

[Chairman: Dr. Carter]

[9:35 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, group. If we could come to order.

Under committee budgets we have Legislative Offices Committee. So it's yellow tab 9, page 6.

Member for Calgary-North Hill, do you want to just give us a bit of an overview.

MR. STEWART: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The budget for this current year is \$33,463, and our best estimate is that we will come in within that budget, just within budget. Our budget that we are asking for for the year '89-90 is \$32,952, so it's a decrease from last year.

Essentially there are two components that make up the budget. One is our travel expenses in connection with conferences that relate to the offices for which we are responsible. As you can see, we estimate almost \$9,500 in that area for this coming year. One of those conferences will be held in Edmonton, the Ombudsman.

The other main area of expenditure is in relation to the independent audit of the office of the Auditor General. We are anticipating a slight increase there to \$11,500. A new auditor has been appointed by the committee. This is a rotating type of situation. The firm of Kingston Ross was appointed at our last meeting to become the new auditor for the office of the Auditor General.

The other matters in the budget principally relate to meetings of the committee, and details with respect to that are set forth there. That comes to a slight increase which we are anticipating there, to bring it to \$10,355, as opposed to \$9,138 last year.

So the bottom line is a reduction in the budget for the 1989-90 year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Questions or comments from committee members?

MR. CAMPBELL: Just one question, Mr. Chairman. How many members are on the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices?

MR. STEWART: Seven.

MR. TAYLOR: Maybe, Mr. Chairman, the Member for Calgary-North Hill could tell me. The independent audit for the Auditor General's office seems to be a fairly small amount of money. In that audit is the auditor just going through the math to see that the dollars are brought forth, or does the auditor have the right, as auditors do -- except maybe in Alberta -- to get in and advise the Auditor that he or she should be checking things that they're not checking? In other words, do they have that power? Or in their report do they do more than just say where the dollars and cents go? Will they come up and say, "The Auditor General should be looking into this or could have explored that paper or could be pressing to the Legislature for more." Do they take a proactive role?

MR. STEWART: Well, keep in mind that what they do is that they only are responsible for auditing the office of the Auditor General.

MR. TAYLOR: The office?

MR. STEWART: Yes, the office of the Auditor General. They

do not redo or rehash or second-guess the work of the Auditor General or any of its agents in the audits they perform for the various provincial agencies and so on.

MR. TAYLOR: Then this is office administration. To me, I think of the political word "office" meaning with all the pomp and glory and everything else that goes with the office, like a cabinet minister's office. So you're talking about the office administration.

MR. STEWART: Yeah, the expenditures and the revenues -- of course, the revenue comes from the Leg. Offices Committee -- but the expenditures of the office of the Auditor General in the purpose of carrying out its work.

MR. TAYLOR: A further supplementary. Do you have a written description of the job of the independent auditor of the Auditor General's office? In other words, is there a...

MR. STEWART: Job description, so to speak?

MR. TAYLOR: ... job description for the independent auditor of the Auditor General's office? If there is, could the committee obtain a copy of it?

MR. STEWART: Certainly. We'll investigate that and provide it to the committee.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, the Auditor General submits his report to the Legislature, so the public has a look at his recommendations and what goes on. Does the report of the audit on his office come to the Leg. Offices Committee so that he can have a look at it and see how his office is operating?

MR. STEWART: That's correct. The copy of the audit comes to the Leg. Offices Committee.

Incidentally, Mr. Chairman, I guess the number is nine and not seven members of the committee, in response to Mr. Campbell's question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You mentioned the Ombudsman Conference is occurring in Edmonton. What date? Is that the Canadian conference?

MR. STEWART: That will be the Canadian conference, and it will be ... By golly, I'm sorry; it's the auditors. It's the Conference of Legislative Auditors that's going to be in Edmonton, July 9 to 12. The Canadian Ombudsman Conference is in Quebec. Sorry about that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No problem. We've approved the budget for the auditors' conference.

Okay. Any other questions or comments with regard to Legislative Offices?

MS BARRETT: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour of the estimates? Opposed? Carried. Thank you very much, Calgary-North Hill.

MR. STEWART: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Legislative Interns was our next

item. Okay, with respect to . . .

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Cypress-Redcliff?

MR. HYLAND: Would you like a motion to approve the committees now?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. You're a mind reader.

MR. HYLAND: Because that was our last one, wasn't it?

MS BARRETT: To approve what?

MR. HYLAND: To approve the budgets of the committees.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The only one left for us to do is our own committee, right? Or we did that one, page 3.

MS BARRETT: Didn't we do that?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Legislative Committees (General Support): the Chair takes the motion of approval for all of the section with regard to Legislative Committees, as moved by Cypress-Redcliff. All those in favour, please say aye or agreed.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Opposed? Carried. Thank you very much. Section 9 is now approved.

Now, section 10, Legislative Interns. Problem, Westlock-Sturgeon?

MR. TAYLOR: Yes, I had a problem. It was the same problem you had, but I realized it later, that Legislative Interns is not in the same package.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't know if you and I have the same problems, but that's okay.

MR. TAYLOR: I was trying to be kind. I could have said roadblock.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Section 10, Legislative Interns, page 1. Page 2 deals with the matter of four interns at the price per year.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if we could consider a motion:

to adjust the income for the interns to be in conformity with the increase that has gone to a number of other divisions that we've already dealt with -- staff increases -- which were around 3 percent, so that they would get a 3 percent pay increase.

I think, if this note to me is right, it would be \$46 a month additional, so adding \$46 to their monthly income.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I take it I have a motion for an increase of 3 percent.

MR. HYLAND: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Those in favour? Opposed? Carried. Thank you. Page 2 to be adjusted.

Page 3: that will make for some slight adjustments there.

MR. TAYLOR: Oh, I'm sorry. On page 2 -- I wanted to talk on that for a moment, if I may, Mr. Chairman. I think that in these times of tough employment and the fact that this is excellent training -- we did cut back terrifically in this area -- I'd like to see two things happen: one, that we put one more intern in next year's budget, to get five interns. After all, it is a question of training our native Albertans to better job opportunities, and I believe it can be used. Secondly, so that it makes it easier to use them, I'd also move in this -- I intend moving in the same motion, unless you ask that I separate it -- that the interns be rotated, because the purpose of interns to me is much more from their side of the equation than it is on ours. They extract maximum benefit out of it. I suppose you can argue that one intern should be locked in for the whole year, but for the training procedure, if we rotated them, they'd get much better training.

I talked to some people, political science profs in Lethbridge and Calgary, and they feel that there is a lessening of interest in the job because it doesn't give the training that it used to do. In other words, there is a certain amount of attraction to applying for a job where you get rotated amongst the caucuses, more so than if you come up here and, as luck would have it, you end up with one caucus over another caucus for the whole year.

So therefore, Mr. Chairman, I would like to move that we increase for next year by one intern and that the interns be rotated as decided in an equitable fashion by the chiefs of staff.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, with respect, hon. member, I'll take it as two separate motions. The first one is to increase by one, and then we'll deal with the next matter.

MR. TAYLOR: I'd like to see us employ one more intern next year, and I'll make that my first move.

MS BARRETT: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's a call for the question. All those in favour of the motion, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Opposed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The motion is defeated.
The next motion, Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: I could feel the rope under the table being jerked to put their arms all up in the air at the same time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Aside from that, hon. member, your motion is . . .

MR. TAYLOR: Okay, Mr. Chairman.
The second motion is that the . . .

MR. BOGLE: He's an expert on ropes.

MR. KOWALSKI: His has been pulled.

MR. TAYLOR: I've cut the rope, so this motion might go

through.

That the four interns be rotated amongst the caucuses on an equitable basis as decided by the chiefs of staff rather than locked into one caucus for the whole term.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And if the motion carries, what effective date? Starting today?

MR. TAYLOR: No, no. This is the '89-90 budget year.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, so starting with the new round.

MR. KOWALSKI: April 1, 1989.

MR. TAYLOR: The new round of hiring; that's right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, so you're talking the new group of interns commencing next summer.

MR. TAYLOR: Yeah. I believe this group ceases in June, doesn't it? Is it June? Does anybody know? It's June 10, I think it is, the contract.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Discussion with regard to the motion.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman, I didn't realize that they have till June. It's only February now. Is there some difficulty about it starting sooner? Is that the end of June or the beginning of June?

MR. TAYLOR: I think it's the 10th.

MR. CHAIRMAN: End of June.

MR. TAYLOR: Is it the end?

MR. CHAIRMAN: End.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, if we're more than halfway through, they wouldn't get the rotation like they used to. If they're not halfway through, maybe that's a possibility, but being more than halfway through would shorten them on one caucus.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, just a couple of questions for information with respect to the interns. Are they here on a 12-month basis during the year?

MR. TAYLOR: Ten months.

MR. KOWALSKI: Ten months? Are they university students continuing their studies, or this is a postuniversity ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: They take a year out.

MR. KOWALSKI: From their studies? Are they expected to go back to university after they've concluded this one year of internship?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not necessarily. They've finished one degree.

MR. KOWALSKI: But that's a condition, a university degree? Is it specified what degree?

MS BARRETT: No.

MR. KOWALSKI: It's a general one. Does it apply as well to the trade schools and technical schools in our province or just universities?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Universities and colleges but not technical schools.

MR. TAYLOR: My experience, watching the last 10, 12 years: I've seen a couple who have been in the middle of degrees, more senior students, but in general they're graduates in nearly anything. I've seen everything from classics to ... I've never seen an engineer; that might be an idea. Between bachelors and masters, usually.

MS BARRETT: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, the motion before us is that commencing with the next group of interns, they would be rotated. Those in favour of the motion, please raise your hand. Opposed? Thank you. The motion is defeated.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, indeed. Edmonton-Highlands, followed by Cypress-Redcliff.

MS BARRETT: Well, yet another consideration then. If we're not going to rotate interns, and if we're going to stick to just four, I move

that for the next rotation

that is, the next group that comes on

the chiefs of staff from the government and opposition caucuses participate in the selection process and that intern assignments ...

Well, no, I'm going to make this more complicated. I move also that with the involvement of the chiefs of staff the short list be expanded to eight applicants ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Eight finalists.

MS BARRETT: Finalists; pardon me.

... and that the chiefs of staff, if we're not going to rotate, have the ability to decide which of those eight finalists would go to any individual caucus.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Which of the four ...

MS BARRETT: Yes, which four. No, but more than that, though: if there's not going to be a rotation, if they're going to go to one caucus only, then I think the chiefs of staff should have a say which of those eight any individual caucus will acquire.

MR. HYLAND: They can't acquire more than four, though.

MS BARRETT: No, no. But have a say in which one will go to any given caucus. Do you see what I'm getting at? To expand the list of finalists to eight and then allow the chiefs of staff for each caucus to have input as to which of those finalists will go. It means four will not be assigned, obviously, but it gives them a

say as to which one would be assigned to any individual caucus.

MR. TAYLOR: Speaking against, Mr. Chairman, I think we've already politicized it enough by insisting that . . . This is a form of indenture. We get these students out of school and force them to stay in one caucus for a year. To now get into the process of divvying them up -- I think we've completely lost the point here, which was to try to give an education on as broad a base as possible and training to some of our young Albertans. To start divvying them up now I think is dangerous and could be very political. Now, I know you're not political at all; maybe some of the others might be.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair recognizes Cypress-Redcliff, Rocky Mountain House, and then Edmonton-Highlands.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, my question was on another matter.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, we'll hold that one. Thank you.
Rocky Mountain House, followed by Edmonton-Highlands, Edmonton-Strathcona.

MR. CAMPBELL: Yeah. Mr. Chairman, what are the assignments now? What's the number going to each caucus?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: One to each.

MR. CAMPBELL: One each?

MR. TAYLOR: That's why four is going to be interesting next year.

MS BARRETT: Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't think this has to be a partisan issue. I think what it does have to be, though, is that if a group of people that no longer includes MLAs decides which people are going to be the finalists, for instance, then if we've lost the notion of exposure to all sides of the House, in the absence of that rotation, surely to heavens chiefs of staff should have something to say about which of the eight possible finalists they'd be looking at. I can't see that that's going to compromise anybody under the circumstances. The ideal program, I think, is the way it used to be, and part of that dynamic is lost. It's been lost by two years' worth of motions now. I just think it's eminently reasonable. We allow our chiefs of staff to do a lot of stuff; we delegate a lot of work to them on our behalf. I think it's crazy not to include them in this process. That's all I'm asking for.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I think we have two things going on in the motion. One is about whether you want the consultation. I don't pick up a whole bunch of vibes that people are against that. I think it's perhaps involved in the second part of the motion, but it's up to you all to straighten it out.

MR. WRIGHT: Well, in that case perhaps the motion could be divided, Mr. Chairman.

MS BARRETT: Okay.

MR. WRIGHT: But speaking to the second part, the rotation, it seems to me that that follows from the rejection of the last motion, because there's going to be the odd case of a square peg in

a round hole. Now, if that was only going to last for half the time, that's not too bad. But the whole time: there are going to be unhappy people and perhaps unhappy caucuses too. So that chance can be minimized by good selection.

MS BARRETT: Agreed; exactly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further discussion on the motion?

MS BARRETT: Question.

MR. TAYLOR: Have we still got the two together?

MS BARRETT: Yeah, we do have the two together.

MR. WRIGHT: Well, then I move to divide it, Mr. Chairman.

MS BARRETT: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Then the first motion as moved by Edmonton-Highlands is
that the chiefs of staff be involved in additional consultation with respect to the eight finalists.

MS BARRETT: Yes, that would be the first part.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. The motion that we believe we have here, perhaps we can . . . It's your motion. Let's see. What are your words?

MS BARRETT:

That the chiefs of staff from all caucuses be on the selection committee to determine who the eight finalists amongst the applicants will be.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So the chiefs of staff or their representatives involved in interviewing all of the 25, whatever -- narrow it down to that.

MS BARRETT: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you ready for the question?

MR. HYLAND: We're not talking about eight; we're talking about the whole . . .

MR. WRIGHT: Okay. I think the two elements were that there should be eight finalists and, secondly, that the chiefs of staff should be involved. But the only reason for the eight was that if the chiefs of staff were involved, there'd be a wider pool. But I think that was the division, Mr. Chairman, so which shall we do first?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, the motion is -- what we currently have would be to involve the chiefs of staff with interviewing, say, all 25.

MS BARRETT: Is that the desire of the chiefs of staff? You have to advise me. I know you talked to McInnis about this. Or is it that you wanted to be involved at the second stage, just the short list?

MISS BLANEY: Second stage.

MS BARRETT: Second stage. Mr. Chairman, I'm afraid I'm going to have to ask for consent to amend my motion to make that clear.

MR. WRIGHT: Well, I don't think so, with respect. You can simply say: (a) that the chiefs of staff be involved in choosing the short list and the assignments thereon, (b) that the short list be increased to eight. Right?

MS BARRETT: No. I talked to John this morning, but I ran in here too quickly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, I think it's coffee break time for about five minutes.

[The committee recessed from 10:02 a.m. to 10:09 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The smoking sections are there together, so good. Now, whereabouts are we with respect to motions? Will we withdraw every motion that's there and start again or what? Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Yes, Mr. Chairman. If the committee will allow, I am prepared to withdraw those motions and introduce a different one which I think captures the essence of what I was really getting at.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Unanimous consent to withdraw.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MS BARRETT: Okay, Mr. Chairman. What I do move, then, is

that after eight finalists are determined by the committee as it is currently structured, the chiefs of staff be able to interview those finalists and have a say which individual finalist might go to any given caucus, understanding that there are only four positions available, and with the whip's concurrence; that is, the chiefs of staff in concurrence with the caucus whip.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for that more enlightening motion.

MR. WRIGHT: Succinct motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not necessarily succinct... But, yes, succinct, in the words of Edmonton-Strathcona. Thank you.

MR. TAYLOR: Just a bit of a clarification, Mr. Chairman. To the nicotine corner over there. Could they tell: the chiefs of staff are not going to select who the four winners are; they're only in there to see where the four will be positioned. Is that what you mean? That's the way I read your motion.

MS BARRETT: No, they would be determining.

MR. TAYLOR: Could you read that? That's not the way I...

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Motion by Ms Barrett:

That after the eight finalists are determined by the committee as it is currently structured, the chiefs of staff interview the eight finalists and have a say as to which individuals go to any given caucus, and with the whips' concurrence.

MR. WRIGHT: Understanding that the maximum is four.

Well, the number is four.

MS BARRETT: The final number is four, but the short list of eight would go to the chiefs of staff, and subject to the concurrence of each caucus whip the assignments would be made by that group.

MR. HYLAND: Question.

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

MR. KOWALSKI: Let the record show that it's unanimous.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Any additional motion required on this one? No? Everything's fine?

MR. HYLAND: Could I ask my question?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Cypress-Redcliff, and then we need to talk about some mechanical aspects to this.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, in looking at our other budgets and the amount of air travel that even just the Legislative Assembly alone spends -- and I look here. One of the donators towards travel is Canadian Airlines International. The note in the budget says that donations from these organizations "will enhance travel expenses." I wondered how close they were to covering travel expenses, because for moving these four people around, I would think that if Canadian Airlines International can't at least give us sufficient tickets to cover their costs, there's something wrong, when we're spending -- what? -- in excess of \$100,000 in airline travel in the Legislative Assembly alone.

MISS SOUTH: The travel expenses that are enhanced by their corporate donation are with the travel to other jurisdictions. Travel expenses within the province come out of the budget, so the Canadian Airlines sponsorship is for travel to other jurisdictions only.

MR. HYLAND: So when you say "enhance," is it covering all of the travel in other provinces or just a percentage of it, Karen?

MISS SOUTH: Canadian Airlines' portion is airline tickets only. The donations from Benson and Hedges and Petro-Canada cover hotel, meals, cab fares, and miscellaneous expenses.

MR. HYLAND: So we cover all out-of-province travel in total between those three outfits?

MISS SOUTH: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Tell him where they've gone this year.

MISS SOUTH: This year the interns have gone to Yellowknife, Winnipeg, Toronto, and Ottawa.

MR. CAMPBELL: Like, last year: what are we talking about? How many dollars would you say these three corporate donations would amount to?

MISS SOUTH: We don't see anything from Canadian Airlines because they give us passes, so I don't know how much exactly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's five grand each or something.

MR. CAMPBELL: Is that for the complete fare?

MISS SOUTH: Yes, full fares. We don't pay them anything, and we don't see the price on their tickets.

MR. CAMPBELL: So, looking back at our budget, then, the travel expenses that we have listed, the \$6,293 for this year: what would that take care of?

MISS SOUTH: The interns' attendance at the various party conventions, their seminars that they hold at the various universities, which they held last week, to aid in recruitment for next year's interns, also expenses related to the interview process, including both for applicants and the advisory committee, the three university professors.

MR. CAMPBELL: Okay; thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Anyone else on this?

MR. TAYLOR: Further along the Member for Rocky Mountain House's question. His was my first one; my second one would be supplementary to that, which is: how much of the travel expenses that we see listed here, \$6,182 -- make it last year's. What percentage would you say went for travel outside the province, of that travel budget? Seeing that so much of it was donated, was there much of it...

MISS SOUTH: None of it.

MR. TAYLOR: None at all. So that's strictly an in-province balance. So, in other words, this notation down at the bottom really isn't pertinent to this budget. It just means when they travel outside of the province. Maybe I'll reverse it the other way then. How much of the travel within the province is covered by Benson and Hedges, donated by Canadian Airlines and Petro-Canada?

MISS SOUTH: None of it is.

MR. TAYLOR: None. So this is really an item saying that when they travel outside of the province, they get donations from these people.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Rod, you've got another comment about the expanded...

MR. SCARLETT: With the interview process now containing eight applicants, and looking at our travel budget, it's apparent we're going to need some more funds to cover the cost of the eight finalists to stay in Edmonton for the interview process for the chiefs of staff. There may be some technical difficulties because if, for example, the committee interviews 12, we may have to keep all 12 over until they've determined the top eight. So I'd like to suggest to the committee that we do need to enhance the travel budget -- and I guess that would be the only one -- by a figure of possibly \$1,500.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, I would move that the travel budget for the intern program be increased by \$1,500, as recommended by administration.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Taken into effect on page 4. Call for the question.

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

MS BARRETT: On the same subject, Mr. Chairman, it occurs to me that we are going to have to allow for a slight increase with respect to the employer costs shown on page 3 -- that is, UIC, CPP, and Workers' Compensation -- to reflect the 3 percent increase that we approved in their wages. So I would move that that 3 percent increase be incorporated, as appropriate, on page 3 of those estimates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. All those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you. Adjustments to pages 2, 3, and 4.

MR. TAYLOR: May I bring up a question of adjustments on page 3? I'm sure it doesn't happen, but it would appear that that budget telegraphs that the four interns should be single, because of the health care and Blue Cross premiums. I wonder, lest it be used as evidence that married graduate students cannot apply, whether that shouldn't be expanded to cover the maximum. Well, let's put it this way: if not married, cohabit with a responsibility.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, the committee had requested on numerous occasions that the administration take great caution in preparing their budgets and that wherever possible they prepare the budget based on our experience in the past year or years. I assume that our past experience has been that most if not all of the interns have been single, and that's why it appeared in this way.

MR. TAYLOR: This is a very interesting point, Mr. Chairman. Ours is married and doesn't get this much, so I think it's eminently unfair to use this budget to tell somebody that is married, "Sorry, we only allowed for single Blue Cross."

MR. BOGLE: Well, might we ask for clarification on that point?

MR. SCARLETT: For clarification here, each of the budgets is budgeted for a 12-month period. If in fact there is a married individual that requires, let's say, a premium for a family, we can use that extra two months' worth of budget item for cover off. So each of the benefits is in fact based on 12 months' contract period, when the interns are hired for 10.

MR. TAYLOR: I agree, and knowing Mr. Speaker and your staff, it would not enter my mind that you would discriminate. But I just thought that for an abundance of clarity and for people that may be taking over this budget to administer down the road -- stranger things have happened -- it should be quite clear that the Alberta health care and Blue Cross cover married or single. I would like to move that at least if you don't want to budget for it, remove the word "single" after "4." You've got four single at

\$9 a month times 12; four single at \$6 a month times 12. If you want to put four times 12, fine. But remove "single" at \$6 and \$9 anyway.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. We'll take it into account in preparing the revised page. Thank you.

Any additional questions with regard to page 4?

Page 5, \$200 item, Freight and Postage. No change. Agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 6, Long Distance Tolls.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 7.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 8.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Page 9.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. TAYLOR: Sorry; page 8, Mr. Chairman. You went too fast for me. Hosting of Ontario Interns: I can see it happening for last year, but why... Is Ontario the only other province with interns? Wouldn't there be other provinces hosting?

MISS SOUTH: Ontario is the only jurisdiction which tends to have its interns visit Alberta.

MR. TAYLOR: Visit Alberta; thanks. The others can't come.

MISS SOUTH: I believe that in Manitoba their only trip is to Ottawa, and the Ottawa interns visit jurisdictions other than Alberta.

MR. TAYLOR: I just didn't want the news to get out that Quebec interns didn't get \$100 worth of entertainment when they arrived.

MISS SOUTH: Quebec doesn't have a program anymore.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Motion to approve the section on Legislative Interns, with the various adjustments?

MR. CAMPBELL: Motion to.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Moved by Rocky Mountain House. Those in favour please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you very much.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, I want to record as being opposed because of the fact that there's only the four interns.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Anyone wish to be opposed?

MS BARRETT: Oh, sure. Well, I mean on the basis of the vote

that called for an increase in the interns, I think it's fair to recognize that Taylor, Wright, and Barrett voted for an increase in the number of interns.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, voted against approval of the budget for Legislative Interns. That's what's under discussion.

MS BARRETT: Oh, I see. Oh, no.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay; thank you. So it's just Westlock-Sturgeon? Thank you.
Thank you, Karen.

MS BARRETT: Well, it's sort of odd, Nick, because you voted yes for some of those votes and voted no for others. There is such a thing as consistency, although I realize that the Liberal Party throughout the world boasts no philosophy whatsoever.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, in this nonpartisan meeting, I think we're back to MLA Administration. Is this where the committee would like to go next? Section 2.

MR. BOGLE: Am I correct, Mr. Chairman, that we've done everything in the budget except the MLA Administration and the various caucuses?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's my interpretation.

MR. BOGLE: Okay. Could I recommend that under MLA Administration we leave the section relating to constituency offices, as previously recommended, and deal with that when we deal with the various caucus budgets?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. The constituency office component, right?

Can we take a 10-minute break, please?

[The committee recessed from 10:27 a.m. to 10:35 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, we're rolling. MLA Administration and other constituency budgets. Do you have the overview there? I'm sure you've inwardly digested it.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Edmonton-Strathcona.

MR. WRIGHT: Can we get one thing out of the way, which was the business about the computerization, which is reflected in the B-1 budget here? After discussion with David, the Clerk, I have ascertained that it is the intention of the people in charge of the computerization to make sure that equipment to make compatible existing equipment will be included in the equipment that is purchased upon request, providing it's cheaper to do it that way. So I'd like it recorded

that the letter of January 24, 1989, in our book, which I guess was approved at an earlier meeting of this committee, is to be construed as follows: that it is understood that equipment to adapt existing equipment to the system chosen will be included upon request with the equipment bought by the Legislative Assembly Office, providing such purchase is cheaper than re-equipment.

MS BARRETT: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, good. You have the wording exactly. Thank you.

MS BARRETT: It doesn't do any good; he writes like a doctor.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. So is that a general understanding or is that a motion?

MR. WRIGHT: Well, I so move then, Mr. Chairman.

MS BARRETT: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Opposed? Carried. Okay, thank you.
May we look at page 2 too? Agreement on page 2?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 3, MLA Communication Allowance. Is that a component of one of the things we're supposed to set aside? No, this one is all right.

MR. HYLAND: Well, just a minute.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: Do we have to move it year by year? Does the increase happen automatically when a postal rate increase comes in?

MS BARRETT: The motion that we passed just a few days ago permanently allows for automatic increases when postal rates rise, if I'm not mistaken.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That was our intent.

MR. HYLAND: I think I'm one page early.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah. We're on 3 and you're on 4. Okay. Absolutely.
Page 3. Agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now on page 4, Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, I thought we had floating around here yesterday -- and I've got one Members' Services order but not the other one -- a change. It's been withdrawn? So it happens automatically then?

DR. McNEIL: Mr. Chairman, the formula for the communications allowance is based on two first-class mailings per year times the number of electors in a constituency divided by 1.5, which calculates the number of households. That was suggested last year, so it's not an issue.

MR. HYLAND: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Agreed with page 4 then?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. BOGLE: Just for clarification. Are we using the most recent electoral lists?

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

MR. HYLAND: Like September's electoral list?

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 5.

MS BARRETT: No.

MR. BOGLE: That's the page we'll skip.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's the one we're going to hold. Thank you.

Page 6. Are you in agreement with page 6?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Agreement on page 6.
Page 7, Repairs and Maintenance of Equipment. Agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 8. Well, here's another one.

DR. McNEIL: I imagine we want to skip that one.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you want to hold on this one? Eight is on hold.

How are you with regard to page 9?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 10.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And 11?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Or is that another hold? Stationery, promotional allowance: 11 is all right? Okay. Agreed.

MS BARRETT: Can I have a question on page 10, please? Is this transferred from our constituency budget? In other words, we pay our light and power, don't we?

DR. McNEIL: Yes.

MS BARRETT: It's just showing up here as a transfer?

DR. McNEIL: Yeah.

MS BARRETT: Thank you. We should change that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Page 10 is now fine for the second time. Page 11, still okay. Page 12?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

AN HON. MEMBER: Pigeons on the roof.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, right. Pretty big ones by the sounds of it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's trying to snow out there, and it's the wind. Maybe it's disturbed the bats too.
Okay. Page 12, agreed. Page 13?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Fourteen, fixed assets, data processing. Should that be all?

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Cypress-Redcliff?

MR. HYLAND: I would like to make a motion to add something to this, and I think, in looking over the Members' Services order that it relates to -- I don't have the right number. But there's a Members' Services order that says we can use any moneys left in our constituency offices allowance and/or our communication allowance to purchase equipment that we think we need to communicate with. In looking at the orders, there's one piece of equipment that isn't listed -- and maybe it's because it's just recent technology -- and that's purchase of facsimiles.

So with that in mind I'd like to move:
that the constituency services order be amended to include the rental or purchase of facsimile and other audiovisual equipment and acquisition of related supplies as allowable items to be acquired from the constituency office budget of the Members' Services allowance, effective on the date of passage of this motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you have a copy of that?

MR. HYLAND: Yeah, one copy.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That includes television sets, radios, compact discs? It would appear it's already in the Members' Services order.

MR. HYLAND: Not facsimilies. We looked.

MS BARRETT: But is it excluded? I mean, if there is a reference to communication equipment . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, committee members, perhaps we could have it read out, Parliamentary Counsel, and then we'll go from there. Okay, do you want to read the article, please, Michael?

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, the constituency services order includes a section which is drafted so that any expenditure from one segment can be transferred, at a member's wish, to another, so they are not separate compartments. The constituency compartment, the communication compartment, and the promotion compartment are all interchangeable, and the constituency office section includes the following:

The Allowance may be applied to . . .

(a) rental office space, furnishings, fittings and office equipment including electronic equipment.

I think that phrase would clearly include something like a fax machine. So I believe there is authority for that allowance to be used to pay for that, unless I'm misunderstanding the member.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You said "rental" or "rental or purchase"?

MR. M. CLEGG: No.

. . . may be applied to the cost of

(a) rental office space, furnishings, fittings and office equipment.

I don't believe that that expression means that the word "rental" applies to the office equipment.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I think the Members' Services order as is -- I don't mind making it more clear, but in fact I know that some of our MLAs in the New Democrat caucus have bought fax machines, for instance, for their constituency offices out of their budgets, and it's been allowed. It's been approved. There is a precedent already.

MR. BOGLE: It seems to me that in addition to the motion which Leg. Counsel has just reminded us of, there is a list of equipment contained in another motion that includes things like a typewriter. My only unease is: if we're going to use a general motion, then why do we have a more specific list? If we're going to carry on with a specific list, let's make sure it's up to date so that if a member has a facsimile machine, it's contained on the list. I'm just saying let's be consistent.

MS BARRETT: Fair enough; sure. I was just trying to avoid a redundancy, because it's already allowed.

MR. HYLAND: Don't we say computers separately? We say typewriters separately. That can be construed as electronic equipment, too, the modern ones.

MS BARRETT: It doesn't hurt to pass it. We'll just go for it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So the motion would be for clarification.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, I don't know if this is important. It seems to me you should be moving in the opposite direction of what these people want to do. Now we're trying to spell out every form of animal or hybrid that might come out. It seems to me the original one, "electronic," covers a multitude of things. Leave it at that. If we're removing anything, we should be removing the specifics rather than going to them, because otherwise every month there's going to be something coming up.

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, in section 4 of the order there is a list of items which are to be provided to each member in addition to the allowance and not paid for out of the allowance, and that is the section which lists certain specific items. I'll read it.

In addition to the items provided and paid for out of the Allowance there may be provided to each Member the office supplies and equipment necessary for the operation of the . . . office including, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, a telephone, a telephone answering device, a typewriter, dictation equipment and photocopying equipment.

So those listed items are provided without expenditure by the member and not deducted from the communication allowance.

Where electronic equipment is mentioned in section 1 is where a member may use his allowance to pay for those. That is where the distinction lies.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, there's our difference.

MR. TAYLOR: Very good.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, with unanimous approval I'd like to withdraw the motion because the intent, I think, is shown in the transcripts. Agreed?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Unanimous?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. It's withdrawn.
Page 14. Approved?

MS BARRETT: Agreed.

MR. CAMPBELL: Mr. Chairman, page 13. I was just taking a look at it. In view of the fact that we have MSC 1/89, and here we have dental coverage of 83 MLAs, I was wondering, looking through this particular list of expenditures, whether we'd have to increase this in view of the fact of MSC 1/89.

DR. McNEIL: That hasn't been passed yet. But when that is passed, we're going to have to reflect those expenditures in this budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Turn down the corner of page 13 then.

MR. HYLAND: I was going to say the committee is ready to report, and we could deal with this quickly.

MS BARRETT: Agreed.

MR. HYLAND: I mean, this is the page it most affects than anything.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Thank you.

MR. HYLAND: I'd like to move, supported by the unanimous vote of the committee,
that we pass Members' Services Order 1/89 as given to us yesterday.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Discussion? Call for the question?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour please signify. Opposed? Carried unanimously. Thank you. Therefore, there will be a revised page 13.

The Clerk has a question, perhaps directed to Westlock-Sturgeon.

DR. McNEIL: Yes. Given that this will only come in force if there is an election, and since we can't budget in anticipation of an election, the money to fund this would have to come from a special warrant, based on the previous discussion on other items.

MR. TAYLOR: I could give you the assurance of any Liberal government forum that I would make sure the special warrant would be passed. You'd have to go to the other parties for this.

DR. McNEIL: I guess what I'm seeking is direction from the committee in terms of how to budget for this particular item . . .

MS BARRETT: That's a good question, I guess.

DR. McNEIL: . . . because it's sort of an anticipatory situation.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, right.

MR. HYLAND: The intent is there. I think the term of the government can be till '91, and it would only be after that point in time that we would have a proper budget figure. For sure, after that point in time we'd have a proper budget figure to work with. Otherwise, the first session, whenever . . .

MS BARRETT: You'll never have a proper one.

MR. HYLAND: Well, you'll have a better idea, whoever is in or out at elections. Till that time, the only choice we have is special warrants, because we don't know when an election's coming.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, it might be useful for the committee to consider the following: that in essence, by approving this motion of this order today, we have cut in a special code now as a result. There would have to be a special code created, I would think. It would seem to me that what at least we should have in this particular budget is the code identified, with a small amount in there. Because one of the things this particular order does is also provide for one who would resign, and that's an uncertainty and an unknown. And perhaps just to put in, well, whatever it is, even if it's a dollar, at least it's a code then on which to go as a special warrant for later to adjudicate. Perhaps a more realistic figure would be \$25,000. But I have no basis for saying that would be realistic or not, because I don't know what these expenditure items would be. But by having identified it, having passed the order now here, we would then have the code in the budget. And then later, when they come to adjudicate with the special warrants, at least it would be something to go towards.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Good. Thank you.

MR. TAYLOR: I knew you had some purpose on this committee.

AN HON. MEMBER: You're going to learn something there.

MR. KOWALSKI: Hang around, Nick.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 14 was approved.

MS BARRETT: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 15.

MS BARRETT: I have a question. What are dictamites?

MR. CHAIRMAN: A small dictator?

MR. TAYLOR: You should know the diminutive of anything.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, that's what I'm wondering. For those of us five feet and under, what are they, David?

DR. McNEIL: They're small hand-held dictating units.

MR. TAYLOR: Pint-size.

MS BARRETT: Oh, okay; all right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Approval of page 15.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Now, B budget proposal, computerization.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I move that proposal 2 be adopted over proposal 1. Proposal 1 calls for the computerization over a period of two fiscal years. As I've said in this committee a number of times, I think it's extremely unfair to any MLA who doesn't draw the lot to get in on the first year, for instance. It is absolutely not a problem to do it all in one year. The only problem -- and I do not consider it a problem -- is, after the installation of the computers, the training of staff. It seems to me that can be done very efficiently over the course of a couple of days in centralized locations -- for instance, training northern staff in the two centres of McMurray and Grande Prairie or what have you -- and do it on a city-by-city basis or bring them in all at once for various classes. But it's extremely unfair to those who don't get their computers in the first year. It leaves them at a real disadvantage.

Proposal 2 isn't going to cost us a nickel more. In fact, it might even cost us less if you do the acquisition all at once, and I think it's the much fairer route to go.

So I move
that we approve B budget proposal 2 and abandon B budget proposal 1.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Discussion with regard to proposal 2? Taber-Warner.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to speak against the motion. First of all, the mover has made an assumption that all 83 MLAs want the computers. It's important to note that some don't have constituency offices. It's also important to note that others have part-time constituency offices in their various constituencies. I think the important thing, if we do decide to phase this in over two or even three years, is that a formula be developed that's fair to all the caucuses to ensure there's a proportionate basis used so each caucus has its rightful share. The caucus can then decide or determine those members who are up and ready to go now and want it, and those who aren't ready and can come in at a later time.

So I think it's an awful lot to bite off, for the administration to try to do this all in one year. It's a large budgetary item, and I think it can be spread over two or even three years and handled very nicely as long as there is that sensitivity relative to the proportional basis for all the caucuses.

MS BARRETT: In other words, there's no reason for disagreeing with my motion. I didn't hear a reason from Taber-Warner.

There's no reason to disagree with this motion. It's not going to cost the Assembly any more; there's no provision in my motion that says you have to have your computers. What it does is allow those who want them to get them all in the same year. Why not?

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right.

MS BARRETT: Oh, Ken is going to dream one up now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll go through the normal process of having a few other people comment and then come back in.
Barhead.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, if I could ask a question. I'm looking at the background with respect to budget proposal 2 on page 17. In the background it talks about eight constituency offices that participated in a pilot project, and then out of the proposal it talks about 63. Well, if I add eight to 63, I get 71. What happened to the other 12 constituency offices?

MS BARRETT: Maybe they don't have constituency offices.

MR. KOWALSKI: Now, it's unimportant for somebody to tell me that there are no constituency offices in those other 12 ridings. The fact of the matter is, if we're going to do something, there has to be fairness and equity provided to all 83 Members of the Legislative Assembly. If the answer is, well, there are 12 that don't have constituency offices, just say yes, that's the answer.

DR. McNEIL: That's the answer.

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, then there's no process or basis for fairness and equity across the system. We have to provide and ensure that all Members of the Legislative Assembly are treated fairly and equally. The concept of computerization of constituency offices is an important one, but it's an optional one as well. If an individual member chooses not to obtain such a service, that's his or her choice. But we have to, I'm sure, as the Members' Services Committee, make sure the provision is there.

Did the subcommittee, the committee that worked on this, ever consider the proposal that basically if we're talking about 83 constituency offices, we would set aside X amount of dollars, whatever that dollar figure -- if it's \$9,000 or \$10,000 -- for a budget allocated to each constituency office, recognizing that there had to be some element of uniformity across the whole system so that no one particular constituency would say, well, I can get a better system or a worse system, and then put it in such a way that if we knew what kind of computerized equipment they wanted would be about \$1,000 more than what the constituency allocation would be -- so there is some onus of responsibility on each constituency as well, not simply to drive up the price because this is something being provided. In other words, there was a check attached to it. I'd like to know if that has been considered.

MR. CHAIRMAN: By the subcommittee.

MS BARRETT: Well, David would be the best to respond.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Clerk.

DR. McNEIL: Yeah, the budget was based on a specific allocation for each constituency office. I guess the principle we budgeted for this year was rather than based on the maximum potential expenditure, we estimated on expected expenditures. That's why we've got 71 instead of 83. If we'd budgeted as in past years for the maximum allowances, then we would have budgeted here for 83. And you know, I agree with the point you're making, that we should budget based on the 83 offices as opposed to the 71.

MR. WRIGHT: So this wasn't a limitation but simply a guess at actual demand.

DR. McNEIL: It was just a guess; it wasn't a limitation. We assumed, too, that the second year of the budget proposal 1, we would have a better estimate of how many computers we needed in that second year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Yes, just a question further to maybe explaining why we went into two years instead of one year. Is it a possibility that the staff cannot handle doing it all in one slug?

DR. McNEIL: From my perspective it would be a significant management problem to implement 70 offices in one year because of the requirement for the individual EDP co-ordinator to do a fair amount of traveling and liaising with the individuals in each constituency office to set up the equipment, test the equipment, and so on. So that's another reason, I guess from the administration perspective, why we would favour the two-year limitation. It would be a more manageable process.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Further discussion? Barrhead.

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, Mr. Chairman, I guess the question here is that this decision has to be based on some principles. Principle number one is that if we're going to do it, it has to be applied equally to all 83 constituency offices. Number two is that while we're talking about equipment that may be sophisticated because of its engineering side, it's not sophisticated by way of its implementation side. We're talking about machines that basically you just press little buttons today and things work, and in a matter of a couple of hours presumably the machine is up and running. If there have to be several days allocated for the training of a person in each constituency office to do it, that surely is not a major quantum problem to implement. I can't see a problem associated with this. If somebody has a problem, I'll volunteer three hours on Thursday sometime in February or March or April or May to assist the implementation of such.

The question is: do we want to do it? Once we determine what it is we want to do, then either we do it or . . . We get it done.

MS BARRETT: Further to what Barrhead has had to say — and I can't believe it; for once in my life I'm going to agree with him — you see, when you buy a whole bunch of computers all at once, you can tell the purchasers to go and buy WordPerfect for you, install it on every one, install a shell program. You can tell them to do anything and get it at a really good price; these people are hungry for business. We already know that we're going to be using WordPerfect, we already know we want a shell, we already know that it's going to be DOS based, and like Ken

said, you know, he or I could set one up in an hour and a half. It really should not be a problem to implement a maximum of 83 in one year. If one person can't do that, then there's a problem. I could do it in a year; I could do it in less than a year.

MR. TAYLOR: Ready for the question.

MS BARRETT: Yeah. Ready for the question, and vote with me, Nick.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour of the motion to approve proposal B-2? One hand, I guess, is all it takes you. Opposed? It's down to a tie.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, didn't the hon. member from Milk River make a motion that we do just the \$377,000 one?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, hon. member. It was B budget proposal 2, and it was moved to accept that by Edmonton-Highlands. That's what we've been discussing.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, Ken wanted to vote with me.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, there was a flurry of activity going on in here. Is it possible to call the question?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Absolutely. Section 2, page 17: the motion is to adopt that page. Moved by Edmonton-Highlands. Okay? Those in favour of that, please raise your hand. Opposed? It fails, 5 to 4. Thank you.

What is the committee's wish with regard to page 16 then?

MS BARRETT: Motion to approve, Mr. Chairman, before it gets worse.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion to approve by Edmonton-Highlands. I have the motion.

MR. CAMPBELL: A motion?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I've got one, I think, from Edmonton-Highlands. Do I?

MR. HYLAND: To approve what?

MS BARRETT: Motion to approve page 16, the first proposal.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Discussion?

MR. KOWALSKI: Is there a plan as to which of these 35 offices will be brought into this?

MS BARRETT: That's a good point.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Discussion with the chiefs of staff, I assume.

DR. McNEIL: The original proposal was that the 35 positions be allocated proportionately among the caucuses and that the individual caucuses would determine which offices would be included in the first phase.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Rocky Mountain House.

MR. CAMPBELL: Okay. I'd like to make an amendment to that motion, Mr. Chairman:

that the B budget proposal to computerize constituency offices proceed. The program would be phased in over a three-year period, and an amount of \$244,000 is approved for the 1989-90 fiscal year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do we have a copy of that, please?

MR. TAYLOR: We're going to buy all the bloody computer components anyhow. They'll be sitting in the warehouse.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, exactly. I mean, I don't get this. Let's hear the reasoning. Justify your motion, Rocky Mountain House.

MR. CAMPBELL: Well, I guess it's probably speaking to the amendment. I have to probably go back to my own experience, where I have a part-time secretary, and the fact is that probably the computerization is not as important as some other members feel it is in their constituencies.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Are there any comments?

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I've never heard of such ridiculous nonreasoning in my life. If Rocky Mountain House doesn't want to be in on the first-year computerization, then maybe he would give me a memo that would allow one of our caucus members to take his place. This makes absolutely no sense. It's going to cost you more, and I plan to be here three years from now to prove to you how much more it costs to phase in over three years. It's going to cost you a lot more, and it's going to be very inefficient in its application. It's an insane proposal.

MR. CAMPBELL: Don't rattle the bars, Shorty; we'll feed you.

MS BARRETT: I'm going to rattle the bars all I want.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Other discussion.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, I have to speak against the motion. I can feel the rope tightening under the table. But you're going to buy these computers anyhow; they're going to be in the warehouse. I just can't fathom the Luddite philosophy that if you can postpone computers, possibly they'll go away a few years from now. I don't really see the sense of the motion at all. [interjections]

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Thank you. The Chair hasn't recognized anyone else. It hadn't been notified that anybody else wants in on this.

MR. HYLAND: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
Edmonton-Strathcona, on the amendment.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I entirely concur with the reasoning of the Member for Rocky Mountain House as far as it goes, but it only goes as far as saying he doesn't want one. So I don't see how the rest follows.

MR. CAMPBELL: I was speaking for the other members, Gordon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're voting on the amendment as soon as I get it back here. The amendment:

that the B budget proposal to computerize constituency offices proceed. The program would be phased in over a three-year period, and an amount of \$244,000 is approved for the 1989-90 fiscal year.

Those in favour of the amendment, please signify. Four. Opposed? Five. Okay, the amendment fails.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: The motion as amended?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, the motion as not amended; the motion. Call for the question? This would be to approve page 16.

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour? Opposed? Carried. Page 16 is approved.

All right. The understanding of the Chair is that section 2 is approved all except for pages 5 and 8, and, of course, page 17 was rejected.

MR. HYLAND: A question on that motion we last passed. Are we assuming now that we're dealing with 83? That is going to have an effect on the number. Those who don't have constituency offices may choose to put that equipment in their homes, for example, to communicate back and forth or something. I know it's going to have an effect. If we've closed the door, there are only 71 that can get it now, not 83.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, that's not my understanding. By approving B budget proposal 1, we're going to phase in the first batch in this next year, and over a three-year period -- and after the discussion . . .

MS BARRETT: A two-year period.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry. I'm thinking of this year as being one of the years, because we're getting the first eight done in this year, and then, in the light of the discussion, move this up to cover every member.

MR. HYLAND: The number will have to change. Maybe not, but the number of offices at least.

DR. McNEIL: I would suggest that we then budget for the remaining offices in 1991, in the second year . . .

MS BARRETT: I agree. It'll be obvious to us by then.

DR. McNEIL: . . . so that we have 43 between this year and the next fiscal year, and the remaining 40 in 1991.

MR. HYLAND: And if your prices come in cheap, you may get more this year, because we voted on the dollar and not the number.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, group.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Member for Barrhead?

MR. KOWALSKI: As a result of this decision today, this allows the administration of the Legislative Assembly now to undertake a certain amount of work so that this project could be implemented starting April 1, 1989. We don't have to wait till October or November. This budget will kick in April 1, 1989. So there is work that can be done now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Once the budget is approved by the House.

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, work can be done, though, prior to that point in time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

DR. McNEIL: Work is proceeding now.

MR. KOWALSKI: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, committee, what is your pleasure? To deal with these pages 5 and 8 in subsection 2, or are you now prepared to go on to the matter of individual caucuses?

MS BARRETT: Let's do caucuses.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Caucuses. Any order you're happy with? I assume we go to item 5. Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to start on the Official Opposition. This will be the third year in a row that I've requested that we do this item first.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Very well. Is there agreement with the committee?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Take us on to tab 6.

MS BARRETT: What you'll see in the proposal of the Official Opposition is that the 20 percent that was cut from our funding two years ago be restored.

Now, I'd like to amend that proposal a little bit. We had to lay off staff. We still can't keep up with the phone calls. I mean, we were put in the most bizarre and awful situation, I'm sure, of any opposition caucus in the country, and I would like to see our ability to function restored, with the financial support that's appropriate.

On the other hand, it occurs to me that I didn't win this item during the last two years, and I'm not going to hold my breath today. So what I propose is that we go for a 12.5 percent increase in caucus budgets. And, if you'll allow me in this motion, I would then propose that we go for an increase so that our constituency office budgets would be at \$34,500 a year, and that that would compensate -- if I can't get my 20 percent for the caucus, in other words, at least it would help us be able to provide more staffing at the constituency level, which would take some pressure off.

DR. McNEIL: That's separate, though, from that.

MS BARRETT: Well, yes. You can direct me on how you

want me to move on this, but my concern is that I would like our caucus to be able to function at the level that we were able to up until two years ago, before the 20 percent cut was imposed.

We've since sustained an accumulated inflation rate of about 9 percent. That's been a fair amount to absorb. I can tell you from my own perspective that my rent doesn't get any cheaper. You know, you want a constituency office in . . . Given the nature of my riding -- there's no cheap office space available in Highlands, period -- I'm forced to pay a fairly high amount just to have an office, period. And no matter where I go in Highlands, it's going to be in that area.

So that's what I propose, that the caucus budget -- and I did work it out in such a way that you could calculate. You will recall we had this formula before. Originally we had a budget that allowed us \$40,000 per MLA per caucus for our legislative function, and we were cut back to \$32,000. What I'm proposing is that we bring that figure back up at a compromise level -- and, like I say, I'm not going to hold my breath on this -- to \$36,000 per MLA for each caucus. And to further complicate matters, no, I don't have it written out.

You will recall that there was some insistence that leaders' offices be segregated from the global figures, that I lost that vote in 1986 and I continued to lose it thereafter. So in keeping with the formula that this committee approved, but with which I never did agree, I propose that the leader's budget be increased by 3 percent.

Louise, if you haven't got all that, I'll say it again.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, we're going to deal with it one step at a time, so we'll take your first one.

MS BARRETT: Okay. One step at a time is fine with me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So your first step is to increase per member from \$32,000 to \$36,000?

MS BARRETT: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. That's the original focus we're going on now.

Taber-Warner, Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. BOGLE: Well, I had my hand up, Mr. Chairman, for clarification, with your permission. I think that's now clear, that we're speaking of increasing the amount provided to each member of the Legislature who is not a member of cabinet from \$32,000 to \$36,000 per year, for a \$4,000 increase.

The member is also proposing to increase the Leader of the Official Opposition's allocation to bring it up to a point where it would be consistent with the average cost of a minister's office, which is consistent with what we have agreed to in the past. And the other component on the constituency offices: what was the dollar increase being proposed for that, Pam?

MS BARRETT: Eight and a half thousand.

MR. BOGLE: Eight thousand, five hundred dollars on top of the current base of \$26,000 for constituency offices. That's the essence of the three parts.

MS BARRETT: Well, actually you make me wonder now, because you see, we didn't get any increase last year or the year before, and I think cabinet ministers' offices -- we won't know

until the budget is revealed later this month. So ...

MR. BOGLE: But on that point, when we struck a figure for the Leader of the Opposition two years ago, we fell back on the average cost of a minister's office in the previous year. So that was taken into account.

MS BARRETT: Well, again it's a position with which I never did concur. But anyway, we'll see.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right.

MR. BOGLE: Well, I just want a clarification on your motion. You're proposing?

MS BARRETT: I'm proposing for the Official Opposition that we pursue what amounts to a 12.5 percent increase for our caucus budget ...

MR. BOGLE: Yes.

MS BARRETT: ... a 3 percent increase for our leader's office budget, and a change in the constituency budgets. By my calculations, that would recover us to the point where we were at a couple of years ago.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's the understanding of the Chair, though, that the motion as it applies to all noncabinet MLAs is that it's \$32,000 to \$36,000.

MR. BOGLE: That's for the NDP caucus.

MS BARRETT: For our caucus.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For the NDP caucus only.

MS BARRETT: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All righty. Further discussion on that point? We have Westlock-Sturgeon, followed by Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't see in this year where we're -- we've gone through this budget, and whether it's interns' salaries or anyone else's, we've kept everything in the 2 percent to 3 percent or held even. As a matter of fact, we brought down our Liberal opposition budget with the idea of holding even, and I notice the government held even. It's only the Reps, if there is such in existence now -- but we'll talk about that later -- and the NDP that are coming in at a higher amount.

For the Member for Edmonton-Highlands to suggest that the Official Opposition can increase theirs by 12.5 percent and 3 percent for the leader, while giving \$8,000 to the constituency -- that's a 32 percent increase to the constituency -- I think that is a blatant bribe to the Tory party to try to get some more money for the NDP opposition or for the opposition members. I'm not willing to go along with it. Eight thousand dollars per constituency or a 32 percent jump for the constituency -- there are more backbenchers, unfortunately, in the Conservative Party than there are in any other -- is a huge amount of money coming up just prior to an election year, and I don't see how we can justify that. If the MLAs for the parties have been surviving this long, why do they suddenly need an \$8,000 jump? I'll admit

that ...

MS BARRETT: Perhaps you want to look at last year's transcripts and the year before ...

MR. TAYLOR: If you're ...

MS BARRETT: ... when you were bellyaching about the 20 percent cut, Nick. [interjections]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Perhaps we could go at this one at a time, everybody. Thank you.

MR. TAYLOR: I was just hoping you could find a cork for them. But nevertheless ...

MR. CAMPBELL: Spending money like drunken sailors.

MS BARRETT: Oh, quit being cheap.

MR. TAYLOR: ... to go on on that point, I think this is just a blatant, as I say, bribe to try to get the backbenchers of the government, who will have that 32 percent or \$8,000 increase -- 60-some. That's a fair amount of money; that's \$480,000, approaching half a million dollars, which they can then move around, as they're now allowed to do, back to the caucus or wherever they want. I don't like it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, that's not the motion. It's for the NDP caucus.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I object to the use of the term "bribe" under any circumstances and require that member to withdraw it. I am fighting the same fight I have fought for two bloody years in here, which is to restore the funding to the opposition caucus. That man over there used to agree with me. Whatever his problem is, I don't know and I don't care. Get him to withdraw that word, Mr. Chairman, or I'm going to appeal to the Privileges Committee.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, all love affairs end at one time or another.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In the meantime, though, will you withdraw the word?

MS BARRETT: You withdraw that.

MR. TAYLOR: No. I don't think -- I think "bribe" is a ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member.

MR. TAYLOR: Okay. All right, I'm sorry. I'll withdraw "bribe" and substitute "incentive."

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have a withdrawal.

MS BARRETT: You'd better be careful, because we can bring in Privileges, Nick. You're in committee.

MR. TAYLOR: You're frightening me to death.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's been withdrawn.

Perhaps, hon. members, as sensitive as the issue is, let's have all the comments through the Chair, and I'll keep you down to one comment at a time on this section.

Cypress-Redcliff was recognized.

MR. HYLAND: My questions, I think, were cleared up in the exchange between Taber-Warner and Edmonton-Highlands, with the division.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

We have a motion before us which is with regard to raising an amount of money from \$32,000 to \$36,000 with respect to one particular caucus.

MR. TAYLOR: That's the first motion on the agenda.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. That's the motion we're now about to vote on.

MR. BOGLE: That's for the NDP caucus.

MS BARRETT: Correct.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For the NDP caucus, as clarified.

MR. TAYLOR: Wait a minute. I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman. A point of order here. Can you move to have certain constituency allowances raised and not others?

MR. KOWALSKI: That's not the point we're talking about.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, hon. member. We're dealing caucus by caucus: the Official Opposition caucus, soon the Liberal caucus, the Representative caucus, and the government caucus.

MR. TAYLOR: Maybe I'm misunderstanding something here, but I thought the \$8,000 was the members' constituency allowance. Is the caucus allowance equivalent to the constituency allowance?

MS BARRETT: I can change the figures, then, if you'll give me a minute, to make the change so that we restore the 20 percent to the caucus and then some. Just hang on a minute.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, hon. member. We have a motion before us which is with regard to one caucus only.

MS BARRETT: Okay.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour, please raise your hands. Seven. Opposed? The motion carries.

MR. TAYLOR: Guess what's going on, eh? The incentive is working.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So is the committee.

All right, the next motion was with regard to the 3 percent raise for the budget of the Leader of the Official Opposition, I believe.

MS BARRETT: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And that is the motion as moved by Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I don't know if I've got this right, but by my calculation . . . Yes, let's just leave it at 3 percent, that the Official Opposition leader's budget be increased by 3 percent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

The third component was with regard to a figure of \$8,500. What's the motion, please?

MS BARRETT: Well, I'm starting to see that there might be a problem in moving this for one caucus, Mr. Chairman, although I'm flexible. I'm in pursuit of getting our funding restored, so I'm at the will of the committee in terms of whether we want to inject that directly into caucuses and make that part flexible or go on the overall constituency budgets.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could ask the member to use that as a notice of motion that will be introduced under MLA Administration or table it, one or the other. Table it and we'll get it at the end, when we're winding up the last section we have left.

MS BARRETT: Well, if that's a motion to table, I can't speak to it. What worries me, Mr. Chairman, is that if it doesn't fly, then I want to come back to the Official Opposition budget so it can be restored, because one way or the other I want those funding cuts overturned.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I think it's a good time to break and grab a sandwich and a piece of cheese and come on back and sit down. Just take a two-minute dash to the food table and back.

[The committee recessed from 11:30 a.m. to 11:38 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, away we go. We've dealt with two motions, and we're dealing with a third here.

Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, it's just been suggested to me that there is no reason we can't adjust the Members' Services order that originally scheduled constituency budgets on the basis that they were originally scheduled. In other words, we could deal with the . . . Sorry to do this in the middle of lunch, but let me just see if I'm right about this. This is an issue of information. Is it correct that if this committee wants, it can deal with constituency budgets on a caucus-by-caucus basis? Or did I get that wrong?

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, there are two separate items here, of course. This committee is determining budget recommendations. All this committee is doing is making recommendations which will eventually form part of the budget which will be presented to the Assembly. Therefore, it is not determining

matters of law and financial appropriation in doing this.

There are two elements. One is the allocation per member per caucus, which of course will be dealt with on a caucus-by-caucus basis. The second element which has been brought up is a suggestion that at some future time the Members' Services order which sets the constituency allowance should be amended and increased. Presumably once the committee has gone through each caucus and made the determination on that issue, either generally or on a caucus-by-caucus basis, it can come back and amend the order. That is within the committee's power, to amend the constituency services order and to make that financial allocation.

MS BARRETT: Okay. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do we have a motion?

MS BARRETT: I think the motion was to table, and I asked for information.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The request was from Cypress-Redcliff that you, Edmonton-Highlands, might consider tabling. But since you moved the motion, you're not able to table. Therefore, does Cypress-Redcliff wish to have the motion tabled? Cypress-Redcliff. Tabled?

Those in favour of tabling the motion, please signify.

MR. TAYLOR: I'm sorry. Could I have that motion then?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion to table.

MR. TAYLOR: I meant that the motion be read.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'll read it after this. Those in favour of the motion to table?

MR. TAYLOR: Well, what motion are we tabling, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The one that dealt with the \$8,500 constituency office for the New Democrat caucus. Opposed? Carried.

Any other item within envelope 6 here, Official Opposition?

MS BARRETT: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That part has been tabled, and we can't go any further with approval on that area.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, I move that we move now to government caucus.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Agreed? Section 5, government members. Member for Barrhead.

MR. KOWALSKI: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. The summary of budget estimates under government caucus shows a figure of no change projected. I would like to propose, sir, two motions. The first motion would deal with the need to reallocate the base on which this decision was made in terms of the current budget year. Members of the committee will recall that when this budget was being prepared well over a year ago, there were certain members of Executive Council, and during this

time frame there has been one fewer caucus member than we had a year ago with the joining to Executive Council by the Hon. Greg Stevens. So the base, in terms of looking at the estimates for '88-89, was slightly different from the base looking at the estimates for 1989-90.

I would first of all like to move

that the government caucus estimates decrease by \$32,000 in recognition of the caucus size being adjusted to 34 members from 35 members.

The principle that we'd established for allocating these caucus budgets was based on the number of MLAs, non Executive Council members, and that motion is self-explanatory.

MS BARRETT: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. TAYLOR: This is a decrease because we lost one member to the . . .

MR. KOWALSKI: Correct.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, through you to the Member for Barrhead. There has also been one death. The way the budget goes, is that ongoing for Mrs. Koper's seat? That's building up for somebody to take when the by-election fills it?

MR. KOWALSKI: No. Each constituency office, to my understanding, does exist, and the constituency office is there for the service of constituents within that particular riding. The dollars allocated for a constituency office are not allocated to an individual Member of the Legislative Assembly; they are provided there as services to her or his constituents.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, then the constituency allowance is to the constituency, not to the MLA?

MR. KOWALSKI: It always has been that way. These are not benefits for MLAs; these are benefits for constituents.

MR. TAYLOR: So you have a decrease of how much then?

MR. KOWALSKI: Thirty-two thousand dollars on the basis which we use for the current fiscal year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Because of the member moving to Executive Council.

With respect to Calgary-Foothills, the operation of the office continues until such time as a by-election.

Okay. Taber-Warner.

MR. BOGLE: Well, I was merely going to respond to our colleague who raised the question that I believe the precedent was set when the late leader of the New Democratic Party -- funds continued to flow both for constituency and for the caucus funding. It may be that one of the New Democratic members can shed more light on that, as I was not a member of the Members' Services Committee at that time. But is that not correct?

MS BARRETT: Uh huh. Can I answer? We didn't have the same formula for funding. Ray was on Members' Services at that time. It wasn't a formula per se, but the matter did go to Members' Services, I believe. Either that or Speaker Ameron-

gen made the decision by himself. I think it went to Members' Services, and it was agreed that the constituency office kept functioning until the by-election had been conducted.

But I have another question.

MR. HYLAND: I was on Members' Services when that happened, and that in fact is true. It was decided to keep everything going, maintain status quo caucus and constituency office, because you didn't know what was going to happen until there was such a time as a by-election.

MS BARRETT: Plus Grant's office stayed open.

MR. HYLAND: Yep.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Edmonton-Highlands, on an additional point.

MS BARRETT: Yeah. I have another question that now leads me to wonder about something. If the caucus budgets are determined on the basis of non Executive Council members, when I proposed on the Official Opposition budget the increase that I did, which was approved, does that include a \$4,000 increase for Raymond, or is he excluded from that?

MR. HYLAND: Yes.

MR. BOGLE: He's included.

MS BARRETT: He's included. Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Parliamentary Counsel.

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, I was only going to comment that the legal requirement is that the by-election be held anywhere within 180 days of the vacancy. Therefore, the actual vacancy during the forthcoming fiscal year will be only about two months and one week as a maximum.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Is there a call for the question, then, on this reduction by \$32,000? All those in favour? Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

There was a second motion by . . .

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, then to determine the allocations of the government caucus for the fiscal year 1989-90, I would like to move that the basis for the calculation of the caucus formula be \$36,000 per member.

MR. BOGLE: Just a question. What percentage increase would that be?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, through you to the member. The global calculation on the basis of 34 members times 36 would be an adjusted base of 9.28 percent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Discussion? Westlock-Sturgeon, thank you.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, I'd like to speak against the motion. A global 9.8 percent still runs up very close to a million dollars. I notice we've asked the interns . . .

MRS. MIROSH: Well, we have more members than you, Nick.

MR. TAYLOR: The fact is that that's having your arms a long way into the taxpayer's pocket though.

The point is that we've asked many others, including many citizens in Alberta -- and certainly our interns and other people are paid here to exist in the 2, 3, and 4 percent area. In fact, I think we just approved 3 percent for the Leader of the Official Opposition. I really can't support the idea of the government members' reaching in to increase the caucus allowance with 9.8 percent. Admittedly that's a lot less than the 30 percent that was originally suggested and then tabled for the constituency allowance, but that apparently will be coming up too. So I think 9.8 percent is unreasonable. It's not in keeping with the way we've been budgeting around here and approving other budgets, salaries, and so on. And bearing in mind that any constituency is able to transfer money into the caucus if the caucus is having trouble, I think the constituency allowance is ample enough for 63 MLAs or whatever it is. There are not that many backbenchers; I'm sorry. Forty, I guess it is. They can transfer in. So I just think a 9.8 percent increase when we're asking others not to take moneys -- when we can't find moneys to fund battered women's shelters and everything else, money coming up here close to a million dollars is just wrong, Mr. Chairman, and I have to vote against it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thanks. Could there be some rechecking on the raw figure you used at the beginning? I don't think that was quite accurate.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, I can give you the figures you want.

MR. KOWALSKI: For clarification, Mr. Chairman, the figure I used was 9.28 percent, some 10 percent less than the figure put forward by the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon.

But to repeat again, this request is being made on the principle of allocations of dollars per each member of a particular caucus, and the principle that was arrived at a few minutes ago in dealing with the caucus of the Official Opposition was based on \$36,000 per member. This motion that I've just raised in the last few minutes follows exactly that same principle, based on the supposition that Members of the Legislative Assembly are all equal and there should be a fair allocation then provided for each caucus. These dollars are not for adjustments in salaries of individuals. These dollars are to be used for service to the people of Alberta, the constituents of Alberta, the electorate of Alberta, and the nonelectorate of Alberta, those who choose to access an office of a particular caucus.

MS BARRETT: Well, now you've got me worried, because I would assume that we're also entitled to . . . I mean, if we had to have pay freezes and layoffs for the last two years, which we did in the Official Opposition, surely we're allowed to use this money for pay increases.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Excuse me a moment, Edmonton-Highlands. Would you like to start again, please, so we've got the attention of all members?

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, you asked me to go through the mathematics here a while ago, and you never gave me a chance to come back with it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will indeed.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, I'm sorry. I thought when you asked me that you wanted an answer then, not down the road.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I figured it might take more than a second to be able to calculate it, so Edmonton-Highlands, followed by Westlock-Sturgeon.

MS BARRETT: Well, I was just looking for clarification on what Barrhead was saying, because my calculation is that the rate of inflation over the last two years on a cumulative basis is in excess of 9 percent. We in the Official Opposition anyway had to freeze wages, and you were just saying that this is not for staff benefit. I mean, that's our decision, isn't it?

MR. KOWALSKI: That's not what I said.

MS BARRETT: Okay, what did you say?

MR. KOWALSKI: I said that the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon left the impression that this would be for adjustments in somebody's salary for that particular level, and of course it isn't necessarily. There could very well be some internal adjustments. It's always been the tradition of this particular Members' Services Committee that how the dollars are allocated internally is not the business of the committee. It may very well be that a particular caucus would want to adjust salary levels to that level, but it's not necessarily true that another caucus would do that.

MS BARRETT: Good enough.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, I'm having trouble with the math. I know this is an action where the big fellow is sending the little guy to see if he got burned and then is going to follow along later if he didn't. They've sent in the Official Opposition, although they may not know it, to get the increase from \$32,000 to \$36,000. This is what the increase per member allowance for the caucuses comes to. But \$32,000 to \$36,000 is \$4,000; \$4,000 over the top of \$32,000 comes to one-eighth; one-eighth is 12.5 percent. So the Official Opposition has got the approval of the government — I guess it was cooked up out here — to get a raise of 12.5 percent per member to be contributed to the caucus. Now the government is using that nose in the door that the Official Opposition so conveniently did for them to slide in a 12.5 percent increase. And I say that's unconscionable.

Now, for the Member for Barrhead to take a global amount and say that because one of our members has been moved to the cabinet we're only asking for 9.28 percent is one of the reasons I don't think he ever majored in math. It's a cute saying, but it's not correct. This is per capita. We've increased it from \$32,000 to \$36,000. That's a 12.5 percent increase.

When the government can't find money for all kinds of things from community schools to women's shelters or even an intern...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member...

MR. TAYLOR: I know you're there to defend them, but okay, I'll drop that. But the point is that we couldn't find money for interns, we couldn't find money for library research, but we can find 12.5 percent to give to the government caucus on a per-

member basis. To me it's unconscionable; it's wrong. We didn't ask for it, and I don't want any part of it.

I know the NDP somehow or another has been suckered into running interference for this while our two friends carry the ball through the hole made, but nevertheless it's wrong.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, the matter of some comments like "suckered" really is inappropriate in the committee. I mean, we've worked on a fairly relaxed basis with the committee and, you know, I don't think we really need to get into that kind of histrionics.

Edmonton-Highlands, thank you.

MS BARRETT: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm getting a little sick of this as well. Because if you look at the transcripts for the last few years, you'll see that Nick Taylor here fought along with me to have the cuts to our budgets overturned. And I'm a little suspicious as to why it is that now he's not happy with even a partial increase to the budget cuts that were imposed on us. I mean, if you want to talk about...

MR. TAYLOR: Has this got anything to do with the issue? Point of order. Has this got anything to do with the issue?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon members, come on.

Edmonton-Highlands, please.

MS BARRETT: Thank you. I mean, those were very serious debates, Mr. Chairman, you will recall. Certainly I can't recall any of the opposition caucuses being happy about the 20 percent cut that was levied upon us two years ago. And I don't like any doubts cast upon myself or our caucus in our attempts to get that funding back.

I have made it clear time and again that the phones didn't stop ringing by 20 percent when we endured that cut. We didn't start getting 20 percent fewer letters. Our casework didn't go down by 20 percent. In fact, because of the budget cuts that were all around, our casework probably went up by 20 percent. So cool it, Nick.

MR. TAYLOR: May I add, Mr. Chairman, that going back certainly we wanted, and so did the government caucus and everyone else, to keep a benefit or an income where it was. But we learned to make adjustments, just like hundreds of thousands of other people in this province have. We've learned to live with it.

Certainly we can always use more money for salaries. You can use more money for any kind of thing. But the point is that we've asked the rest of the government employees and much of Alberta — and you may call it histrionics, Mr. Chairman — we've asked much of Alberta to keep within 3 to 5 percent and we're making an overt grab of 12.5 percent per MLA, which I think is wrong. We can live with a zero increase; I don't see why they can't.

MS BARRETT: Look at cumulative negotiated settlements for the last two years.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Other comments with regard to the motion?

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour of the motion, please

signify. Opposed? Carried.

MR. TAYLOR: Would you please record that too, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: For Westlock-Sturgeon. Thank you.
Member for Taber-Warner.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, could we now move to the Representative opposition? I would like to move
that the Representative caucus estimates be adjusted to reflect the formula of \$36,000 per member; in other words, increasing their allocation for the two members from \$32,000 to \$36,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. That's a motion.
Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I could live with the increase for one, for Walt Buck. I hate to make this personal, but I discovered yesterday, I was told yesterday, that Ray Speaker is actually a member of two political parties now. I think we as a committee have the right and the power to ask of him which political party he's prepared to leave when it comes to sitting in the House. Because he's got a budget that's based on this formula -- again, one that I've never really agreed with -- but anyway, they've got this budget that allows them to function as an opposition caucus. I know it's complicated, Mr. Chairman, but we do have the power to request of him to say which one he is. If he's going to cross the floor, I think we need to know that for budgeting purposes, and if he's not going to cross the floor, then he has to declare in such a way that he's going to rip up his other party membership. He can't have it both ways, Mr. Chairman.

I don't mind for Walt Buck. He says he's still a Representative, and he's announced that he's not going to run again. Fair enough. He's entitled to it. And so is Ray Speaker, but it depends on which caucus. Because it's not the \$4,000 that worries me; it's the rest of the budget that we're allocating for this Representative caucus. If the only true Representative Party caucus member left is Walt Buck, fine with me. If he wants to function as an opposition caucus by himself, then we should give him a budget to do that. But I'm really concerned that Ray Speaker is looking to have things on both sides of the fence, and I can't see that that's quite fair. I know we have the power to ask him to make a decision prior to approving this budget. I'm not speaking against the motion, you understand. I'm talking about the rest of that budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
Westlock-Sturgeon, followed by Edmonton-Strathcona.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, I am speaking against the motion, Mr. Chairman. The fact of the matter is that this is a budget for next year for two people who used to be the Representative Party. We don't know whether the Representative Party is going to be renewed or not. It has to be filed, I think, by sometime in February. Maybe Counsel will know exactly as to whether a party exists. But as to whether a party exists out there in the hustings and whether it exists in the House, I understand there is a difference. After all, in the House one member has said he's retiring. The hon. Member for Clover Bar has said he's retiring, will not be running again, and that the Representative Party does not exist. At least that's what I've read. The other member has proudly announced that he has joined the Conservative Party.

So what we have is a peculiarity here of funds going to a couple of MLAs to keep an opposition together that at the very maximum is one. Therefore, I would like to amend the motion put forward that the budget be cut by 50 percent.

MS BARRETT: On the amendment, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The amendment is not . . .

MS BARRETT: Well, it's true it's antithetical to the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah, that's right. It'd have to be a separate motion.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, just for a moment as a point of order maybe, and maybe I'm wrong. I'd like to submit to you that the motion as made by the hon. member from Milk River was how you mathematically arrived at the solution -- in other words, per caucus member -- of \$32,000 to \$36,000. I'm just saying amend it to add the four for the number of one member, not two members.

MS BARRETT: Oh, I see.
On the amendment, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay; that it's going to be calculated on the basis of one member. That isn't exactly what came across.

MR. TAYLOR: Yeah. Because his motion was \$32,000 to \$36,000; it didn't say how many members.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So it's on the basis of one member. We'll take that as an amendment.
Edmonton-Highlands, to the amendment.

MS BARRETT: Yeah. I guess I agree in principle with the amendment, but the point I was making earlier I think still holds. Is it fair for us to judge this when we have the power to direct Ray Speaker to declare in which role he will act in the House? Now, I know I'm not supposed to put all the faith in the world in this, but I read a quote from Ray Speaker that says he's not going to ask questions in question period, which is a fundamental role of an opposition member in the House. So surely before we deal with this budget, we have the right to ask that person, Ray Speaker, if he's still going to be an opposition member or if he's going to cross the floor to be government. Why don't we ask him that and come back to this at our next meeting? Why don't we get him to clarify?

MR. HYLAND: We might be through today.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Parliamentary Counsel.

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, from the point of view of parliamentary procedure and precedent and tradition, the seating and loyalty of a member in the House is, first of all, not connected with his registration in a political party; it's a matter between himself and the House, represented by the Speaker. So if he indicates to the Speaker that he wishes to be seated with a particular party, that's where he will be. It's between him and the Speaker where he sits.

If at some future time any member were to change to another party, it would be possible for the money in one vote to be read-

justed, because there are capabilities in any departmental vote, as with the Legislative Assembly vote, for money to move within a subvote to a subvote with certain Treasury Board restrictions. All this money, all the opposition funding, is contained in one of the numbered votes, and therefore it is not a problem from that point of view. They are subvotes within a vote, and there's always the possibility that if a particular party's seatings and standings should change during a fiscal year, administrative adjustments could be made.

MR. BOGLE: I want to make the observation, Mr. Chairman, that the arguments put forward by our two hon. colleagues might better be stated when we're dealing with the leader's allowance for the Representative Party. We've established in the past a principle that private members, whether they sit on the government side or the opposition side, should be treated equally, and we've just adjusted the figure. Now, the only way I could see that formula being adjusted is if a member of the caucus in question argued that the figure was too high, that speaking on behalf of his caucus, the figure should indeed be lower. Otherwise, I think we are bound by the figure of \$32,000 per member. I repeat: unless that argument is made by a member of the party in question, saying, "No, I don't want \$32,000; I want some lesser figure." That can certainly be considered.

So I think the amended motion is really out of order. If the member wishes to pursue this matter when we deal with the leader's allowance for the Representative Party, then it certainly could be pursued.

MR. TAYLOR: May I speak to the point of order?

MR. CHAIRMAN: There isn't a point of order at the moment.

MR. TAYLOR: Oh.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It was a point rather than a point of order.

MS BARRETT: This is getting trickier and trickier by the moment, because what Parliamentary Counsel has just said is that we're hamstrung when it comes to determining that leader's budget if he remains a leader, for instance. We're hamstrung. This is an arrangement that is left between the Speaker and that particular MLA. Not knowing in advance with which caucus this man plans to sit, properly speaking, I don't know how we can deal with anything but Walt Buck, who has made it very clear that he's staying as an opposition caucus member representing the Representative Party. Therefore, I hope you're not going to mind, but I'm going to move

that we table this item and try to talk to Ray Speaker between now and our next meeting, Mr. Chairman, so we can get it solved.

MR. TAYLOR: Good point. Call for the question.

MR. BOGLE: For further clarification, Mr. Chairman, and I believe it was stated during one of our past meetings, Mr. Speaker did state publicly to his constituents, to all Albertans, that he intended to remain leader of the Representative Party until the next general election is called. My understanding is that his position is quite clear in what he intends to do. Unless he notifies the Speaker of the House that he wishes to change his seating in the House, we as a committee are bound to follow that process.

MR. TAYLOR: I have two small points to make. One, I have some trouble following the official Counsel to the committee's statement that the budget can be adjusted, because the caucus budget doesn't come up by the month; it's a global thing. So if the caucus was there, we have the hypothetical idea that the ABC party could spend all their money in the first month and then in the next 11 months go and join the other caucus. So the idea that there is any kind of discipline or control through the money going out each month doesn't exist. What we have here is almost a possible siphon from a supposed Representative Party over to Conservative Party funds and research, with no way of stopping it.

A second thing is: as the member for Milk River says, he has announced that he's still going to lead the Representative Party. Well, as has already been pointed out, it doesn't matter what party is existing out there and what anybody says. What takes place in the Legislature is an entirely different item, just as Counsel has said, as to what takes place out in the wilderness there. He can lead five parties if he wants to, or lead a party that we've never even heard of, but in the House I would think you're either speaking for the government or against the government. The Athenian idea of democracy is: propose, oppose, and the House disposes. So certainly I would think this committee has the right to ask some member who has said that from now on he or she intends no longer to oppose, that they will be on the proposing side — certainly the Speaker then, I think, has a responsibility, even if that person has not maybe the understanding of the system, to ask the person to cross the floor and sit with the opposers or the proposers.

Sindlinger, when he moved from the proposers to the opposers, didn't stay over there; he was asked to move across the House and did move. So why doesn't it work the other way? Why doesn't it work the other way? Once you start no longer opposing but are on the proposing side, you should have to move where the proposers are sitting. Consequently, that would mean automatically that the allowance we give is not given to the party; it's given to the caucus. The caucus is at the very most a one-person caucus now; it's not a two-person caucus. To sit there and pretend it's a two-person caucus is ignoring the basic principles of how our parliamentary system works.

MS BARRETT: Well, I think it's technically more confusing than even that, Nick.

MR. WRIGHT: Did I gather, Mr. Chairman, that Counsel had said there was some way of moving the sum per member across the floor, as it were, if that member crossed the floor into the caucus appropriate?

MR. M. CLEGG: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, a point of clarification. I'm not sure if it's even an ethical question to ask of the chairman, who also functions in the capacity of Speaker of the House. The difficulty, I'm sure, that all members will agree we have in dealing with this is trying to ascertain what is the current situation. We're dealing with a budget that would go into effect starting April 1, 1989, for a party that is a registered party, that's an elected party that exists in name. Irrespective of what we may hear or read, it seems to me the only instrument that would cause action to take place would be a letter delivered to the Speaker indicating that the Representative Party either doesn't exist or doesn't need or doesn't want or anything else. I'm not

sure, sir, if it's even fair to ask you the question if you have received such. Because all this committee can do is make decisions on what is legally the existing situation today, not what may be.

History has shown that all kinds of things tend to change. At a point in time, we can only make a decision on the basis of what we know to be true, and sir, again, I don't know if we can get that. And I have to ask you the question if you have received such information.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The answer is that there has been no receipt of information. There has been no correspondence. Until such time as it arrives, it remains as a set situation.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, just to note that reference was made to when Mr. Sindlinger moved from the Conservative caucus to sit in the opposition. When that happened, my understanding is that he was still a holder . . . We seem to be wondering if people can hold memberships in two political parties. He was still elected as a member of the Conservative Party of Alberta and then moved over to opposition. It wasn't the party that did anything; it was the caucus. He moved over; he sat on the other side. Indeed, he received additional money, because he wasn't able to share a secretary, researcher, et cetera. So additional money was given to him so he could act as a member.

MR. TAYLOR: I think, Mr. Chairman, the Member for Cypress-Redcliff makes a very good point. You see, the party is entirely separate from the MLA, and the budgets we put out here are for caucuses, not for parties. To say that somebody is still leading the Representative Party outside the House is not relevant to the conversation here. He might be leading all kinds of parties. It's only relevant to whether you're opposing or proposing the government in the House. I think that's the only relevant point you have to make.

Then, of course, you can split into caucuses within the government side or within the opposition side, and someone who says they support the government is automatically in the government caucus. Now, if the whole party walked over there, the Representative Party could maybe argue for their own allowance as distinct from the Tory party, but then they shouldn't be sitting where they are. I don't see how you can have your cake and eat it both.

MS BARRETT: Well, Mr. Chairman, this issue is complicated by two factors. First is the per-MLA allowance — all right? — which currently stands at \$32,000 and is proposed to stand at \$36,000.

Now, follow me through for a moment, please. If you have a scenario in which Ray Speaker decides to cross the floor, for all we know he may occupy a cabinet minister's position. In that instance, that \$32,000 or \$36,000 recommended would not even apply. It doesn't apply to Executive Council members, because they have their own budgets for their own departments. Right?

The second thing has to do with the function of a leader or a caucus budget by which research is conducted primarily for the purposes of House activities; that is, for studying Bills, question period, estimates, you name it. That itself, then, is put into question, because we may be looking at only one MLA in that political party in that context. In other words, it could be reduced to one, Walt Buck. And then we still wouldn't know what is fair under these circumstances.

I do not know how the matter is going to be resolved. I

would think members of this committee could certainly go and talk to Ray between now and our next meeting. Under the circumstances of extreme confusion, I move now that we table this matter until we meet next.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Those in favour of the motion to table, please signify. Opposed? Okay. Motion to table fails.

The motion before us is an amendment. The main motion moved by Taber-Warner was to increase the per-member allocation from \$32,000 to \$36,000 for the two members of the Representative Party. The amendment by Westlock-Sturgeon, which is what we have been debating the last while, is to reduce that so it would apply to one member only, therefore bringing into play a different formula.

On the amendment: those in favour of the amendment? Opposed?

MS BARRETT: I'm abstaining, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. One abstention. All right. On the main motion as proposed by Taber-Warner, those in favour? Opposed?

MR. TAYLOR: Wait a minute, Mr. Chairman. On the main motion, is this lumping together the . . .

MS BARRETT: No.

MR. TAYLOR: No? Then I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman.

MS BARRETT: It's just on the per-member allocation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, that motion carries. The motion by Taber-Warner carries. Thank you.
Taber-Warner.

MR. BOGLE: I further move that
a 3 percent increase be allocated to the leader's allowance for the Representative Party.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, could I, on a point of information, ask the Member for Taber-Warner if he — because this is a leader's allowance, I too well know that goes to the elected MLA who leads the party, not the leader of the party if that leader of the party isn't in the Legislature. Therefore, it is very important to know who the leader of the party is in the Legislature. Could I ask whether the member from Milk River or the chairman . . .

MR. BOGLE: It's Taber-Warner.

MR. TAYLOR: I'm sorry; Taber-Warner. That long runway always sticks in my mind.

Mr. Chairman, could I ask whether he has any proof or any idea who the leader's allowance will go to and whether we shouldn't know that before we make the motion?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's for their . . .

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, this committee has no authority to provide funds for a leader of a party. We are talking about elected members, an allowance for whoever the party has as its leader in the Assembly. So let's be clear. We're talking about support and assistance to elected members.

MR. CHAIRMAN: They determine it.

MR. TAYLOR: But, Mr. Chairman . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have Edmonton-Highlands, then Westlock-Sturgeon.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, okay. I'm back to how complicated this issue is. For instance, Nick, who used to be the leader of his political party, still enjoys the financial arrangement we hitherto agreed to which allows for a special fund, a distinct fund, to be established for the purposes of whoever is heading that caucus; that is, for research purposes, communication, et cetera, et cetera. The problem I have with this is not that I'm opposed to a 3 percent increase. I'm not opposed to it. The problem is that when an opposition caucus is headed by a person who declares himself not interested in functioning as an opposition MLA anymore, I've got real trouble with this. It just doesn't make sense to allocate a fund to somebody who declares to be intending to join the government caucus at one stage or another, not function as an opposition. I say: what are they going to use the money for?

Now, you may argue back, "Well, it could be Walt, for all we know." And it could be Walt by himself. But until I know that, I do not feel I can vote on this matter, and I am again going to move

that we table the matter until we next meet so that we have an opportunity to talk to Ray Speaker to get what I believe is a very complicated matter clarified.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion to table.

MR. HYLAND: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Those in favour, please signify.

MS BARRETT: Hallelujah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Opposed? Carried unanimously.

MR. HYLAND: Mark one down as a winner, Pam.

MS BARRETT: All right; one win.

MR. TAYLOR: Good going, Pam.

MS BARRETT: All right. Now, who gets to talk to Ray Speaker. No doubt I'll be appointed. Right?

Mr. Chairman, may I further move that we invite Ray Speaker to attend our next meeting to help us through this process.

He's an hon. member. He's been around for what? Twenty-seven years? I'm sure he'd be prepared to help us out. [interjection] Twenty-five? Sorry, I overstated the case. Can we invite him, please? Say yes. It's a motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

AN HON. MEMBER: You moved a motion?

MS BARRETT: I moved a motion. Question. All those in favour?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The committee certainly has the right to

invite Mr. Ray Speaker to come, but again it will be up to the member to deal with the Chair as to the House part of it. So with respect to the invitation, it deals with the matter of budgets, and you can ask him whatever you . . .

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, I guess one of the difficulties all members around the table must surely recognize for us all is that we've agreed on a principle. We agreed on a principle a number of years ago that the internal administration of a particular caucus budget would not come before this table. That should not be forgotten even though we have a very, very complex matter before us. We agreed to that principle that we would not go through the items presented by a particular caucus.

MS BARRETT: Right.

MR. KOWALSKI: Once again, I appreciate and recognize the very complex nature of this whole discussion, but that's the thing that I think puts a caveat on most of us.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, if I could help allay the concern here. You will also recall the lengthy discussions we had when members such as yourself wanted to separate opposition budgets into amounts that are allocated on a per-member basis and amounts that are allocated on a "who's needing and their requirements" basis. I never concurred with that, but I've had to live with it. The discussion evolved around: does that person have particular responsibilities; are they related to the House; do they involve additional research requirements? All those things. They'll be in the transcripts. How on earth can we decide this without Ray helping, without him giving direction? We can't. I'm not asking him to tell me on which items he wants professional and technical labour services. I don't care. But I do care about his intentions with respect to having at least up to now acted as an opposition MLA and as the leader of an opposition caucus and what those intentions are with respect to the upcoming fiscal year. It's got to be fair, Ken. It has to be.

MR. KOWALSKI: That's the flip side of the argument.

MR. WRIGHT: If I can phrase it another way, Mr. Chairman. Our puzzle is not who the leader will be but if there is going to be one at all. So it's not really a matter of internal interference.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair recognized that there was general agreement to invite Mr. Speaker to attend. Thank you. Perhaps we can try for Monday afternoon at 1:30. Not possible. Tuesday morning?

MS BARRETT: Are we booked for both of those occasions? Mine says we are, so we can give him the option.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Monday afternoon or Tuesday morning. Okay. If you'll convey that, please.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, will your office be contacting him for that purpose?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, the Representative office. Their representative is here.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, there's no change from what we've already scheduled for Monday afternoon and Tuesday?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's my understanding, but we'll come to that in a moment.

MR. BOGLE: We're now speaking of Tuesday morning at 9:30?

MS BARRETT: Or Monday afternoon. We meet Monday afternoon as well.

MR. BOGLE: Yeah, either Monday afternoon or Tuesday morning. My only concern is that I have a commitment Tuesday afternoon away from the city.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, no, it would just be afternoon of the Monday or the morning on Tuesday.

MR. BOGLE: All right.

MR. TAYLOR: You could just leave the rope here, and I'll pull it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All righty. May we move on, then, to yellow tab 7, the Liberal opposition.

MR. TAYLOR: Speaking to that, Mr. Chairman, we have learned to live within the limits that are imposed, like most other people, and there are no particular suggestions for change. I move its adoption.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Discussion?

MR. HYLAND: Can I ask you, for clarification: we're not talking about the leader part; we're talking the whole budget? Okay.

MR. TAYLOR: The whole page. See, it's made up of the leader's allowance, the number of members in the caucus, plus . . . Although the NDP and the government feel they need a raise — we could always use one too, but I think it's unfair to ask for one. We've learned to live within it and intend to win the next election, so we'd be making the decisions anyhow after that. So I just don't see the idea of grabbing taxpayers' money to fatten us a little faster than the rest of the province is being fattened.

Thank you for giving me a chance to editorialize a bit, Mr. Chairman. But all I really want to do is move the motion.

MRS. MIROSH: I'd like to move, Mr. Chairman, that we table this motion until the next meeting, on Tuesday.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion to table this budget portion.

MR. TAYLOR: How can you, Mr. Chairman . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's a motion to table; sorry.

MR. TAYLOR: I'll have this on a point of order then. [interjections] How can you table a motion and take what's already there?

MR. BOGLE: You're getting tripped up on that rope you've been talking about.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The motion to table takes precedence. All

those in favour of the tabling motion, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

MR. KOWALSKI: Are we inviting your leader in too?

MR. TAYLOR: Yeah.

MR. KOWALSKI: Let him come and tell us what it's all about.

MR. TAYLOR: He won't get off so easy.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I know I booked things for this afternoon, and I'm assuming we're going to adjourn soon. I just wondered if I could have a rundown now of all the sections that are completely dealt with or, alternatively, which sections have some remaining items to be dealt with, aside from opposition, which is obvious now. I mean, you know, 7 and 8.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have General Administration dealt with.

We have some aspects of 2 which have yet to be dealt with.

Section 3 has been completed and section 4.

Five is holding. We did not pass a motion to adopt the whole section, but we did pass two motions.

Official Opposition: hold.

Liberal Opposition: hold.

Representative Opposition: hold.

Legislature Committees have been approved.

Legislative Interns: approved. Some adjustment sheets to come in for our next meeting.

Section 11 on *Hansard*: approved.

Section 12 on library: approved.

MS BARRETT: So then 2, 5, 6, 7, 8. Is that correct?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Whatever that translated back into.

MS BARRETT: That's okay; I've got it. I wrote it down, yeah. Motion to adjourn. [interjection] Sorry; what?

MR. HYLAND: Can I move, being as I was the one who moved that it be tabled and I didn't put a time limit on it to be tabled,

that the subject of constituency offices be brought back onto the table.

MS BARRETT: Sure, if you want, yeah. I want to get out by 1.

MR. HYLAND: Then that will get another department done.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Fine, but in terms of your scheduling, let's look ahead to Monday. We're due back in here on Monday in any event.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, 1:30.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We think it's highly unlikely that the leader of the Representative Party can be here until Tuesday. So we're working on the theory of Monday afternoon and then Tuesday. So there would be a fair amount of time on each day, I think.

MR. KOWALSKI: We do have a motion, do we not, Mr. Chairman, before the committee?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I was just pointing out to the committee . . . All right. Well, there's the request by the member that we now take from the table that one matter. Is there unanimous consent to take it from the table?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any opposed? Thank you.
All right. Hon. Member for Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: Actually, you should move it; it's your motion.

MS BARRETT: Yes, that's what I was going to deal with.

MR. HYLAND: Question on the motion. My motion was just to table it. My second motion was to take it off the table, so it's Pam's motion now.

MS BARRETT: Mine was flawed, insofar as I was dealing just with the Official Opposition constituencies, and really the policy is that we don't do it on that basis. The policy is that we deal with constituency offices as a whole.

MR. HYLAND: Make your motion accordingly then.

MS BARRETT: Well, if there's agreement around the table on this matter, sure, but you'll recall that what I had attempted to do last year and the year before was have the Official Opposition budget restored to its pre-cut level. Now, I've accomplished part of that today, although not entirely. I was proposing that the difference be made up by an increase in constituency office allowances. But I want to make sure there is agreement from all the people represented here — and obviously we don't have the Reps here — to deal with this as a global issue. It had not originally been my intention to deal with it as a global issue.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So what is our motion?

MS BARRETT: Well, my motion had been that the Official Opposition constituency budgets be increased, but it's technically inappropriate to deal with it in that way. So I'm asking if the members want to deal with it in the broader context of all MLA constituency offices.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you then making that as a motion?

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to amend the motion: that it includes all constituency offices.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. So the effect would be for each constituency.

MR. HYLAND: Yeah. Which makes it optional for the members.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MS BARRETT: It makes it optional?

MRS. MIROSH: You don't have to take it.

MR. HYLAND: You don't have to use it all.

MR. BOGLE: Some members don't use it.

MR. HYLAND: Some don't use it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Members who don't have offices.

MR. BOGLE: Some turn money back.

MS BARRETT: Oh, yeah. I see what you're getting at. Jeez, I never do.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Discussion? Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Yeah, Mr. Chairman. Just to help me through this bit, is the first vote going to be called on whether we amend the motion or whether we approve it? I'm having a little trouble, because I believe the first motion made by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands was out of order anyhow. A member is a member is a member. I don't see how you can say that certain MLAs are going to have a constituency allowance and some members aren't. So isn't the proper thing to have it ruled out of order and then a new motion, rather than try to amend an out-of-order motion?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think the first part is agreement to withdraw the first one. We've ruled it out of order. We usually do the withdrawal.

MS BARRETT: With unanimous consent, then, I'll withdraw. Is there unanimous consent?

MR. HYLAND: Okay; then move it again as a straight motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's been a request for unanimous consent to withdraw. Is unanimous consent given?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. So now we're in a position for a new motion.

MR. WRIGHT: Well, I may say that I just thought the motion was in order but the member misunderstood the import of it, but it doesn't matter.

MS BARRETT: You might say that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. So we've got a withdrawal. Thank you.
Cypress-Redcliff, with a motion.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, I'd move that the constituency office allowance be adjusted to \$34,500 per fiscal year effective April 1, '89.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, on a point of information. Wasn't the original from \$32,000 to \$36,000?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's a different item.

MS BARRETT: We're on the constituency now.

MR. HYLAND: This is the constituency office.

MR. TAYLOR: Oh, I see. Okay.

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. TAYLOR: No, I'd like to speak to it. Mr. Chairman, bearing in mind -- and I think Counsel will bear me out -- that MLAs can transfer their constituency allowances to their caucus but the caucus, I understand, cannot transfer it to the constituency, and I believe some government members have been doing that, again not only have we given a tremendous boost of 12.5 percent or so to the government but if these moneys are transferred, the increases count up to as high as 25 percent. If you put it in an envelope, the constituency allowance of \$32,000 to \$36,000 and this particular one up to \$34,000 or whatever it was, it comes out to close to a 20 to 25 percent raise for MLAs, to be used not for the MLA's pocket but for the MLA's expense. I just think that's unreasonable. I know that every MLA can use it; I probably could too. But I think it's unreasonable when you put it into a total envelope, and it's grabbing for the MLAs a benefit that is not being realized by the average population out there and certainly the number of employees we have associated with the government.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, if that's the concern Nick has, you'll recall that a couple of years ago Nick sponsored a motion that allowed us to transfer up to 25 percent of our constituency budgets into caucuses. I'd be absolutely happy to second a motion to reverse that Members' Services order originally sponsored by Nick, and that would prevent the problem he's talking about.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, that's fine too. I'm glad she perceives, Mr. Chairman, the loophole within the argument, because the transfer from constituency to caucus was sponsored by me in one of those moods of goodwill where my foot got tangled up with the rope from the Member for Taber-Warner. Certainly in our caucus we don't transfer from the constituency to the caucus. It was understood that it was the government... [interjections] No, we don't.

MR. KOWALSKI: Pardon me? It's going to start to grow. It's going to be out there before too long.

MS BARRETT: If you need to know, I've got the original documents that show that's not true for your caucus.

MR. TAYLOR: So consequently it's a different motion, but I would suggest that you think about that one for a few days.

MS BARRETT: I've got them right in my desk drawer, Nick. It was done right after you got that motion through Members' Services, Nick. I still have the information.

MR. TAYLOR: There's an old Bible saying: when the lion lies down with the lamb, there's something wrong. I won't say which one is which here.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes, there's peace.

MS BARRETT: You'd be in a tough position, I'd say.

MR. TAYLOR: You get peace as long as you feed the lamb to the lion every 30 minutes.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I'm just prepared to lend my support to the motion provided that subsequent to this we sponsor a motion that puts a stop to the ability of constituency offices to transfer money into the caucus allowances.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MS BARRETT: I'll sponsor that motion then.

MR. BOGLE: Stop the Liberal loophole.

MS BARRETT: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question on the motion. Those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.
Next motion, Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I propose now to sponsor a motion

that would overturn the policy adopted two years ago by this committee which allowed MLAs to transfer up to 25 percent of their constituency budgets into caucus budgets.

In other words, this would from this day forward not be allowed.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, I thought that was the motion we just voted on. [interjections] There's a lot of tittering going on between the new fraternity or sorority.

What was the first motion then? My understanding is that she'd moved that and you had accepted it.

MS BARRETT: No. That would be a gross... Somebody who sat in the Legislature galleries for as many years as you claim to would understand that we deal with the first motion first and the next motion next. I said that after we dealt with the first motion, I would propose the second motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: That's right.

MS BARRETT: We're on the second motion, Nick.

MR. TAYLOR: I had some trouble figuring out, through the avalanche of words, what was what.

MR. KOWALSKI: Everybody else understood.

MS BARRETT: I think you're pretending to have been confused, Nick.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. members, with due respect. The first motion was passed, the increased funding for the offices.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, could I be recorded as being against the first motion then? [interjections]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry.

MR. TAYLOR: No, this is being cute. This is being like a fraternity. [interjections] There's the incessant chatter on my

left, and you were calling the motion. It's not right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, with due respect, there's been lots of chitchat around all parts of this table from time to time.

MS BARRETT: That's right. And you've had three years to learn the procedure on the floor.

Question on the motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If the committee wishes to go back and rerecord the vote on the last one, it's up to the committee to request it.

MR. CAMPBELL: No, it stands.

MR. WRIGHT: Nick, you can make things right by voting against this motion.

MS BARRETT: Question, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On this motion, which is now going to stop the business of the transfer of funds, Parliamentary Counsel.

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, just before the question is put, can I have for clarification: is this second motion intended to be effective today or on April 1?

MS BARRETT: No, I should clarify that: April 1, 1989, to be consistent with all the others.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour of the motion? Op-

posed? Carried.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. You'll notice I voted for the last motion. That's what I expected to do because that was a loophole, if you want to call it that, that the government did -- we did with a saw-off with them last year. But I would like to be recorded, Mr. Chairman.

If you want to, I will make a motion now:

that we reduce the motion just passed, of increasing the constituency allowance.

If this is the only way I can get it on the books:

that we decrease the allowance per MLA and constituency back to what it was 15 minutes ago.

I would like to make that motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There was another problem. You said "the motion just passed." Well, it really was the motion passed before the one that was just passed.

Hon. member, how about if we have it indicated in the minutes that you were in error in the voting but that you recorded your opposition to that vote?

MR. TAYLOR: That will be indicated in the minutes? That's fine. Okay, thank you. I wouldn't want posterity thinking I had slept with the Tories.

MS BARRETT: Motion to adjourn, please.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Those in favour, please signify. Monday afternoon, 1:30. Thank you very much.

[The committee adjourned at 12:46 p.m.]

