

9:57 a.m.

[Mr. Kowalski in the chair]

THE CHAIRMAN: Good morning. This is the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services.

For those of you who were elected to this committee for the first time, may I welcome you and congratulate you on your election. Those of you who have been returned to this committee, may I welcome you back. The Special Standing Committee on Members' Services, in my humble opinion, is one of the most interesting committees that is associated with the Legislative Assembly of the province of Alberta, and its objective and intent is as per the name itself, the committee on members' services. The purpose of this committee is to deal with the issues relating to private members of the Legislature and to focus primarily on their concerns and their issues.

We have an agenda, and I'd seek approval of the agenda.

MS BARRETT: So moved.

THE CHAIRMAN: Point 3 is Funding for the . . .

DR. McNEIL: Shall we have a vote on that?

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, a vote. It's assumed that the agenda is approved.

The number one issue on the agenda today is Funding for the New Democrat Caucus, and Ms Barrett, your name is associated with that item.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I've given you copies which we may now want to circulate of a proposal which I wish to put to members of this committee. I can give you background, as much or as little as you want.

Ms Barrett moved that the New Democrat opposition caucus be granted a leader's office allowance in the amount equivalent to half of the Official Opposition Leader's office allowance, which is \$296,685. Half of that amount would be \$148,343 for the 1997-98 fiscal year.

Essentially what I'm asking for for the New Democrat opposition caucus is a leader's allowance in the amount of 50 percent of the Official Opposition Leader's allowance. The totals . . . I don't have a copy.

MRS. DACYSHYN: Oh, I'm sorry.

MS BARRETT: That's okay. I probably didn't make enough.

The Official Opposition Leader's office allowance is \$296,685. My request is for half of that, which would come to \$148,343 for the 1997-98 fiscal year.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Renner.

MR. RENNER: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I think that there is need for government and we, as people, to recognize the role of the opposition in democracy. In so doing, we have allocated an amount of money to the Leader of the Official Opposition to cover expenses that would relate to that leader's position. My understanding is that there is some precedent in this province when we do have a third party represented in opposition, and that precedence has been approximately half of what the opposition leader would receive. In fact I understand there is even precedent, should there be a fourth party, that they would receive about a quarter. So I think this is a reasonable request. I think it's a price that we pay in democracy for

ensuring that we have opposition that is doing the job that they're elected to do.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Wickman.

MR. WICKMAN: Well, a couple of questions first of all, Mr. Chairman. My understanding is that it's policy that party recognition requires a minimum of four members. Is it not? In the period of time that I've been here, since 1989, we've never been faced with a situation where we've had a request come forward from a party with less than that required number of four. If we go back in history to the days of Grant Notley and such, I don't recall those particular circumstances. I can recall the two Independents making arguments as to why they needed additional dollars.

Mr. Chairman, I can go back to 1989 when I spoke in favour of the leader of the third party getting a leader's allowance increase when there were MLA increases given at that time, but the arguments that were made at that particular time were based on a number well over four. Secondly, it coincided much more closely with the number of government MLAs than with the number of opposition MLAs. Here we have a request that comes forward for one-half of the amount of the Liberal caucus leader's office allowance, yet that party's status is only one-eighth in terms of numbers.

Mr. Chairman, I would submit that if the electorate of Alberta wanted the New Democrats to have those additional dollars for research, if they wanted them to have party status, they would have provided them the minimum of four MLAs, which they didn't. They still get the resources as individuals that they're entitled to. In my opinion, that is sufficient under the circumstances.

Mr. Chairman, this is similar to the requests we've seen happen at the federal level where the New Democratic Party federally didn't have party status and made similar arguments, and it was rejected. I would submit this would be rejected as well. The four members have not been achieved, period.

MRS. SLOAN: Just to add to my colleague's comments, I think it's worthy of note that in 1989 when that request was made by the Liberals, the NDs, which had official status, did not support that motion. I think it's also useful to look at precedent that goes back actually even farther than that to '82, 1980. I refer to minutes that were of the Standing Committee on Members' Services, November 12, 1980, where Grant Notley at that time was in a position where he was the only ND member. He sought an increased allowance on the basis that he had to provide a service for a broader audience, et cetera, et cetera. There was not, at that time, a recognition, and the precedent was set that the motion for an increased allowance for him to serve in his capacity was denied.

In 1982 we had a situation where we had three Social Credit members. Again, the discussion surrounding allowances occurred. The Conservative members did not support providing an increased allowance.

If the committee is going to consider giving an additional fiscal allowance to a party that does not have official status according to the Act, I think we set a precedent then historically that will be utilized in subsequent committees and by subsequent parties to increase the allowance. In the end, I would submit that it's the taxpayers' money. If the taxpayers wanted an increased allowance for any party, then they would have elected sufficient number of members to have qualified that party for official status.

So I'm opposed to the suggestion by the member across the way that we should consider an increase in the allowance for the New Democrats at this time.

MS OLSEN: Just a couple of other notes on that same position. First of all, I notice in the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services minutes from November 26 of last year:

Moved by Mr. Wickman that the Independent Members' Services head: 1997-98 budget estimates in the amount of \$0 be approved.

Given that there is no official party status, then that would leave the NDs to be as Independents. There was no budget for that at the time.

Now, we've gone through an election and, yes, we recognize that we have two ND members. However, they're allotted their \$42,000 as everybody is for every member that's elected. All members in all of our parties use that specific money for our specific endeavours, be it research, support staff, whatever. Therefore, there's nothing – you know, the NDs are getting no less than everybody else. I would suggest that if you're going to consider giving the NDs more money, then you need to consider that around the table for everybody, for every elected member so then each elected member gets more than the \$42,000 that goes into the caucus budget.

Also I daresay that the existence of the Legislative Assembly Act won't permit any of that, given that there is no official party status.

10:07

THE CHAIRMAN: Additional comments, members?

Mr. Herard.

MR. HERARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think I would have to support what Mr. Renner said earlier. I mean, opposition is opposition, and it has a role to play. We've just heard a discussion as to what the funds essentially get used for in terms of the leader's office, in terms of research and support staff. I think that in order to be effective as an opposition, you definitely need those components, so therefore I would support that the additional amount of \$148,343 be allocated for 1997-98.

MR. JACQUES: I want to clarify just at the outset before I speak, Mr. Chairman. My understanding is that Ms Barrett moved that in the form of a motion. Is that what we have on the books?

THE CHAIRMAN: Correct. We have a motion before the committee.

MR. JACQUES: Thank you.

I would like to make an amendment to that motion based on some of the discussion that's occurred here, and that is to that last sentence of that motion which states "Half of that amount would be \$148,343 for the 1997-98 fiscal year," to add to that sentence:

and these funds will be allocated from the existing budgets found head: in the Legislative Assembly estimates.

THE CHAIRMAN: We now have an amendment to the motion. Is that seconded by anyone?

MR. RENNER: If it requires a seconder, I'll second it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, fine. We'll do it.

MRS. SLOAN: Point of order, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MRS. SLOAN: I'm just wondering in what capacity the committee can consider this motion, when in fact we do not have before us the Legislative Assembly budget and cannot project, then, the implications of the amendment in terms of where will this money come from and what reductions will have to be made in other

categories of services in that office.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is no point of order. We have before us the Legislative Assembly estimates that were tabled in the House a number of days ago. All members have that.

MR. WICKMAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, let the member explain, then, where the dollars are going to come from. Is he going to suggest maybe that it come from the Liberal caucus? Maybe it'll come from your caucus. Are you going to give up \$148,000 from your caucus to the New Democrats? You can't just say you're going to find it in there without specifying exactly where those dollars are going to come from. You're going to be unfair to somebody. Who? Library services? Who's going to pay the price?

MRS. SLOAN: If I could interject, that means reduced services, then, for all of us. I at least can summarize that, that it's going to mean reduced services for all of us by that allocation being made. I'd like to hear from the hon. member: why the Legislative Assembly Office specifically, in what categories, and why that versus an allocation from surplus?

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Jacques, did you want to comment on that? This is not wrapping up your submission to the amendment.

MR. JACQUES: Thank you. I make the motion on the basis that if we reflect back to the deliberations that occurred last fall in this committee in terms of all the cost centres within Legislative Assembly services, I think there was some prudent review and some prudent discussion at that time with regard to the total amount. It's also fair to say, I think, that if we look traditionally at the actual amounts versus the budgeted amounts, we typically tend to come in under as opposed to over. I would certainly suggest to you that the amount of \$148,343 is not what I would call relatively significant to the total budget of Legislative Assembly services and that finding that amount of money in there should not pose a problem that would reduce the level of service to existing members.

MRS. SLOAN: If I could just further question, then, the member with respect to that. I've seen and reviewed the minutes from the last meeting on the '97-98 budget, when in fact a number of departments were allocated a decrease and others had no increase. So we're basically saying that they have to do more with less, that our staff providing services to all Legislative Assembly members are not eligible for increases, given that there's no increase in the budget allocations for those particular sections. How do we justify that, if we're telling our research staff, if we're telling our library staff, the public information staff, "Sorry, we can't keep your salaries up to the cost of living, the inflation; you're going to have to go with a zero percent or perhaps, in some cases, even a loss in wages," and make an allocation to support a party that doesn't have official status in the Legislature?

MR. JACQUES: The issue on salaries . . .

THE CHAIRMAN: Perhaps the chairman will interject at this point in time. We've got an amendment to a motion. We're on the amendment, that basically these dollars, should the motion be approved, be allocated from existing budgets of the Legislative Assembly Office. Should this amendment be approved, then it would be the responsibility of the Speaker to ascertain the source of those funds.

In anticipation of what might or might not happen this morning, the Speaker has reviewed the Legislative Assembly estimates, and

previous members' services committees did budget a certain amount of dollars for re-establishment allowances. As it turned out, again, not knowing who would be seeking re-election or not seeking re-election in the last provincial election, there is an additional amount of dollars. It would be that one line item for re-establishment allowances which would have those dollars, and should this amendment be approved and should the motion be approved, that is where the dollars would be ascertained and that is where the Speaker would find those dollars for this. It would not be a reflection on any other line item or any other administrative factor. That is where the dollars will come from. They're unexpended funds at this moment, and there's provision under the Financial Administration Act of the province of Alberta to move these dollars from one subvote to the next. That would be the source.

Now, the chairman of this meeting is interjecting for a point of information, notwithstanding the amendment that we have before us. Is there further discussion on the amendment?

Yes. Mrs. Sloan.

MRS. SLOAN: Can I just ask, then, as a new member to the committee: what other reasonable expenses would be considered from that unutilized account, the one, Mr. Chairman, that you are proposing these funds be taken from? What other considerations over the course of the next fiscal year would be given to that money?

THE CHAIRMAN: Whatever matters that hon. members would bring before this committee.

MRS. SLOAN: If I may then. Arising again from the last committee minutes of November 1996, there was a significant concern raised by a member with respect to constituency allowances and budgets.

THE CHAIRMAN: I'll just interject right now. The discussion right now is on the amendment before us, on the motion. Should the hon. member wish to bring such a matter before this committee, then you will have an opportunity under future items to deal with that.

MRS. SLOAN: That was not my intent, Mr. Chairman. My intent was that we have on record a request that an agenda item be brought forward at the next committee meeting. Based on my assessment of that recommendation, it could have financial implications. Would we then be looking at the same category of funds and, by approving this amendment this morning, be reducing the pool of funds that is then available to all members of the Legislature?

MR. HERARD: Well, Mr. Chairman, I think we're really dealing in a lot of hypotheticals here. I don't think we're here to deal with all of those things. I think this committee does have the legislative power to deal with anything that hon. members bring before it, but to now start to try to second-guess what might be brought forward in the future is totally hypothetical. I think we're just wasting time on this.

MR. WICKMAN: Where did the second-guessing start?

THE CHAIRMAN: Hon. members, let's remember here that the item we have on the agenda today has to do with funding for the office allocation for the leader of a particular party, not the caucus funding related to that. That is what the motion is. There's an amendment to it, and I'm going to ask you to come back and keep your comments on the amendment we currently have before us.

Mrs. Forsyth.

MRS. FORSYTH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree with what you just said, because that was what I was going to bring forward. My

understanding – and I could stand to be corrected – is that in 1986 a precedent was set in regards to the same sort of motion for an unofficial party. I think . . .

MRS. SLOAN: Not to the same degree though. Not to the . . .

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, Mrs. Forsyth has the floor.

MRS. FORSYTH: I agree with the motion that Mr. Jacques has brought forward. It shows some democracy in here.

THE CHAIRMAN: We're on the amendment right now, not the motion.

MRS. FORSYTH: Right. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Additional comments on the amendment to the motion? Then we will deal with the question on the amendment that Mr. Jacques has moved, which is essentially the motion that Ms Barrett has but with the addition of

and these funds will be allocated from existing budgets found in head:the Legislative Assembly estimates.

All those in favour? Opposed? It's carried.

10:17

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I have an additional amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: An additional amendment. Okay.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I would move that the figure of \$148,343 be reduced to \$37,015.

Speaking to it, Mr. Chairman, it's obvious that the Tory members here have made a decision prior to coming into the meeting, and that come hell or high water, they are going to give the New Democrat caucus some additional research dollars. It's wrong, but let's try to minimize that wrongness. This is something that is being done that is very, very unusual, and one would suspect there could be some political motivation in trying to spread this so-called effectiveness of the opposition amongst two parties rather than one, particularly when both parties seem to have some stronger appeal in the city of Edmonton.

Anyway, putting all that aside, let's look at numbers for a minute. Based on 1989, again the argument, which the New Democratic Party caucus at that particular time didn't support, was based squarely on proportion. When I proposed at that time that Laurence Decore's leader's allowance be increased to 50 percent of the New Democrat leader's allowance, it's because the New Democrats at that time had 16 members and we had eight members, so 50 percent made sense. If we want to use those same types of arguments at this particular time, rather than one-half, when we look at the numbers of 16 and two, we're looking at one-eighth. If we want to be fair and if we do want to give the New Democrat caucus some additional leader's dollars, then it should be based on those numbers, and those numbers bring it down to the \$37,015. If an argument wants to be made that despite the lack of party status they are entitled to some leader's dollars, then let's do it based on fairness, based on the numbers that actually are represented in the House. In the next go-round, if the New Democrats manage to increase from two seats to four seats, then their leader's allowance would be different because they would have party status.

THE CHAIRMAN: On this amendment, Pam Barrett, then Rob Renner.

MS BARRETT: Thank you. Just a little review of history here. In

1982 there were only four members in the opposition. Two of them had run as Independents; two of them had run as New Democrats. The Speaker, in the end, needed to resolve this issue. He did so by choosing the New Democrats as the Official Opposition, not based upon the numbers, because the numbers were identical to those who ran as Independents, but based upon the notion of a political party. It was a decision long in the making, as you will probably recall, Mr. Chairman, but in the end was fair.

When the issue of funding for the two caucuses came up – remember, one caucus consisted of two people who ran as Independents – the Speaker and the Members' Services Committee agreed that funding for both caucuses should be allowed, even acknowledging that two of the members in the opposition had not run with a party affiliation.

Now, in speaking against this amendment, I think I'm making a little bit of history clear. If I'm not mistaken, the Liberal Official Opposition caucus has a Calgary caucus office funding, and I believe there's just one Liberal representing one riding in Calgary. Now, I wouldn't dream of doing this. I wouldn't dream of moving that because the status of the Liberal caucus has changed in Calgary, their right to funding to help out a person who's going to be called upon by all kinds of people in one city should be removed. I wouldn't dream of doing that, and therefore I oppose this amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Rob Renner.

MR. RENNER: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to speak against the amendment. I don't think the motion at hand deals with representation in numbers of members. We're dealing with the leader's allowance for an opposition party. The member points out that there are 18 members in the Liberal opposition and only two members in the ND opposition. The fact of the matter is that there are significantly less Liberal members in opposition now than there were prior to the election, and no one is proposing that the numbers be changed, that that decrease to the leader of the Liberal opposition. All this is recognizing is that there are now two leaders representing opposition parties, and there is a recognition of the cost to those individual parties. Regardless of the number of seats that they hold in opposition, there is a cost involved with being the leader of an opposition party.

We are dealing with something that has some precedence. The Representative Party in 1987 received a similar allowance to what is proposed here. I think it makes some sense, and to start to structure leaders' allowances to the number of seats they hold I think would be a precedent that we would not want to get ourselves into. It could be that at some point in time the Leader of the Official Opposition has very few seats, and then how is this committee going to deal with it?

MS OLSEN: Can I respond?

THE CHAIRMAN: You have the floor in terms of making your contribution to the amendment before the committee. The amendment.

MS OLSEN: Well, I think we just have to bear in mind that although that's one-eighth, whether you take it to the number of people or not, the Act specifically states four members and that they will then be recognized as an official party and that leader would be paid a certain remuneration for her caucus. That has not happened. There are not four people in that party; there are two people. Therefore, if you look at the Act, it specifies what happens with a leader's allowance.

THE CHAIRMAN: Again, the chair doesn't want to interject, but

let's just make sure that we are factually correct with respect to our interpretation of what is in the Legislative Assembly Act and the Standing Orders. When the dollars are allocated for a particular leader, those are dollars that would be given to the individual who would serve in the position of leader. The motion here this morning has to do with an allowance for the office of the leader. Ms Barrett, in her capacity as the leader of a third party in the House, does not get a particular stipend for herself that I'm aware of by anything under the Legislative Assembly Act or the Standing Orders. We're dealing here with an office allocation for the position. I only interject for the clarification of the matter.

Denis Herard. Sorry. Ms Olsen, did you have something further?

MS OLSEN: No. That's fine.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Herard.

MR. HERARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not sure that we can tie the status of an Official Opposition party in the House to one-half of an office allowance. Does that mean we have half an official party here? The two don't link. Essentially I believe that there has to be a certain critical mass from which research and support staff must be supported. Therefore, I'm speaking against the amendment before us, that this amount be reduced to what has been proposed.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have no one further. Mr. Wickman, did you want to wrap up the discussion on your amendment?

MR. WICKMAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, when I was stating my figures – I have to apologize. I was also thinking of back in 1989 when I used the number of 16. That 16 was floating in my mind because that was the standing of the New Democratic Party at that time. The Liberal caucus of course has 18. If I were to adjust that figure, instead of the \$37,015 it would be \$32,965. Again, it's quite apparent that the Tory members have made a decision, and they're going to give the New Democrat caucus \$148,000 whether we think it's right or wrong or whether the taxpayers out there think it's right or wrong. [interjection]

THE CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry. Mr. Wickman has now completed that section. As the mover of the motion, he also has the right to conclude it, so he's done that.

MRS. SLOAN: Just a question for clarification or a point of information, Mr. Chairman. We are going to vote on the amendment and then vote on the amended motion?

THE CHAIRMAN: If the amendment is approved, yes. Right now we're voting on the amendment that Mr. Wickman has moved, that the leader's office allowance will be reduced from \$148,343 to \$37,015.

That is the question before the committee at the moment. All those in favour of this amendment, please raise your hand. All those opposed to the amendment, please raise your hand. The amendment is defeated.

10:27

What we currently have before this committee is a motion that was already amended by Mr. Jacques, and it currently reads that Ms Barrett moves that

the New Democrat opposition caucus be granted a leader's office allowance in the amount equivalent to half of the Official Opposition Leader's office allowance, which is \$296,685. Half of that amount would be \$148,343 for the 1997-98 fiscal year, and these funds will be allocated from existing budgets found in

head:the Legislative Assembly estimates.

MRS. SLOAN: Speaking, then, on the amended motion, just by way of introduction, I'm certainly learning that politics makes for strange bedfellows. I would read to you from the Members' Services Committee in 1988 the rationale that was raised by the hon. Grant Notley's executive assistant as to why they needed an allowance. Despite all of this rationale being raised and with some similarities to the discussion this morning, the Conservative members . . .

MS BARRETT: Excuse me. Just a point of clarification, Mr. Chairman. Grant Notley was not alive in 1988. Could we have the exact year that is being referred to? He died in 1984.

MRS. SLOAN: My apologies; 1980. It was a Mr. Puxley who was speaking, and he speaks in the context that as the only ND member in the province, they were receiving requests. He says:

Between 2,000 and 2,500 . . . Many of these are recorded. Some of them require a lot of time; some can be dealt with almost immediately on the phone. But in terms of a period of time like this when the Legislature is in session – it's just nuts working there at the moment. As I say, one clerical person can't handle [it]. It's very difficult for the rest of us to maintain our hand as far as the Legislature demands are concerned. So the most important part of the B budget, as far as I'm concerned, is the request for an additional clerical position

and subsequent funding.

The committee at that time did not approve that, and in particular the Conservative members of the committee did not support that. In the context and with all due respect to all members of the committee, I would ask, though, for a Parliamentary Counsel legal opinion on in fact the precedent this committee is setting with respect to the definition of a recognized opposition party in the Legislative Assembly Act.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, we've got Parliamentary Counsel with us. Would you like to venture forth again with an opinion on the question raised?

MR. REYNOLDS: Well, thank you. I obviously didn't have any advance notice of this, so this is more or less just based on a quick interpretation of the statute. As I believe you pointed out, Mr. Chairman, section 48 of the Legislative Assembly Act refers to a recognized opposition party but only in terms of the salary that would be paid to the leader of that party. Indeed in the revised Members' Services Committee orders the members' allowances order at page 16 section 3 refers to certain payments, but it's only with respect to once again the salary, if you will, of the leader of a recognized third party.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you.

MRS. SLOAN: The supplemental on that, if I may, Mr. Chairman, is that in fact in 48(1) of the Act it defines what a recognized opposition party is in two categories and then from there flows to there being an additional fiscal allowance. I would submit to the committee that given my, again, sort of quick review, we are in fact superseding the Act on this point, and if in fact there is a ruling by this committee that an unofficial party is approved an allowance, then in fact we are superseding what the Act actually provides as entitlements.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think, Mrs. Sloan, again the chair is going to interject in terms of the history of the Legislative Assembly and his own involvement. I'm afraid I simply would have to suggest to you

that one should look back, then, to see the precedents that were set for the funding for the Representative Party when it did exist.

MRS. SLOAN: When it had more than four members.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, it didn't. It had two.

MRS. SLOAN: Not to the degree.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, but the principles were established in terms of the support for the Representative Party.

MRS. SLOAN: That's one example, though, Mr. Chairman. There are more examples where the opposite has been the case.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have the floor.

MRS. SLOAN: Well, I would just submit, again with due respect to our counsel present, that he has not had an opportunity to review the Act. I have reason to suspect that we are superseding the Act, and I think that the amendment should be tabled until the next meeting of the Members' Services Committee so that in fact we can know legally: are we in a position where in fact this can be an item of business for this committee?

THE CHAIRMAN: Do I hear you making a motion to adjourn?

MRS. SLOAN: To table. To table definitely until the next meeting.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right then. Mrs. Sloan has moved a tabling motion. All those in favour of the tabling motion? Those opposed? It's defeated.

We're back now to the motion as amended before us. We will now call the question. I'll just read it again to make sure that there's absolute clarification. Ms Barrett moves that

the New Democrat opposition caucus be granted a leader's office allowance in the amount equivalent to half of the Official Opposition Leader's office allowance, which is \$296,685. Half of that amount would be \$148,343 for the 1997-98 fiscal year, and these funds will be allocated from existing budgets found in

head:the Legislative Assembly estimates.

All those in favour of the motion? Those opposed? Would you like your names recorded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

MRS. SLOAN: Perhaps we should have all votes recorded, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: They can be.

MRS. SLOAN: I think it would be useful for the record.

[For the motion: Ms Barrett, Mr. Coutts, Mr. Doerksen, Mrs. Forsyth, Mr. Herard, Mr. Jacques, Mr. Renner]

[Against the motion: Ms Olsen, Mrs. Sloan, Mr. Wickman]

THE CHAIRMAN: We're moving on to the next item on the agenda, which is the date of the next meeting, hon. members.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I haven't had a chance to talk to other members of the committee, but I wonder if we could meet shortly after the House rises to deal with some things that have

changed.

THE CHAIRMAN: The chair was going to suggest that the next meeting would be at the conclusion of the spring session of the Alberta Legislative Assembly at a date found convenient to all members. The chair will ask the deputy chairman to consult with other members to find a suitable date.

Should there be agenda items forthcoming, kindly advise the chair of your interest in those particular items.

We have a motion for adjournment.

MR. RENNER: So moved.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Have a wonderful day.

[The committee adjourned at 10:36 a.m.]