McDOUGALL: Now, the B budget you're referring to is the microfilming of newspapers?

MR. WRIGHT: Of weeklies, yes.

MR. McDOUGALL: Weeklies, yes. What we're trying to do is that in 1987 as a part of the reduction of the library staff budget, which is approximately an 11 percent reduction, this program was discontinued. At that time it was a \$30,000 program. Since

that time what I've been using is that whenever we realize any budget savings, which happens from time to time, we have put it to microfilming Alberta weeklies. But, of course, we've made limited progress.

Now what I'm recommending is that we resume the program officially, because the work that's been done up to this point has just been as funds are available from savings and other accounts. This would formally commence the program again at half its previous level. That's my approach to it. So this would, in effect, sort of reinstate the program. So what you're saying is that if it's something we'd wish to continue, that would be the effect of approving the B budget item, to sort of officially start it up again.

MR. WRIGHT: But if it was simply routine stuff that you expected to continue, it would go in the A budget, wouldn't it?

MR. McDUGALL: Yes. These funds, if this program is approved, would go into the A budget and then would continue, you know, as long as we were able to sustain it.

MR. WRIGHT: But is there not an element of catch-up, which is in the nature of a capital expenditure? Because you've got the best part of two years to catch up, haven't you?

MR. McDUGALL: Oh, yes. I see. What we have -- as I said, I've been able to complete some of the communities with financial savings. As well, we've co-operated with the Glenbow institute during those two years, and it might have filmed a lot of the shorter runs in communities in southern Alberta, basically. So they've used our material, but they've funded the actual filming. So the program didn't really come to a complete or a dead halt. They've picked up. They tell me now, however, that they won't be in a position financially to help in the future, and so, you know, we'd be completely on our own again doing this work.

[Dr. Carter in the Chair]

MR. WRIGHT: Have they dropped their filming of weeklies then? Or will they be dropping it?

MR. McDUGALL: This is the Glenbow?

MR. WRIGHT: The Glenbow, yes.

MR. McDUGALL: Yeah. What they were doing was going almost, I believe, once a month to their board and sort of requesting the funds for each separate project, and as they could accommodate it, it was approved by their board. But they have informed me that they feel they won't be in a position to be able to do that any longer.

MR. WRIGHT: So once more the Legislature will be the sole permanent repository of Alberta weeklies.

MR. McDUGALL: Yes. We've always been basically the sole, total repository for the province. But we would be the only ones that would be doing any preservation in the province of that material.

MR. WRIGHT: But does that mean you chuck away the actual papers?

MR. McDUGALL: No. What we do is that when we've finished microfilming a community -- for instance, last year we realized enough funds to microfilm the communities Wainwright and Lacombe, which were fairly large runs, as those communities are larger regional centres -- we'd offer the papers, the original files, to representatives of the community. It's usually the local archives, the library, or the publisher, because some of the publishers have had plant fires at some stage in their history and have lost their files. And because they've helped us with the project, supplying missing issues and so on, I've made them available to them as well. So we have not destroyed any files. I mean, we've microfilmed an awful lot of newspaper since 1977. None of those files have been destroyed; they've been turned over to some agency or organization.

MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. TAYLOR: I have a couple of small problems; maybe they're big. The B budget: I can understand microfilming Alberta weekly newspapers ... Is that what we're on? Page 1?

MR. WRIGHT: I think we did them both together.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now we're into the B budget, or are we going to wait? This is still general discussion. All right. Thank you.

MR. TAYLOR: We haven't moved to ... I see.

All right; the general one then. On page 3 sessional reference librarians were cut from \$10,000 to \$3,900, cut by \$6,000. What I was going to suggest -- that's why I was putting the two together. I would rather see that come back, at least one more librarian or maybe double or triple the amount there, because as one who uses the reference library, I think it's an excellent and an outstanding place to get information and I think it's much more valuable to the MLAs. And if we have to find the money, I would take it out of the B budget for indexing the *Alberta Report*. This is why I want to put it together. Not that the *Alberta Report* isn't ... It has some attractions; it's always printed in red, which is very attractive.

But the question is that I would think the *Alberta Report* has its own index somehow or, on the other hand, maybe they did go off firing in all directions for the last 15 or 10 years. I think what's of more value in research and handy to us is a restoration of a certain amount of the research facilities that we had to give up last year in our draconian cuts. Consequently, I would like to hear from the Librarian: why couldn't we cut the *Alberta Report* indexing, say, in half or out altogether and use those funds to expand the research facilities in your budget on page 3?

MR. McDUGALL: The information in the reference services section is in the main library downstairs here, and they just do information responses for factual information and then referral to sources. They've never done research assignments in terms of the formal understanding that the former legislative research services section did. The reason I've reduced this is that we don't require that much funding to cover off the desk situation down in the library. I guess in summation on that point I would just say that the reference librarians don't do research on a formal basis like the people that were formerly our research officers, so that wouldn't really resolve that problem. As well, we didn't feel we required that much assistance on our desk schedules to maintain the current level of service.

In connection with the *Alberta Report*, one of the reasons I put that in as a B budget item was that the indexing was suggested by a former member of this committee, Mrs. Cripps, and at the time we weren't able to do anything about it. Afterward, the commercial service started. So the idea for that came from a former member of the committee, and I think it's worth while.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MR. TAYLOR: Just further to that, I thought all magazines had their own indexing. At least the ones I've subscribed to through the years occasionally put out. Say, if you want an index, pay so much money, and if you want it handbound to look beautiful above your fireplace, you pay so much more, covered with Himalayan nanny goat, whatever it is they bind it with. Is there not an index put out by the *Alberta Report* itself? Are we reinventing the wheel here by any chance?

MR. McDOUGALL: No. The indexing was picked up by commercial firms. I indicate the dates in the related item. The firm itself, first of all, to the best of our knowledge doesn't have any kind of formal indexing that it's able to make available to the public. This happens quite often with publications that have a much broader base of support than the *Alberta Report*. Consequently, quite often libraries undertake these indexing programs to remedy that particular situation. The period we're talking about is 1973 to 1980. To the best of my knowledge there is no indexing that's available to the private citizen or the general public or to us or to you through us. So I don't see it as a duplication of effort.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Cypress-Redcliff, Edmonton-Strathcona.

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to move that the budget as presented by the library and the B budget request of \$15,000 for continuation of the *Alberta* weekly newspaper microfilming be approved. Is there a motion already?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have one motion on the floor from Edmonton-Highlands, approving page 2.

MR. HYLAND: Okay. I was going to move the whole thing; I thought we were through. I thought we were just basically talking about -- it seemed to be centring around the B budget items, and I was trying to move it on.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I understand your confusion.

All right. Edmonton-Strathcona, for the motion on page 2.

MR. WRIGHT: I don't know where this fits in on anything, but I'll just ask the question anyway. It's just that if we're going to index the *Alberta Report*... We were talking about it, but you can ask me to defer my question, Mr. Chairman.

If we're going to index it, then why don't we sell it to *Alberta Report* or to the public? Is there some way of doing it and recovering some of the cost?

MR. McDOUGALL: Yes, we could do that. It would be a fairly limited market, but that's something we could consider if that's the wish of the committee.

MR. WRIGHT: By the way, is it a paper index or electronic?

MR. McDOUGALL: It's very likely to be done electronically.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is with regard to the motion to approve page 2. Any more discussion on B budget items will have to wait.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour of approval of page 2, please signify. Opposed, if any? Carried. Thank you.
Page 3.

MR. HYLAND: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Call for the question with regard to page 3 approval. All those in favour?

MR. TAYLOR: I have a question again, apropos to what I asked the Librarian about the sessional reference librarian. He introduced the fact that we have no researchers at all now, I gather, like we used to have. If you had a researcher in the sense of the word as you like to describe it, what would that cost be in the budget?

MR. McDOUGALL: A legislative research officer is classified as a research officer II level, so you're looking at a salary range of \$28,000 or \$30,000 to \$40,000 per annum. That's the approximate cost. That's without benefits.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Forty-five with benefits?

MR. McDOUGALL: Add 11 percent, say.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour of approval of page 3, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.
Page 4 follows on from the others. Agreement?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Page 5, Tuitions and Bursaries and Fees for Conferences.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Page 6.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 7, Freight and Postage. Minus 12.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair hears agreement.

Page 8...

MR. WRIGHT: On 7, if you don't mind, Mr. Chairman. It's great to see a decrease, but how can that be when postage has gone up?

MR. McDOUGALL: Well, I always get a little concerned myself when cutting back funding in view of the general increases we get in freight and postage. But I've made an allowance for that in my cut, so it should work out.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 8, Property, Equipment and Goods.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 9, Long Distance Tolls.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 10, Repairs and Maintenance. Are you in favour of page 10?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
Page 11, Binding.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 12. What is your pleasure?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thirteen, Hosting.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
Fourteen, Materials and Supplies. All in favour?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Fifteen, Purchase of Office Equipment.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, may I ask a question on 14, Microform Materials, back again to microfilming our newspapers. Is that two different items in the budget?

MR. McDOUGALL: The library's microfilm account is used for basically three things. It's used to acquire a lot of library reference material, first, that's in microform, and then we use it to microfilm the press clipping service we have that's heavily used at the library. Then if we have funds available, we do weekly newspapers.

We were all directed to try to keep our budget as close to zero as possible in terms of an increase. In order to do that with some of the other requirements, I took some funding from this account that could have been used for microfilming weekly newspapers and then put the papers as a B budget item to try to recover it. So one thing has sort of led to the other. That's the reason for it. With this money we're able to cover acquiring all of the reference material we normally get, various indexes and so on, in microform, we're able to pay for microfilming all the newspaper clippings, the clipping service, but we're not able to do any weekly newspapers.

MR. WRIGHT: Is there a microform other than microfilm?

MR. McDOUGALL: Yes. The fiche sheets that are about this

size. Nearly all the material we get out of newspapers is on the fiche sheets. So the film work we contract out, other than newspapers, is all in sheet form.

MR. WRIGHT: I must say that I thought fiche were film.

MS BARRETT: No, they're little individual cards. You don't use the library much.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Perhaps not that section of the library.
Okay; that's page 14.
Page 15 is the matter of office equipment.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 16 now brings us to the matter of the B budget. B budget proposal 1.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. HYLAND: May I make my motion now?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Cypress-Redcliff, yes, please.

MR. HYLAND: Okay. Do you want me to read it again?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please.

MR. HYLAND: I'd like to move that the B budget request for \$15,000 for the continuation of Alberta weekly newspaper microfilming be approved, as well as the A budget as submitted for the library.

MR. WRIGHT: I'd like to amend the motion, Mr. Chairman, to add that the Librarian will look into ways of recouping some of the costs by sale of the *Alberta Report* service.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sorry. That's not embodied in the original motion. The motion is . . .

MR. TAYLOR: He hasn't got *Alberta Report* in it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's correct.

MR. WRIGHT: I'm sorry, aren't we on page 17?

MR. HYLAND: Yeah, but I moved, Gordon, that the B budget item relating to *Alberta Report* didn't go. I moved that the A budget go and the first part of the B budget.

MR. WRIGHT: Oh, I'm sorry. I beg your pardon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The motion is: all of the budget that we've had so far for the library, plus B budget proposal 1. That's where we are at the moment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour of the motion, please signify. Opposed? Thank you. That is carried. So section 12 plus proposal 1 is carried.

Additional discussion?

MR. WRIGHT: Well, proposal 2 is before us too.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah. We'll now turn to page 17. Edmonton-Strathcona, then Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes. I don't know whether it's in order to tack my little rider on in some fashion or whether noting it in the minutes is sufficient.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Will the Chair take it, Edmonton-Strathcona, that you're moving approval be given to B budget proposal 2, plus your provision?

MR. WRIGHT: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, that is the motion before us then. Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: I have some questions again. I'm still puzzled about doing an indexing for one commercial magazine that should be doing it on its own. Can I go a step further then? If this indexing is done, is it available then for the public to take and distribute free of cost?

MR. WRIGHT: No; there's a copyright.

MR. TAYLOR: Is there a copyright too? In other words, can the *Alberta Report* then distribute our work along with their subscriptions?

MR. McDOUGALL: First of all, the question, as I understand it, was: why the *Alberta Report*, versus some other publication? As I'm sure you already know, *Alberta Report* is very heavily read and subscribed to by Albertans, and there's a great demand for it in the library.

MR. TAYLOR: By a certain ilk.

MR. McDOUGALL: But in my opinion it is the truth that it seems to be a very popular magazine with Albertans. On the other hand, it is of a much more limited interest on the national scene because, you know, it's basically a provincially based publication. Because of the strong interest in it and its news coverage and stories and so on by Albertans and the fact that national interest is limited, it seems to be a good way for us to contribute to facilitating access to it through the indexing process.

Now, in terms of what about copyright and so on, by just indexing a publication, we're not in violation of copyright because we're not copying the data; we're simply providing access to it.

MR. WRIGHT: The index becomes our copyright.

MR. McDOUGALL: Oh yeah, if we create the index, of course. So it becomes ours. So with our other things that we microfilm, our indexes to the government publications and so on -- they are made available to other library organizations and so on at the cost of producing the film, duplicating the film. So we could do the same thing with this. In other words, they would pay for the cost of producing the copy on film, if they wish to, of course. So those are the two sides of it: why the *Alberta Report*; secondly, what about copyright? We're not violating copyright

in terms of their copyright, and it is true that if we created that index, the copyright on it would belong to the Legislative Assembly.

MR. WRIGHT: So they couldn't sell it? They couldn't copy it and sell it.

MR. McDOUGALL: No, not without an agreement.

MR. WRIGHT: That's right. And I'm suggesting we explore the possibility, then, of recouping some costs.

MR. McDOUGALL: Could be.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman, on the point of the *Alberta Report*, I do read the thing myself, although I disagree, of course, with many of its editorials. But it is a good source of news and is the only publication of its kind, and it is in fact widely read.

MR. TAYLOR: I have to go to confession, too, and admit that I read it too, Mr. Chairman. It ranks with the *Protocols of Zion* and other famous pieces of literature that should be in libraries. But I just wanted to make sure that commercial use couldn't be made of it at the taxpayers' expense. I think that people should in the years ahead have a chance to read the gospel according to St. Ted.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, if I understand what this \$15,000 would do, we're talking about issues from '73 to '80, not current. We're talking stuff way back, you know, that's history. History is found in the books, and you dig it out.

AN HON. MEMBER: It makes it easier to do.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. We have a motion before us to approve B budget item option 2, with the proviso of making attempts at cost recovery.

MR. TAYLOR: I still have points of information. Was '73 the first year that *Alberta Report* came out, and is there another index out from 1980 on? Is this just filling a gap?

MR. McDOUGALL: Yeah, it was picked up by commercial concerns in 1980, a national index of periodicals. It was picked up by the Canadian Periodical Index in 1980. So we're trying to fill in this gap.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, let me thank the Member for Cypress-Redcliff for opening my eyes on that. He should have spoken up earlier. These prairie boys are pretty sharp.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's from shooting gophers.

All those in favour of the motion to approve B budget item option 2, please signify. Opposed? Okay. I think I have it approved 5 to 4. Let me see a show of hands again. Those in favour? Five. Opposed?

MR. TAYLOR: What did Ted Byfield ever do to you fellows?

MR. HYLAND: Most of you are talking against it and voting for it.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, you said it was filling in a gap, and everybody would like to fill a gap. A hole is exactly where it should be.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, somebody voted twice that time, because I know what it came out as. It is approved 5 to 4.

MR. TAYLOR: It shows the NDs and the Libs are the only ones who encourage dissent. Just because the poor guy ran a Reform candidate, you want to kill him.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, not doubting your judgment, but are you sure?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Why do you think I asked for it twice, then blinked when I saw five hands on each side and there are only nine members in the count.

All right. I'm going to try it once more. Those in favour of approval, put 'em up high so I can see them. [interjections] Opposed?

AN HON. MEMBER: It was Pam that did it, was it? She tried to vote twice.

MRS. MIROSH: Yeah, it was you, Pam.

MS BARRETT: Oh, I was just having a little bit of fun with a few abstainers and switchers.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, don't rush away embarrassed now.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, come on back, Dianne. We'll be nice -- for a minute.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, now we have to look at it as being defeated. You're a great bunch to defeat this one.

MR. TAYLOR: Politics makes strange bedfellows.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Thank you, Blake, very much.

MR. McDOUGALL: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you'd like to turn to section 9 for a moment, there are a couple of pages, perhaps, we can ... What word do we have in Law and Regulations that it just stays exactly the same and there's no -- this may or may not occur. Is that your understanding, Parliamentary Counsel?

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, the Committee on Law and Regulations does not have any standing mandate from Standing Orders or statute. It only operates when it's instructed to do so by the Assembly, and has not done so regularly over the number of years. There have been many years when it has not functioned at all.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So that's section 9, page 5.
Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: I think a question I would have related to that one, then, is that if we have that amount in there, it's maybe not a significant amount, but it's like we did with a lot of the other committees. Those that didn't use them ... We've tried to get

all the committees now, and in fact our Legislative Assembly administration and everything now are all budgeting according to what we used the previous year, more or less. It's not going to make a big difference.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman, if there are no meetings, why is there an item for catering at these nonexistent meetings? It's just a pro forma thing?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just pro forma.
Approval of ...

MR. WRIGHT: Sorry. And to follow that up, Mr. Chairman, so the \$850 just never gets spent and goes back into the ...

MS BARRETT: That's right. The general revenue and revolving account.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Approval for page 5?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Agreed. Thank you.

Leg. Offices we'll deal with tomorrow, hopefully. Members' Services, section 9, page 7. Does that strike you as being ...

MS BARRETT: Looks good to me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Approved?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Public Accounts. We've got Private Bills; that's Schumacher, Drumheller. And again, Parliamentary Counsel, we're keeping it at the same amount. Was that amount, \$15,000, expended this last year for advertising?

MR. M. CLEGG: I can't answer that, Mr. Chairman. I don't know what was spent by the committee for advertising.

DR. McNEIL: There were no funds spent for advertising last year.

MS BARRETT: Is that right?

DR. McNEIL: At least there are not -- I have on my printout that it may be misallocated.

MS BARRETT: How can that be, because they have to advertise to tell people what the deadline is for petitions, and they do that every year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. Thank you.
I've got Taber-Warner, Edmonton-Highlands.

MR. BOGLE: Well, around the very same point. We put notices in the paper re private Bills and the deadlines.

MS BARRETT: And they're coming up right away.

MR. BOGLE: The payment has to be made out of some source,

and if it's not this element, it's someplace else.

MS BARRETT: Yeah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Both on the same point?

MS BARRETT: You betcha. David?

MR. CHAIRMAN: So some checking to be done on . . .

DR. McNEIL: I think it was just paid out of a different account, that's all. It was paid, I know, because I was looking at the correspondence last week.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. But before we give approval to it, we'll check on that one before we next meet. Thank you. So that holds page 9. Page 10 was looked after.

Okay. We have the Clerk Assistant coming over to be present for discussion with section 10 on the interns. Well, she's here, fast like lightning as always. Thank you.

Section 10, Legislative Interns. The first page gives you the overview and the reasons. Any general comments, Karen? You've got the whole section and then we'll go page by page.

MISS SOUTH: Just a general comment that the interns this year have certainly seemed to be generally well accepted by the caucuses, as they were before. In traveling with them, they seem to be getting an awful lot from the experience. I think their relationships with the caucuses, working full time, has perhaps even given them a little more research work than they might have had in the past.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Might we then turn to section 10, page 1?

MR. BOGLE: Well, Mr. Chairman, I have -- it's on an overall.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sure.

MR. BOGLE: Members of our government caucus ask our chief of staff what input the various chiefs of staff have in this process, and I would like some explanation as to the Chair's views on the matter in terms of ensuring that we now have -- what? -- four interns, one with each caucus. Could we have the Chair's views on that matter, please?

MR. CHAIRMAN: With respect to the allocation to caucuses or with respect to the interviewing that took place with all the various applicants?

MR. BOGLE: Both.

MR. CHAIRMAN: With respect to the interview process I felt, after some discussion, to move it down to a smaller working group rather than have the larger one, which we had had previously. And I know that caused some concern with at least one caucus. If it's the wish of the group to have that changed for the interview process next year, that's fine. But it was dealing in terms of numbers, pure and simple. Maybe it wasn't too pure; maybe it was terribly simple.

In regard to the allocation to the caucus, we just simply threw them all into the hat and let them be pulled.

MISS SOUTH: That is normally what we'd do. You know, in the past because of the switchover, half went with the government and half with the opposition.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And that's the other aspect too. It was that in time past we were rotating them from caucus to caucus. This is the year that we decided we'd put them with one caucus for a full year and then we would review the matter after that year.

Further? Taber-Warner, then Edmonton-Highlands.

MR. BOGLE: No, I'll pass for a moment. I may wish to get back in before we conclude the general discussion.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, I just wanted to ask who was on the selection committee or who was represented on the selection committee for the crew we have now, the four we've got now?

MISS SOUTH: The three university professors -- Gibbins, McCormick, and Johnston -- Michael Ritter and myself. Speaker Carter sat in for a couple.

MS BARRETT: Oh, I see. Okay. It used to be that we had an MLA from each caucus as well.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Or a representative from the caucus, not necessarily an MLA.

MS BARRETT: Or a representative, that's right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And I decided to narrow that down to a short list. When we got it down to the short list, that's when I then sat in.

MS BARRETT: You decided by yourself?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, with a group.

MS BARRETT: Yeah. Is there a problem with having caucus representation on the committee? Would you like to try that again?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Whatever is the wish of the group here. Part of the problem when you get so many people in one room and you have the one interviewee coming in, it can be very intimidating.

Edmonton-Strathcona, then Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. WRIGHT: On this point, Mr. Chairman, I couldn't escape the impression at the time I did it that there tended to be a bit of logrolling according to what the political members on the committee judged to be the political slant of a particular interviewee. Not having any MLAs there at all would tend to, I presume, eliminate that aspect, which might be a good thing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: I'll pass, because I put my hand up when I thought we were going onto a general topic. Mine was related to specifics.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Taber-Warner, do you wish to return to the topic?

MR. BOGLE: Well, I'm concerned, Mr. Chairman. The program really has several objectives. There's an objective that would be defined by the professors at the university and by our administration. That's clear; it's understood, and it's respected. But there's also a political objective from the various caucuses, and if this program is going to continue to function, you have to ensure that both of those major objectives are satisfied. So I'm suggesting that we work harder to ensure that they're both satisfied. If one large screening process is deemed to be intimidating to the candidate, then surely we can look at another process or something else that would see the parties involved in possibly a second phase, in a separate meeting, where the questions are quite different because the objective is quite different. So it's merely a concern that we do what is necessary to ensure that the program meets all our objectives so it may continue.

MR. WRIGHT: Before I was going to ask the Clerk Assistant what the reports from the interns were on last year's go-around.

MISS SOUTH: As far as the selection process?

MR. WRIGHT: No, so far as being allocated to one caucus only.

MISS SOUTH: Well, their preference would be to work for two, to see both sides of the House.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. The question is raised about process. Are there any difficulties with the interns at the moment that we haven't heard about? No, it's not that. Well, as always, we take it under review as to the process part.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes.

MR. BOGLE: Might I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that we table the item dealing with the interns until we meet tomorrow. That will give members as well as yourself and your staff an opportunity to think about it, and we'll see if we have any refinements that we wish to put forward tomorrow.

MS BARRETT: Good idea.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A motion to table. All those in favour?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Opposed? Carried. Thank you. See you tomorrow.

MR. BOGLE: Why don't we put Karen right on first thing so that we can deal with it at 9:30?

MS BARRETT: Yeah, preplanning.

MR. CHAIRMAN: At 9:30. With the only proviso that if Fred Stewart arrives, we'll have to deal with him first because he's only got a short period of time. That would be the only provision. Okay. Thank you.

Do we have the revised pages for . . .

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

What I've handed out reflects the decisions made on Friday. The first handout is just the bottom-line budgets. Maybe you could go back to those. The Overview of the General Administration: the change made in that budget was a decrease under Wages of \$20,000, on page 4 of that section, where there was a part-time payroll person on wages, which was removed from that section. Page 5 reflects the impact of that change on the benefit costs, so that the bottom-line budget for that section, General Admin, becomes \$518,387.

DR. ELLIOTT: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman, you've lost me.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, I confess I've joined the ranks.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. With this section, then, we have yellow tab 1, General Administration.

MR. WRIGHT: This substitutes for the entire package, does it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, only partial.

DR. McNEIL: The overview page substitutes for the overview.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The overview substitutes for the overview.

MS BARRETT: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 1 substitutes for your next page 1, but then you'll find that 2 and 3 are the same as what you have in your white pages.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, I get it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay? And so forth. All righty?

DR. McNEIL: The change on page 4 is the elimination of a part-time payroll clerk at \$20,000. Page 5 replaces the former page 5, which reflects that decrease of \$20,000 in terms of the benefit costs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So the blue sheets have reflected the direction of the committee from Friday, and that picks up everything else that was raised. Right?

DR. McNEIL: So the overall budget in that section decreases from \$542,143 to \$518,387, from a 5.6 percent increase to a 1 percent increase.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay? So the motion to approve was given last Friday subject to the changes. The changes are now in place, so section 1, General Administration, has been completed.

MS BARRETT: Right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, the next batch of blue sheets takes us on to House Services, yellow tab 3, plus some pages. Again, my understanding was that approval was given it.

DR. McNEIL: Just to highlight those changes, they reflected removing the conference in Zambia, on page 7, \$14,084, adding one more delegate to the CPA General Conference in Barbados, and increasing the Sergeant-at-Arms Conference to five days

and reflecting the increased cost of the Sergeant-at-Arms Conference. So that resulted in a change in the travel budget from \$69,376 to \$61,729.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. So that gives us sections 1 and 3.

DR. McNEIL: And page 12 has a typo, so we just substituted page 12.

So the bottom line for that section, House Services, moves from \$1,192,958 to \$1,185,311.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. If we can do a quick double check here, my understanding is that now tab 1, General Administration, has been approved; tab 3, House Services; most of 9; 10 comes tomorrow; 11 and 12. What is your pleasure, to go to MLA Administration or the Speaker's Office?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, we had recommended earlier that we hold at least a portion of the MLA Administration because of some discussions with caucuses, and those discussions aren't quite complete yet.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, let's go on to item 4. As you can see there in the overview, it's because of personpower, staffpower, merit and market adjustments.

Page 1: all those in agreement?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 2.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 3.

MS BARRETT: Well, when you approve page 1, aren't you basically approving the whole thing?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry. Yeah, you're right. We'll come back to 1 then. We've got 2.

Page 3, the Clerk Stenographer.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 4, Executive Assistant.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Agreed to page 5?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, 6?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 7. The two vehicles are the Speaker's and the deputy's.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 8. Is there a question?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. WRIGHT: A general question here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Whoa. Hold the phone here.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes. Just explain why, say, page 4 and the same on page 3 -- there's nothing against the actual item. It's just the totals. Is that just an omission?

DR. McNEIL: Mr. Chairman, that's the convention we adopted this year, that . . .

MR. WRIGHT: To save writing individual salaries.

DR. McNEIL: . . . we wouldn't list individual salaries. But in the case of this situation, there's only one individual in the category, so we know.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Page 8, Insurance. Who's agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 9, Freight and Postage?

MR. TAYLOR: For just curiosity though, Mr. Chairman, on insurance of vehicles, were they uninsured last year or were they insured by somebody else?

MR. SCARLETT: The Legislative Assembly Office picked up the insurance, and we're just correcting the budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 9.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 10.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MS BARRETT: You're going to get yes to everything because we already approved page 1, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, I was willing to let that one go and come back.

Page 11?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
Page 12?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. HYLAND: It looks like on page 11 the Speaker's doing more talking, because it's up 33 percent.

MS BARRETT: I have a question on 11. Oh, no, it just got answered. How do you get a microcomputer for 420 bucks?

DR. McNEIL: That's maintenance.

MS BARRETT: Oh, maintenance again. You keep fooling me with this one.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 13?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. WRIGHT: How much of this was taken up last year, Mr. Chairman?

MR. SCARLETT: Of the Temporary Staff and Printing Requirements?

MR. WRIGHT: Yes.

MR. SCARLETT: A vast majority of that, because that includes our letterhead, and we did have a temporary secretary come in for replacement for a couple of weeks.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And when we get to send all this interesting mail out to former members.

Page 14?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 15, Materials and Supplies?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 16? There you have the salaries listed.

MS BARRETT: Well, those are statutory, aren't they?

MR. SCARLETT: Yes.

MS BARRETT: Well, agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 16 is agreed.

Is there a motion to approve the whole section for the Speaker's Office?

MR. TAYLOR: I so move.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Westlock-Sturgeon. Those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you very much.

All right. Is that perhaps the limit of the budget discussion for today? We have, however, some other items of business. We have Members' Services orders. Do we get that clarified here, as to which Members' Services order needs to be passed today?

We'll grab one more cup of coffee or something. Just take half a minute.

[The committee recessed from 3:40 p.m. to 3:42 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, ladies and gentlemen, we have two Members' Services orders to deal with.

Okay. The Members' Services order you have in front of you should be a two-page document which says Amendment Order No. 3. Page 2 is the operative part of this.

MR. HYLAND: Is that the Members' Services Order No. 8?

MS BARRETT: No, it says No. 3. Oh, yeah, it says three on the top, and then on line 4 it says Order No. 8.

MR. HYLAND: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay? Same document.

What happens on page 2 is the effect of the discussion we had the other day where you as a committee directed that the real title for the re-establishment allowance was to be "re-establishment allowance." Now, since the Members' Services orders have been drafted and signed as resettlement, I feel I have to come back to you as a committee to at least apprise you -- apprise you, not surprise you -- that this now will be, in effect, the re-establishment allowance.

Now, Parliamentary Counsel says I can go ahead and sign this because it was an editorial error. And we can take that as general agreement; that would be fine. But it would be entered into the record. Or, in turn, you can give me a new motion that directs that it shall be known as the re-establishment allowance.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, I would move that we change the wording in Members' Services Order No. 8/88 to say just what you said and call it "re-establishment allowance."

MR. WRIGHT: Well, I'd like to move to amend that, recognizing that it is merely an editorial amendment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Would you take that as a friendly ...

MR. WRIGHT: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MS BARRETT: Question.

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, I would just suggest to the committee that it be regarded as if it had been written that way from the beginning so we don't have a change in the middle. So it is not a change at this point in time, but it is recognized that it was to reflect the wording of your motion and the writer who prepared the order had the wrong word.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. M. CLEGG: This way, we don't have an amendment; we have a recognition of an error.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And our other term, is it not, should be "former member" instead of "ex-member." Michael, we usually refer to them as former members rather than ex?

MR. M. CLEGG: I would have to refer to the motion to see what it said. I thought it said "former member." Was it "ex-member" in the motion which originally ...

MR. WRIGHT: But is there a difference?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, there isn't, but we're just trying to keep the form.

All right. But the motion still -- will field it and then we'll

sign that.

MR. WRIGHT: But it will be either "ex" or "former", according to . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would think so.

All right. Those in favour of the motion to regularize that, please.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Opposed? Carried unanimously.

Now, the next Members' Services order.

DR. McNEIL: This order formalizes the extended benefits option. The main point to make here is that once the member ceases to be a member or reaches age 65 or is deceased or gives written notice to discontinue coverage, the dependants are no longer covered. So once the member dies, that same coverage doesn't revert to the member's dependants, but what's payable under that coverage is payable to the dependants.

MR. HYLAND: Okay, then, my question of last time is: does it still make it possible for those dependants to partake in the plan, at least in the portion of the plan they wanted?

DR. McNEIL: No.

MR. HYLAND: I thought that was part of our intention. Unless I misunderstood, it was to cover that as well, not if somebody dies their family is cut off with . . . Sure, they'll get the life insurance, et cetera, et cetera, but not dental, you know . . .

MS BARRETT: The life insurance would kick in. But you're talking about the others.

MR. HYLAND: I'm probably thinking more about those with younger families and stuff like dental and your doctors and medical coverage.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Committee members, with due respect, I think we should adjourn our meeting until tomorrow and invite the subcommittee to meet over this wording to make sure it's picking everything up.

MS BARRETT: I agree.

MR. HYLAND: Okay.

DR. McNEIL: I have a handout, too, on this, if that helps.

MS BARRETT: Well, could we have that for information? But I agree with the Chairman's recommendation, because we might have a difference of opinion on this, and maybe we could work it out.

MR. WRIGHT: But, Mr. Chairman, can we, before it is adjourned in that manner or at all, just make clear the policy of the matter? Is it not that for five years after the member ceases to be a member, he or she has the election of continuing the coverage as if he were a member, so neither less nor more will happen than if he died or retired as a member?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm not sure about that part.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, I think we've got a problem here to the extent of understanding this, and either I'm way out or somebody else is.

What we're talking about here is not writing our own plan. We're being transferred to a plan that's already in there. Aren't the civil servants who take early retirement covered by a plan now?

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, aren't we then just transferred into that plan? I understand that Blue Cross is not going to make a special plan for retiring MLAs.

DR. McNEIL: No. It would be part . . .

MR. TAYLOR: We would be part of a plan that's ongoing.

DR. McNEIL: Correct.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, this is what I'm getting at. So to sit here and try to restructure a plan -- we don't. All we're doing is transferring over to another plan.

Now, is it possible to get that other plan we're transferring to or maybe even word it in a way . . . The order sounds as if we're going to a new plan. We're not. We're just being transferred over to a plan that's been ongoing for a year or two or three now for all senior civil servants who take early retirement. So why don't we just say that?

DR. McNEIL: No, but you're not being transferred into that ex civil servants' plan. You're still considered within the MLA plans, but as an ex-member, extending it for five years for you as an ex-member.

MR. TAYLOR: In other words, then, we can bargain and change in dependants and everything else. See, my understanding when we were in subcommittee is that we couldn't do any changes because it was already there.

DR. McNEIL: But if you start talking about the basis of coverage, you're talking about a whole change in rates. It's a whole different story. Right now if you were deceased tomorrow, your dependants would not be covered by any dental insurance. They would receive a group life payout, they would receive a pension payout, but they would not be covered at any time by your dental plan or your long-term disability plan or any of those things. They may have to assume the payments . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Clerk, I'm sorry. Thank you, David. Let's not go around and around here.

In a moment we'll adjourn until tomorrow morning at 9:30. I invite the subcommittee to meet here with the Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel listening in. This gives us enough time to try and check over with administration before they leave. So hopefully we'll have this result for tomorrow morning. Okay?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. HYLAND: Okay, let's close this meeting off.

MS BARRETT: Yeah.

MR. HYLAND: Are we through now?

MR. CHAIRMAN: And then we'll deal tomorrow with your other item, Mr. Wright, the memorandum re computerization. All righty?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We are. Okay, we now stand adjourned until tomorrow.

MS BARRETT: Agreed.

[The committee adjourned at 3:51 p.m.]