

8:30 a.m.

Wednesday, May 3, 1995

[Chairman: Mrs. Abdurahman]

THE CHAIRMAN: I'd like to call us to order. Could I have approval of the agenda, please?

MS HALEY: So moved.

THE CHAIRMAN: Moved by the Member for Three Hills-Airdrie. Thank you. All in favour, say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any nays? Carried unanimously.

Approval of the minutes of the April 26, 1995, committee meeting. Could I have a motion to accept them? Moved by Peter Sekulic. All in favour? Any nays? Carried unanimously.

It gives me a great deal of pleasure this morning to welcome the Hon. Mike Cardinal, Minister of Family and Social Services; also our Auditor General once again, Mr. Peter Valentine, and Mr. Mike Morgan from the Auditor General's department.

I'd ask if before the hon. minister makes comments, he could introduce his staff with him this morning.

MR. CARDINAL: Thank you very much. I'll start off and introduce the staff and then go into my presentation, if you don't mind.

THE CHAIRMAN: Certainly.

MR. CARDINAL: Thank you very much. First of all, I'll introduce Frank Wilson – Frank is the executive director of resource management services – and Duncan Campbell, director of budget and financial analysis, and Pat Boynton, assistant deputy minister of adult services. Also, in the member's gallery we have Bob Scott. That is the staff present with me today.

AN HON. MEMBER: Can't you let him down on the main floor?

AN HON. MEMBER: Come on down.

THE CHAIRMAN: I remind you that when you speak across the floor, people can't hear you because your mikes are not on.

MR. CARDINAL: He's always in the wrong place, but that's okay.

THE CHAIRMAN: To Mr. Scott: I don't think that's the case this morning.

MR. CARDINAL: He doesn't listen too well.

THE CHAIRMAN: If you'd like to proceed, hon. minister.

MR. CARDINAL: Thank you very much. First, my officials and I would like to thank you for inviting us to review the '93-94 spending in the Department of Family and Social Services. As reported in the public accounts, we are also prepared to discuss findings in the '93-94 report of the Auditor General. I want to make some generalized overview comments; then I would invite members of the committee to ask questions related specifically to the '93-94 public accounts and Auditor General's report.

Compared to the '92-93 budget, the department's overall spending dropped by almost \$165 million. You will notice that a significant number of our departmental support areas ended the year with sizable surpluses. This resulted in large part from the department's restrictions placed on spending in areas such as travel and the purchase of goods and services. Savings in these areas were used to meet spending requirements in other high-needs areas of the department.

The '93-94 budget also represents the first year of implementations of welfare reforms we introduced early in '93. As I have mentioned before, when the welfare reforms were announced, it was the intention to redirect money spent on the passive welfare system to other high-needs areas in the department. These '93-94 public account numbers demonstrate the success of this initiative.

As you can see, the supports for independence program, reference 2.2, shows a surplus of over \$28 million. The surplus was a direct result of our efforts to point people towards training and employment initiatives aimed at moving them off a dependency-promoting welfare system. As you look at other programs in the department, you can see where the surplus supports for independence dollars were redirected. For example, the increased caseload in the assured income for the severely handicapped program resulted in a deficit of \$4.4 million. We were able to meet this increased demand because we had funds available for redirection as a result of the welfare reforms. Similarly, spending in the child welfare services program exceeded the budget by \$7 million. Again, the department was able to redirect savings from one area to this very important program that required additional resources in '93-94.

The overexpenditure in day care programs, reference 3.4.2, is a direct result of the success of the training and employment initiatives that were started in a supports for independence program. Also, a deficit of \$4 million was reported in the family and community support services program. Most of the deficit resulted from a one-time grant that was paid to municipalities with FCSS programs to help them bridge their social program funding requirements as the government moved to consolidating all its municipal grants into one grant paid by the Department of Municipal Affairs. Again, welfare reforms made it possible for the department to redirect funds to this high-needs area.

The final area that received additional funding was the services to persons with disabilities, again another high-needs area. Many people who were living in institutional settings such as the Michener Centre have chosen to move into their home communities. This has reduced the population of these institutions, creating a surplus of employees. Most of the \$3 million deficit reported in this program resulted from separation payments to employees in these institutions who chose to retire from the public service.

Turning to the capital investment vote, it is important to note that over \$1.5 million of the \$2.3 million spent went towards the purchase of ADP equipment, enabling staff to process payments to clients and maintain more detailed records with less staff. In the year-end revenue, the funds received under the Canada assistance plan or under the ceiling established by the federal government show that the success of the welfare reforms not only saved Albertans money but also saved the federal government over \$28 million.

A comment is also required under salaries and benefit schedules on page 360 of volume 2. You will note that the department's reorganization brought our regional directors into the executive team, creating a management group closer to the frontline issues, letting us serve clientele better.

I would like to finish my introductory comments by referring to the Auditor General's report. Once again I believe the department has received a very favourable report from the Auditor General. He has commented on how the department has begun implementing some of his '92-93 recommendations in areas such as improved identification of benefits, costs for disabled clientele, and better use of computer-matching data with other governments. The department will once again take all the Auditor General's recommendations and comments into consideration and will make changes to its business practices where necessary.

That concludes my opening remarks. We are now ready for questions from committee members. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, hon. minister. One request: if we could ask the two gentlemen . . . I'm not quite sure which is Frank Wilson and which is Duncan Campbell.

MR. WILSON: I'm Frank Wilson.

THE CHAIRMAN: You are. Fine. It's for the benefit of *Hansard*. Thank you very much.

At this time, Pearl Calahasen.

MS CALAHASEN: Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. Good morning, Mr. Minister and Mr. Auditor General. It's good to see both of you up so early in the morning. It's a wonderful morning.

In volume 2, page 93, if you look down to 3.4.2 on day care programs, you had a \$3.2 million overexpenditure there. Could you explain what that was all about?

MR. CARDINAL: Okay. As a result of the success of the welfare reforms, more Albertans were leaving the welfare rolls and going into jobs and training. This resulted in an increased demand for day care subsidies for those particular people.

MS CALAHASEN: I'm going to deal with some of the over-expenditures that are on this same page in the same volume. Can you provide specific details on the extra spending of just over \$4 million that occurred in the family and community support services program? It's reference 3.4.3.

MR. CARDINAL: Okay. The '93-94 budget was based on the expected level of local FCSS program surpluses that turned out to be lower than anticipated. Also, with the winding down of the FCSS program, the province provided one-time-only transitional funding – as I mentioned briefly in my opening comments – to most of the municipalities to ensure the smooth transition to new unconditional grants under Municipal Affairs.

8:40

MS CALAHASEN: Madam Chairman, on 3.4.6, the same page and the same volume, the prevention of family violence, there was also an overexpenditure. Could you explain why that was?

MR. CARDINAL: Okay. The shortfall in this program arose because the implementation of the rural family violence prevention model was not budgeted for. This funding model increased operational funding and staffing to more appropriate levels for the service that was needed out there and provided. There was also increased funding provided to the Native Women's Shelter in Calgary during that year.

MS CALAHASEN: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, hon. minister.  
Peter Sekulic.

MR. SEKULIC: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Mr. Minister, my questions are from the Auditor General's report, '93-94. My first question, on page 68, is with regards to recommendation 17 where the Auditor General speaks to classification of individuals on assistance. In particular, he refers to transitional support. I'm a bit concerned about some of the comments there that people in this transitional category are on the program for a duration of anywhere between two and 18 years and that files lack much of or lack the required medical evidence. I'm wondering: what steps have you undertaken to remedy this?

MR. CARDINAL: You're talking about the ones that are over 18 years old, in that particular category; right?

MR. SEKULIC: Actually it's not with reference to their age. It's more with reference to the duration of receiving assistance.

MR. WILSON: The reference to the 18 years is slightly incorrect. The new categories were only introduced in '91-92, and that was actually the date of application. The point is well taken, though, that there was a large number of clients in that category that should not have been there. We did a substantial file review, and as a result, we removed 8,000 clients from that category. To prevent future recurrence, we have implemented a new function called error detection and continuous improvement where each month a random sample of files is reviewed in all the district offices and, from this, we're able to ascertain if this is a continuing problem and also provide remedial training for the staff to ensure that this category is retained only for those needing transitional support.

MR. SEKULIC: My second question is on page 69. In fact, the minister alluded to it in his opening comments. In reference to data matching, although the cross-provincial matching seems to have improved, I'm curious as to the tracking on frequency of reopens, particularly pre and post cuts. Have you seen that you're starting to get more reopens, and are you able to detect that quickly? The reason I'm asking this question is that reopens really speak to the success of any programs you may be funding through the department to assist people off assistance and to stay off assistance. It measures the success of the program.

MR. CARDINAL: Actually, as you're aware, each month we open about 8,000 files and close about the same amount. We find – and the staff maybe can comment on it in more detail – that most of the people that get off our rolls do not come back on. An example of this was when the welfare reforms were introduced. The first year we provided student grants, for example, I think about 11,000 students participated in the program. Of course we were criticized that July 1 would see an increase in the caseload of 11,000. What happened was that on July 1 of that particular year the caseload continued dropping, so we felt that most of the clientele did not come back on our caseload. That's just one example, but maybe the staff can comment on it a little further if there's any more to comment on.

MR. WILSON: Only to enforce, as the minister said, that we have 8,000 people leaving the system, 8,000 coming on every month. We do have limited resources. We have decided that the best use of them is not for tracking why people are coming and going. It's not seen as a major priority within the resources that are available.

THE CHAIRMAN: Final supplementary, Peter?

MR. SEKULIC: Yes. My final supplemental is from the Auditor General's report, page 72, and it's with reference to contracted agencies and allocating funding to regions. Now, one comment the Auditor General has made is that there's no shortage of clients requiring services in any of the regions. I'm particularly interested in how it is that the department assesses the needs in the regions or in the areas. One of the areas I look at as an example was recently used in the Legislature. The Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Belmont's constituency, I believe, has the highest rate of single-parent families in Alberta, single mothers. My question specifically is: how do you ensure that those families get the resources and the programming they require?

MR. CARDINAL: Okay. Part of the plan of involving departmental staff at the field level in relation to streamlining expenditures and budget controls – when we implemented the welfare reforms, part of the plan was to have department allocation of dollars at the regional level, especially in the area of child welfare, services to persons with disabilities, and the SFI program. These models are based on a combination of client needs, population, and even location. What we do, then, is on a monthly basis review those particular expenditures. It is easier for each region to monitor and control expenditures based on their local needs. We find that it works very well. Without that model we would not have the expenditure controls we have in the department. That also includes other areas such as capital expenditures, travel, purchase of supplies and stuff. It is a good model.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, hon. minister.  
Carol Haley.

MS HALEY: Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. Mr. Minister, I'd like to refer you to the Auditor General's report, page 70. The first main paragraph indicates that there are approximately 3,000 children in the Department's care [and] departmental figures indicate that the direct cost of supporting a child in government care ranges from \$16,000 to \$82,000 per year.

Could you please indicate why the costs are so high?

MR. CARDINAL: Okay. Effective April 1, '95, legislative changes to the Child Welfare Act allowed licensed adoptive agencies to complete home studies for private adoptions and for applications for adopting children from out of the country.

MS HALEY: That wasn't the question, Mr. Minister.

MR. CARDINAL: Okay. Could you repeat it?

MS HALEY: Yes. It says that your costs are between \$16,000 to \$82,000 per year per child. I'm wondering why the costs are so high.

MR. CARDINAL: I'm sorry. Was that page 70?

MS HALEY: Seven zero. The first main paragraph.

MR. CARDINAL: Okay.

THE CHAIRMAN: It's the Auditor General's report, the first paragraph on that page.

8:50

MR. CARDINAL: Is it page 70 or 69?

MS HALEY: Well, in my book it's 70.

MR. CARDINAL: It's 70 in your book.

THE CHAIRMAN: It's actually the first paragraph.

MR. CARDINAL: Yeah. We've found it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Sorry, hon. minister. We can't hear what you're saying. Could you repeat what you said?

MR. CARDINAL: We've found it here on the page.

MR. WILSON: The reason the costs vary so widely is simply based on the needs of the child. Some have got more problems, more difficulties that cost more to service, to provide treatment for. Sixteen thousand dollars would represent a child with very, very, very low needs, and \$82,000 would be the extreme.

THE CHAIRMAN: Possibly, if the minister wishes, he could supplement the question in writing? Would you like that?

MS HALEY: Yes, very much.

MR. CARDINAL: We could do that, yeah.

MS HALEY: I would appreciate that. With that in mind, then, could you please tell me: is the number 3,000 fairly static, or is that just an average number on a yearly basis? Like, what is the turnover on the 3,000?

MR. WILSON: The caseload in child welfare has remained fairly static over the last couple of years, so it is the average for the year. There would be slight fluctuations but not major from month to month.

MS HALEY: So are the children in this program, then, in it just for the long term, or is there hope of putting them back with their families and letting their families be responsible for them?

MR. CARDINAL: You know, we're out of the area of the budget now. If you want to talk about this year's budget, I'll tell you – well, you know what's happening in this year's budget. But going back to '93-94, we didn't have the implementation of the child welfare system. Two years from now you could ask that question.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mike Percy.

DR. PERCY: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Mr. Minister, Mr. Auditor General, staff. My questions are to the minister. Often during question period I've heard you talk about high needs and priorities. I'd like to ask you some questions related to outcomes and the basis on which you make decisions about success and high needs. It will follow up on an earlier question of tracking. I think it was Mr. Wilson who said that given limited resources, it was not a priority to track individual cases and assess outcomes. Could you tell me on what basis you've made the decision that it's not the best use of your resources to track?

MR. CARDINAL: Well, to start with, the welfare reforms introduced two years ago were, first of all, to try and target the employables and trainables, the young and very healthy Albertans that were sitting on assistance. In fact, a good percentage of the clientele caseload was in that category, including couples without children. The original welfare reforms were designed involving clientele and frontline workers and departmental staff. We did not have any roundtables when we designed the welfare reforms. We involved clientele, we involved the aboriginal groups, we involved frontline workers, we involved child welfare workers, and we involved all our own departmental staff who designed the process.

One thing we found initially is that nobody wanted to be on welfare, and number two, people wanted to get off the welfare system as quickly as possible. Number three, after they got off the system, the people didn't want anything to do with us after that. They didn't want governments coming back to phone the employers or their new place of residence to say, "Are you still on welfare?" or "How are you doing?" That is one thing. When they severed ties with us, they wanted to be independent and be on their own, didn't want any further contact in most cases.

The other area is that if there is a requirement – and we do an ongoing review of our caseload reductions. As of just this month, we're down close to a 50,000 caseload. It would not be impossible now if it was necessary – I would assume the 50,000 caseload there now is generally a higher needs area than the first 46,000 or so. I assume it would be possible in the future sometime, if we do have the dollars, to look at systems as to how we may monitor the movement of the balance of the caseload. I believe it has not been the priority in the past two years. We've concentrated on training, employment, and moving people into the workforce without any monitoring systems in place.

DR. PERCY: A follow-up. I know that when the minister of advanced education and manpower was here, we asked questions regarding tracking. That minister said that they in fact were going to track those that had made the transition from social services to student finance. Will there be a link between the data they set up, which will give some measure of outcomes, and whether or not those individuals end up coming back into your system?

MR. CARDINAL: Those will be easy to track, because they don't go off our system. To start with, what I do is transfer – for example, last year we transferred \$60 million to Advanced Education and Career Development specifically to provide student grants to individuals getting off our system into academic upgrading and life skills and other basic skills upgrading. Of course, those files continue under the student grant program, and in most cases individuals would continue the transitional supports also. For those individuals, yes, it would be easy to track, because once they are completing their academic upgrading program, we want to make sure they have the opportunity to either take further training or take a job. Once that happens, we are also involved in most cases in the placement of these individuals. So tracking for that specific group of people would not be impossible to do, and I believe we have the systems in place to be able to do that at this time.

I don't know if the staff would want to maybe comment on that a bit more, especially the tracking. Pat, would you like to . . .

MS BOYNTON: The minister has identified it very well. To track the individuals that go forward on training programs, move into employment initiatives, and with whom we work to place in employment opportunities – there are opportunities to track their movement for three to six months following. That's easy enough

to do. It's the individuals who leave the system and may not even notify us that they've left the system. They just don't reappear. Their files are closed. We do not know where they are or what they're doing particularly. They've decided to seek their independence through job opportunities on their own. To track those people down and try to find out what they're doing so we know how our caseload has shifted I think would be an invasion of their privacy as they've left the system and started their independent lives. It's actually invading their privacy. So we haven't made attempts to do that. They've moved on on their own. The ones that are still within the system are easier to deal with.

MR. CARDINAL: Most of the caseload actually stays a very short period of time. That was always the intention of the social supports put in place: to assist those people in need, in transition. Actually, most of our clientele do not stay on the system very long. In fact, I mentioned earlier that we open 8,000 new files a month and close 8,000 old files. That just shows you that it's short-term assistance for most people. It would be tough to track those.

9:00

THE CHAIRMAN: Final supplementary, Mike.

DR. PERCY: Yeah. I'd like to briefly switch to a discussion of program 3.2, child welfare services, on page 93 of volume 2. The question I have is: since this is one of the components of your department where you're entering into arrangements with the private sector to deliver those services, were there studies or programs set up to ensure that the way these contracts were allocated was free, open, transparent? Was there a tendering process or bidding process or some very transparent mechanism out there so that everybody could see how the contracts were awarded and to whom?

MR. CARDINAL: I'll talk specifically about maybe one contract and the reason that particular project was not tendered out. When the commissioner was appointed to review the child welfare system and design a program, part of the design was based on pilot projects. And not only in child welfare. Some of the pilot projects in the whole welfare reform program – which I was involved in, and the deputy and some of the staff members, in fact, here were involved in also – were piloted as far back as 1986, involving small native communities in northern Alberta, part of the SFI, the training programs. The other part, of course, was the child welfare system. That is the reason we did not hold that many roundtables when we designed the programs. The design was based on pilot projects that were already successful.

In the particular case of the child welfare services, of course everybody knew that government is not a good parent and will never be a good parent. The first priority should be, wherever possible, to keep the family together and keep the child at home with the parents, because one thing we found is that the child is never the problem. The problem is always other problems, either employment or other social problems. In the past we've always removed the child. What we are doing with the new program, of course, is putting the support services right at home to keep the family together wherever possible, unless there's physical or sexual abuse and then, of course, the child is removed. Generally that is the plan. Again, part of the new reshaping of child welfare that is announced is based on the pilot project that is under way now, a two-year program in Lac La Biche, the northeast area of Alberta. It's a very successful program. I believe the person employs over

160 individuals on either a full-time or part-time basis on their two-year pilot project.

In the future, if there is a need for that type of support service from the private industry, then of course it will be tendered out through the public tendering process, unless the contracts are so small that it is not viable to tender the programs out. But generally the whole child welfare system is not being privatized. It is being brought to the community level for delivery. Of course, close to 50 percent of the children in care are of aboriginal ancestry. The aboriginal community is ready and, I think, can do a better job than the government to deliver the child welfare services. I don't class those as privatization. Those are giving back what the aboriginal community never gave to the government to deliver to start with. I am optimistic that that is the right thing to do.

One thing I find in the design of the whole welfare reform package – it includes the question you asked – is that if you use the normal tendering process that we've used in the past, in some instances the program could not succeed. I'll give you a good example, and it ties in with your question. The area of colocation of delivery of services to the public: federal human resources, Advanced Education and Career Development, and Family and Social Services. If you were to tender those out how we've tendered out in the past, you would never colocate, because only a miracle would happen to bring those three departments together. What we've done with that is take the larger department. For example, if Advanced Education and Career Development had an office already set up, the federal government would tag on and go out and actually lease space rather than tendering it out to implement their programs tied in with that department, and we would do the same. And that's not easy to do. The preference by the public is to tender it out, but in some instances when you're running very sensitive and innovative programs, it is tough to tender. We would prefer to tender too, but sometimes it's tough.

MR. FRIEDEL: I'm going to be referring to the Auditor General's Report, page 68. The first question deals with the issue of supports for independence, the transitional support clients. In the documentation or the background the Auditor General has provided, it says: "There is evidence that significant savings could be achieved by identifying clients who should not be in this category." I'm wondering if the minister could give us some indication as to what might be happening in this regard, what action the department is taking with regard to this recommendation.

MR. CARDINAL: Okay. We touched on this, just briefly though, and we'll expand on it again. The department, as mentioned earlier, began reviewing the need for transitional support in 1994. As a result of the review, a number of files were transferred to more appropriate assistance categories. I believe over 11,000 files were reviewed, and it was mentioned earlier that over 8,000 were transferred to other categories. Almost 1,200 went to supplementary earnings, over 5,100 went to employment and training support, almost 1,600 to assured support, and over 250 to assured income for the severely handicapped. That's where the budget has increased.

THE CHAIRMAN: Supplementary, Gary.

MR. FRIEDEL: Yes. On the same page, just a little bit further down, on the same issue, it indicates that "of the clients whose files were examined, 9% should never have been categorized as transitional." It talks about averages being two years for the

transitional period, but one client had been receiving it for 18 years. I expect this is something of an anomaly, but how does that sort of thing happen?

MR. CARDINAL: This category has only been in use since '91-'92. However, the effective date of the category was the date the client applied for benefits rather than the date the client category changed. Of course the system has been changed so that there are new edicts requiring an effective date to be entered on the system when the client category changes. So that is why there was a problem in that one specific case.

MR. FRIEDEL: If you go on to the next page, page 69, still on the issue of supports for independence, the Auditor General indicated that "the Department could make better use of computer matching to detect program abuse." He goes on to say: "In particular . . . interested in the feasibility of data matching with Revenue Canada." He also says that "the Department has made progress in this area." I'm wondering if maybe the minister could give us a little bit more information on how that initiative is actually progressing.

MR. CARDINAL: That's a good question. Data sharing with Revenue Canada is not possible due to the confidentiality of income tax information. I wish we could do it. It would be good. However, federally, an agreement with Human Resources Development Canada was amended to allow on-line access to unemployment insurance data. That's part of the colocation of projects that I mentioned earlier, where we are having joint projects with that particular department. An agreement with immigration Canada regarding defaulting sponsors is ready for sign-off, and the Canada pension plan data match is in the initial stages of negotiations. Interprovincial agreements have been signed with British Columbia and Saskatchewan, and data matching is taking place already in those areas, very successfully. Agreements with Manitoba and Yukon are ready for sign-off, and agreement of Ontario is being negotiated at this time.

Within Alberta, agreements are in place for data matching systems with the Students Finance Board and Alberta Justice. An agreement with Workers' Compensation should soon be ready to sign off. The other area we need to look at is Indian Affairs and the Indian bands across the province. We've had some initial discussions with those particular groups also.

9:10

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Gary.  
Sine Chadi.

MR. CHADI: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Good morning, Mr. Minister and staff, Auditor General.

MR. CARDINAL: Tansi.

MR. CHADI: Manandokema. Mr. Minister, in your opening comments you mentioned that there were savings not only by the province but also by the federal government. I'm going to refer to page 96 of volume 2, which talks about revenue. I was curious. In your opening comments you mentioned \$28 million in terms of savings by the federal government as a result of welfare reforms in this fiscal year, yet I look at the Canada assistance plan and the transfers from the government of Canada and see that in the 1993 fiscal year \$607 million or \$608 million was transferred to Alberta, and then in 1994 actually an increase took place. Given what you did say about a \$28 million savings from the government of

Canada, what then can you say about the increase from '93 to '94 by the feds?

MR. CARDINAL: Okay. I'll try to answer that. The '92-93 recovery amount of just a little over \$607 million that you're referring to was the maximum that could be claimed as a result of the government imposing a formula for limiting the amount of cost sharing that can be claimed by Alberta. Without the ceiling, our cost-share claims would have exceeded \$676 million. There was a ceiling set. However, in '93-94, the formula provided for an increase in the maximum amount that could be claimed. The amount claimed was actually \$28 million under the ceiling. As well, there were some retroactive claims that were paid to Alberta by the federal government during '93-94. So the ceiling is what created that difficulty.

MR. CHADI: I understand.

MR. CARDINAL: That was why it was so critical to bring the caseloads down to where we can fall under the ceiling, so we can maximize cost savings and maximize cost-sharing benefits also for Alberta under that program.

MR. CHADI: There was an awful lot of talk, of course, during the fiscal year of '93-94 of fraudulent cases. We hear of some of them through the media and through our constituency offices. I'm wondering if your department could give us an indication as to how many fraudulent cases were actually taken to court and you got convictions on.

MR. CARDINAL: I don't believe we have the numbers here. We'll have to get back to you on that particular one. But again, we do get the same phone calls that there is still some overuse of our system out there. We get calls, and I think all the constituency offices get them. It is good that we are getting the phone calls, because it identifies that there is a need for better controls of the use of the dollars designed for people in need. I've always said there is no lack of dollars in my department; it's how we utilize the dollars. I have to commend the opposition and my government colleagues and the public out there for taking the time, when they see dollars not being used properly, to phone us. It's only through a process of that nature that we can continue improving our fraud investigations and streamlining our program design. We will get back to you, though, on the actual numbers.

MR. CHADI: You'll be doing it through the chairman of Public Accounts?

MR. CARDINAL: Yes.

MR. CAMPBELL: Could I just add something here? The number of cases that actually go to court is small compared to the instances where our investigators just happen to appear at people's places and they decide that maybe they shouldn't be claiming assistance anymore either.

MR. CHADI: Could you give us that number as well then?

MR. CAMPBELL: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.  
Final supplementary, Sine.

MR. CHADI: Thank you. Although you did mention that the number of cases that have gone to court and have got convictions is small, it seems to me there would also be some recovery of dollars from clients that received funding from the department under fraudulent terms. Where in the revenue side of page 96 would I be able to see the amount of dollars that may have been recovered in that fiscal year? Or do the funds go straight into general revenue? Where are they?

MR. CARDINAL: You'll notice it shows up under refunds of expenditures under public assistance.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, hon. minister. Thank you, Sine.  
Jocelyn Burgener.

MRS. BURGNER: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Good morning. I'd like to refer to the Auditor General's report, page 69. I'm going to have two questions to the minister, and then I'd like to ask you a question, Peter, that is drawn from some of the comments in the Auditor General's report on page 70.

With respect to recommendation 18 on page 69, the Auditor General has recommended

that the Department of Family and Social Services estimate and take into account the cost of acceptable alternatives when deciding on the most appropriate method of supporting children in need of protection.

I'm anxious about how that will be done. My question in the first place is: what is the department's reaction to this? I'd just like to know how it has unfolded.

MR. CARDINAL: Okay. Frontline staff do consider the most cost-effective way of delivering services to children in need, as evidenced by the growth in the in-home support programs. We talked about this a little earlier. You know, it is critical that we provide wherever possible the in-home support services rather than apprehending children. It should also be recognized that there will be times when there is only one placement available for a child, and as we move forward now with our new process, of course, that will change.

MRS. BURGNER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. My supplemental question also involves a recommendation from the Auditor General. This moves into the day care model, I guess, on the next page of the AG report, page 71. Just generally, there's a recommendation

that the Department . . . determine the costs and impacts of the day care subsidies and services provided to parents who are searching for jobs or have special needs.

I'd like to understand what the department has done in this regard. What action are they taking?

9:20

MR. CARDINAL: An analysis of the cost of providing day care subsidies to these parents and the alternatives for providing them with child care was completed. As a result, effective May 1 of 1995, supports for independence parents searching for a job will receive assistance with child care through the supports for independence program. Subsidies to non-SFI parents searching for jobs of course will be discontinued. The policy for child care for a special-needs parent is currently being reviewed, and a decision is expected sometime in June. As a result of these changes, it is anticipated there will be a million dollar reduction in costs as a result of child care assistance not given to ineligible clients. So that question which was brought forward by the Auditor General should be dealt with properly.

MRS. BURGNER: A final supplemental. Peter, on page 70 of the AG report, paragraph 2, I think you're identifying some very considerable concerns with respect to the cost of children in care, and Carol spoke to that: the difference between the \$16,000 and the \$82,000. Clearly, we need to know how those expenses are broken down, and the minister has committed to getting some answers on that. I am very concerned with the last sentence in that paragraph about the cost considerations never overriding the concern for the child, but your office feels it's important that the anticipated cost should be taken into account when we do decide on the support that is provided. How are you going to implement or assess the department with that frame of reference when, indeed, the needs of the child are something you can't necessarily put a monetary value on?

MR. VALENTINE: We don't disagree that in the end the needs of the child are paramount. What we're saying is that without knowing the cost of the program delivered or the cost of alternatives that might have been considered, the decision tree in and of itself is not complete. I don't think for a minute we're suggesting that money would be the only factor. Alternatively, we do say that money should be a factor.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Valentine.  
Does the minister wish to . . . No. Thank you.  
Nick Taylor.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Yes. If I could just refresh my memory, I know the minister has always said how much . . . Oh, by the way, good morning, Mr. Minister and all the assistants. It's a more civilized hour now. The minister has talked about the total cuts he has done on his program, but do you remember the cuts you've made just in old-fashioned welfare payments? How much are we spending in this budget that we were – how much did we cut it from the year before? That's just income support for welfare.

MR. CARDINAL: I believe in my introductory comments I mentioned that the reduction in actual dollar expenditures was \$160 million. In our streamlining of the welfare reforms, for an example, you can determine that one case would cost \$769 or somewhere in that area. At one time it used to be \$845, and I believe back in 1992 it was over \$900 per case. So not only did we bring the caseload down by close to 50 percent through the reforms; we've also reduced the cost per case by close to \$200, no doubt, in the past two years by streamlining the process.

MR. N. TAYLOR: What bothered me a bit: I can see about a \$30 million saving in the amount of money that went to people on welfare, but I guess maybe you could have picked up \$70 million somewhere else. But to get to more detail, in volume 2, 2.2.4, for instance, there's an example. Is that \$43 million? Yeah. There's a \$43 million shortfall in employment training. In other words, you did a lot more employment training than you used to do. Then you flip over to advanced ed on page 43, just to get a correlation, and in adult education and rehab, similar things, 3.0.6 and 3.0.7, we pick up another \$10 million. When I put it all together, there's about \$50 million that seems to have been transferred from welfare over to training, whether training in your department or training in the other department. So I was wondering whether you're running a bit of a flim-flam here; you're just moving them from one place to the other.

One of the things that bothers me is that when I talk to – I get a number of calls. Although you're transferring literally \$54 million from welfare over to training – my untutored eye picks

that up in a few minutes – the type of retraining these people are getting doesn't seem to be in jobs they want. So have we got eternal people on eternal training? How many hairdressers and welders that are unemployed can you retrain and keep retraining?

MR. CARDINAL: Basically, our number one priority, of course – I said earlier on the whole welfare reforms that there were always enough dollars in the department. It's how we used dollars originally. When you go back far enough, the welfare system was designed to assist those people most in need, but what it became was for the government and it was not what the people wanted. The governments, both federal and provincial and, in some cases, municipal, found where they were involved that it was easier to hand out dollars and not really deal with the issue of the employment and training of people. Over a period of time, over 40 years, of course, we created a lifestyle for too many people. It's not what the people wanted. What we've done with this new system is, first of all, target the people that are readily employable. Using many innovative ways of placing people in jobs, we've managed to reduce the caseload considerably and use private industry in employing these people. That part is very successful.

The other complaint we had in the past was that a number of people require life skills training before they can get into the workforce. A number of people required academic upgrading closer to a grade 10 or maybe a grade 12 level. We found that we could not move people off the welfare rolls unless we provided alternatives for them. One was a job; the other was a training program. Now, the way we've set it up, for anyone that does not want to participate in that or doesn't take that option, the file is closed. If they do not, of course, they either have to move out of the province or seek other resources. So it does work two ways. One, it is an option for people for further training. It gives our department people an option to say to an individual, "Look, if you don't want to take training, you'd better find another way of making a living." That is the added option. But the actual training: I am working now with a number of my colleagues in government and also Northland school division and northern development to look at ways of providing further training for those people that choose to go on to postsecondary education and apprenticeship types of training, possibly bursary programs. There are a number of bursary programs available. In fact, through the welfare reforms, we've increased the bursary programs in my department for the first and second year of a social work program through either an AVC or Grant MacEwan. We've increased that to 34 bursaries a year, where each student gets around \$10,000. That's been very successful.

9:30

What we do after the two-year training program is accept those individuals into our social work program, and while they are working they can actually get a degree in social work through distance learning with Athabasca University. As of, I believe, September 1 of next year, Athabasca University will be able to provide through distance learning a degree in social work and possibly in education. So I'm encouraging the minister of education and also the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Health to look at a bursary program for some of the clientele within the department.

In addition to that, I'm talking to northern development – in fact, I had a meeting with them this week – and they are coming up with a model as to how they may have a bursary program for first and second year education. Third and fourth year is not a problem; individuals can find student grants. But you've identified an area, and I appreciate that. The first and second year of

postsecondary and apprenticeship training is a major problem in relation to our clientele because of the lack of finances. Northland school division, for an example, hires 180 teachers in northern Alberta. A lot of the teachers they hire they have to go down east to recruit, because a lot of our own teachers in Alberta choose not to work in remote communities in northern Alberta. So it is a complicated process, but I think it is the right thing.

But you are right. What happens once these people finish grade 12? So far they haven't come back on our caseload, but I believe we still have to provide something for the first and second year somehow, and I'm working on those processes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Final supplementary, Nick.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Yes. I applaud you moving from welfare to training. I think that's a good idea. My whole point was that it was maybe a little deceptive to say you're saving \$100 million when you're spending \$50 million in retraining.

This goes into my second question. I hear that you had trouble tracking and therefore couldn't tell whether the training was good or not. I think Ms Boysie said that about interfering with privacy. I question that. It seems to me the easiest thing in the world to see whether somebody has adapted . . . By the way, some smart people on the side said, "What's wrong with being a barber?" Getty's barber got to be the representative in Los Angeles.

THE CHAIRMAN: Nick, get to the question, please, or I'm going to have to cut you off.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Back to tracking again and Ms Boysie's comment about interfering. I don't quite follow what you're talking about here, because you've got a very simple system. Forty percent of income tax comes back to the province. If somebody's paying income tax, they're successful, so why don't you just call Treasury and find out which of your welfare people are not paying income tax? Not how much. Just if they're paying. If they're paying, they're obviously off welfare. That's all you have to do.

THE CHAIRMAN: Could we keep the questions more concise.  
Hon. minister.

MR. CARDINAL: Yeah, we can track those.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Boysie's giving me a look out of the corner of her eye. She wants to answer.

MR. CARDINAL: Boynton is the name, not Boysie.

MR. N. TAYLOR: I'm sorry.

THE CHAIRMAN: Could I have some order, please.

MR. CARDINAL: The answer is yes, we can track those people. Pat already answered that.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, hon. minister.

MS CALAHASEN: That's a good answer to the wrong question.

THE CHAIRMAN: I don't know whether you realize it, hon. minister, but I said, "Could we have some order?" and you said, "Yes."

David.

MR. COUTTS: Thank you. Good morning. I'd like to deal with the Metis settlements accord in volume 2 of public accounts. If you look at page 89, reference 14.1, you'll see the expenditures of the Metis Settlements Transition Commission. I wonder if you could explain to me what the function of that transition commission is.

MR. CARDINAL: Okay. The Metis Settlements Transition Commission was established to help the eight Metis settlements achieve self-sufficiency. They do this by providing grants, advice, and administrative assistance to the settlements and the general council. As you're aware, in the past this government made a major settlement with the Metis people that lived on the eight settlements in relation to administration of their own lands and programs and actually transferred, I believe, over 1.25 million acres of land. As part of the process to achieve that administrative independence by the settlements, the government is providing dollars to assist in the transition.

MR. COUTTS: If that's the case, then, what is the budget for the Metis Settlements Accord Implementation Act used for? Is it used at the local level?

MR. CARDINAL: Yeah. Actually the total amount that was settled on originally was \$310 million, I believe, over 17 years and involved the transfer of 1.25 million acres of land to the eight Metis settlements. The \$25 million is part of the \$30 million per year for the first seven years. The \$25 million operation and maintenance assistance payments are for ongoing operation of the Metis settlements. That includes the infrastructure, some housing programs, water and sewer systems, the road network, and in fact having a bursary program for training under that system also. An additional \$5 million is for future development assistance. Payment is set aside in a bank account each year for the settlements to draw on beginning the year 2007. At that time the fund will total \$35 million plus interest.

MR. COUTTS: If I can go down to reference 14.2, the Metis Settlements Appeal Tribunal, it seems to have a surplus every year. I guess I'm wondering why the estimates aren't adjusted to reflect the proper spending levels.

MR. CARDINAL: The Metis settlements accord and related legislation called for a graduated implementation of various programs. As full implementation is achieved, more field activity could occur. So the estimates are not adjusted. In fact, a smaller surplus is anticipated for '94-95. As the transition gets more successful, that area of the programs should get more activity.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, David.  
Terry Kirkland.

MR. KIRKLAND: Thank you, Madam Chairman. My apologies to you, the general administrative staff, and my colleagues for my late arrival this morning.

THE CHAIRMAN: You're excused.

MR. KIRKLAND: Thank you.

Mr. Minister, in '93-94 you had several employees that left the department due to downsizing and the likes of that. The case of my neighbour in Leduc: in her words, she was pushed out for refusing to participate in efforts to protect the department in the Lenny case. She also indicated to me that she negotiated a fair



settlement with the department on her departure there in early '94. What vote would that sort of settlement be credited to as far as the accounts are concerned?

MR. CARDINAL: It should be under program 3. I don't believe it's separately identified, but if you want, it's something we can get back to you in writing.

MR. KIRKLAND: It's curiosity, because I have difficulty separating some of the costs associated with the department.

One other cost we've asked about before that I couldn't separate: the department employs agencies, that generally would be referred to as placement agencies, for SFI recipients. What sort of dollars is the department spending on that undertaking, and what vote would we find that under?

9:40

MR. CARDINAL: Program 2. But we have to be careful. Again, to be fair with you, we'll get back to you in writing on this. Some of the placement activities we utilize are actually administered and funded under Advanced Education and Career Development. We are also doing some. So what we'd have to do is access the information from Advanced Ed and Career Development. We'll make sure we do that and provide you with the information on both what we do and what they do in relation to the placement agencies. In fact, the majority of the placement agencies, except for offices where we do have a colocation, fall under Advanced Ed and Career Development.

MR. KIRKLAND: Okay. Those are my questions, Madam Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Barry McFarland.

MR. McFARLAND: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Good morning, Mr. Minister and staff. I'm on page 92 of volume 2. My questions will deal in this order: 2.2.4, 2.2.6, and 2.2.5.

My first question: would you explain the rather large overexpenditure in the employment and training support program of \$43.9 million?

MR. CARDINAL: Okay. What is the question again? What is the overexpenditure?

MR. McFARLAND: Could you explain the reason for the overexpenditure of \$43.9 million under 2.2.4?

MR. CARDINAL: Okay. Very good. No problem. At the time the '93-94 estimates were prepared, historical details were not available for these new categories, which were announced in '91-92. Consequently, there were variations between what was budgeted and what was actually spent within each of the four categories. Overall the supports for independence or SFI benefits were \$31 million less than budgeted due to better results from our welfare reforms. The average annual caseload was 2,700 cases lower than expected, and at that time, of course, the per caseload cost was higher than what it is now.

MR. McFARLAND: Then, Mr. Minister, on 2.2.6, the assured support portion of the supports for independence: would you explain why there's a fairly substantial overexpenditure of \$12.24 million?

MR. CARDINAL: Okay. That was the over \$12 million overexpenditure. As mentioned previously, the estimates by

category were approximate. The assured support overexpenditure was the result of a higher caseload and a higher cost per case. The caseload was 110 clients higher and the cost per case \$100 higher.

THE CHAIRMAN: Final supplementary, Barry.

MR. McFARLAND: Yes, relating to 2.2.5, transitional support, where we have the reverse. Overexpenditures are a better means of budgeting for these three different areas so that you don't continue to have an underexpenditure in one and an over in the other.

MR. CARDINAL: The department now has in place a system which reports expenditure and caseload information by the four new categories. The department has also expanded a budgetary process to include input from the regions – and I mentioned this earlier – and worksites that deliver the SFI program. The budgets can then be refined and include local economic conditions. That is what I mentioned earlier. Because of those models in place in relation to budget controls, we've managed to have a very close watch, even on items such as purchase of supplies and travel and movement of staff, to make sure we fall under our three-year business plan in relation to the budgets.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Thank you, Barry.  
Peter Sekulic.

MR. SEKULIC: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Mr. Minister, my questions will pertain to public accounts, volume 2, page 92 and vote 2, first of all, generally, income support to individuals and families where you're expending close to a billion dollars annually. My understanding is that the single largest category is single-parent families. Could you answer for me what percentage of the total number of single-parent families on assistance is on assistance because maintenance payments aren't being made?

MR. CARDINAL: Because you're talking about . . . You'll have to give us a little bit of time.

MR. SEKULIC: Sure.

MR. CARDINAL: During March of '94, for an example – and I assume you're talking about the '93-94 budget; right? – we had single-parent cases at 22,367 or 35.8 percent of the caseload. I just want to update. In March '95 the caseload is still the same, 35.5, although that's out of the area.

MR. SEKULIC: That's 35.5?

MR. CARDINAL: Yeah.

MR. SEKULIC: The next question I have is that I'd like to know what the recovery rates are through the M and E program. I note that under vote 2.2.2 you've authorized three . . . [interjection] Sorry?

MR. CHADI: The MEF program?

MR. SEKULIC: Maintenance enforcement . . .

MR. CHADI: Okay.

MR. SEKULIC: . . . and recovery.

THE CHAIRMAN: He thought you were talking about machinery and equipment.

MR. SEKULIC: I'm sorry. That's a popular topic as well, but not today.

You've authorized \$3.2 billion and expended \$3.3 billion, so we have an overexpenditure there. I'm just curious as to why. Is it because the recovery rate isn't very high?

MR. WILSON: The overexpenditure of \$126,000 is not related to the collection activities. It is related to staffing costs. The collection activities are paid for by the Department of Justice through MEP.

MR. SEKULIC: Okay.

MR. WILSON: The actual reason for the overexpenditure was that a number of staff took an opportunity for voluntary separation. Of course that wasn't budgeted for, so it was paid for from another area.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. SEKULIC: It would be interesting to get some of the recovery from the Department of Justice to the department of social services.

THE CHAIRMAN: I want to move on to the next question.

MR. SEKULIC: So do I. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

My next question is: given the 35.8 percent, the caseload in '93-94 was single-parent families, and there was very little change, in fact, in the 35.5 percent currently of that. I was wondering what initiatives you have in place that would enable more people, single-parent families, to become independent. If they were to receive their maintenance payments, I know the caseloads would decrease. So what initiatives – and perhaps you're formulating some type of legislation for the next session that would be more strict in requiring payments and therefore reducing the caseload.

MR. CARDINAL: Of course, the welfare reforms have only been around for approximately two years, and the first priority was again to look at the single employables on the system and couples without children. Those areas were the easiest to target. Looking back now, I think we did the right thing, because those people should not be on the system. The program was very successful in moving those people off the welfare system.

In relation to the single-parent families, there are a number that are taking various forms of academic upgrading programs and life skills programs. I believe the caseload as of March of '95 is down by 4,000 cases, so it is coming down some. We don't expect that area will move as rapidly as the other areas. You know, when you look at an 18 year old drawing welfare who is absolutely healthy and there's nothing to hold them back from either training or work, and you compare that with a mother with two children at home, the first person you should get back into the workforce is the person that's ready to go to work. That's what we've done. That's the easy part. But while we were doing that in the last two years, we also managed to reduce the single-parent families by 4,000 cases. That is a slower process and more complicated and a very sensitive area, and we need to be very careful.

That doesn't completely answer your question. My staff feels that we can assist in writing in answering your question. We'll do that in relation to the specific question of maintenance.

9:50

MS BOYNTON: A brief additional comment is that in the category where the minister identified 38.5 percent of single parents on welfare, some of those people will, of course, be receiving maintenance payments collected through MEP. So we may be just making up the difference between their ability to meet their basic needs in addition to the money they receive through MEP.

THE CHAIRMAN: Julius Yankowsky.

MR. YANKOWSKY: Thank you, Madam Chairman, and good morning, everyone. My questions are all found in volume 2, page 93. The first question I have is that I'd like to ask the minister to explain the overexpenditure of \$9.9 million in the element of foster care – the reference there is 3.2.5 – particularly in the context of the surplus of over \$4.8 million in the element of residential care, and the reference there is 3.2.7.

MR. CARDINAL: The main cause of the overexpenditure in foster care was the higher than anticipated cost of foster parent skill fees. Implementation of a new system of payment based on skill and training of the foster parent rather than strictly on the age of the child resulted in a higher than anticipated expenditure. Another important factor was the department's emphasis on keeping children out of a residential setting and using foster care and in-home support instead. This approach is much less disruptive to the children we deal with.

The surplus in residential care reflects the reduced use of residential spaces, and the cost shows up in foster care and in-home support instead. That is the direction the whole process is going: to try and keep families at home together, with proper support systems wherever possible. Again, I'd just like to indicate that part of the overall welfare reforms is to make sure we move those dollars to high-needs areas. In this particular case, it's a very sensitive and a very high needs area. That is why the changes took place.

THE CHAIRMAN: Supplementary, Julius.

MR. YANKOWSKY: Thank you, Madam Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Minister. The reference here is 3.2.3, in-home family support, and 3.2.4 under adoptions. You show overexpenditures of \$682,000 and \$503,000 respectively. Could you please explain the reasons for these overexpenditures?

MR. CARDINAL: Again, I mentioned this before briefly in a number of the questions on the overall plan. The department is placing more emphasis on keeping children in their homes, resulting in an increase in in-home support for the family. In addition, overexpenditures have occurred in adoptions due to the department's emphasis on permanent placement. We feel at this time that the in-home support program no doubt is going to be costly in the short term. But I believe if in the long-term we can keep families together and more accountable and responsible and actually deal with problems immediately, then long-term savings for the taxpayer both provincially and federally will increase. I believe that keeping the child at home with the parent is also a good move for the child and the parent and the extended family.

THE CHAIRMAN: Final supplementary, Julius.

MR. YANKOWSKY: Thank you again, Madam Chairman. My final question is referring to reference 3.2.1. I note there that the administration costs for delivery of the child welfare program were

overexpended by \$2 million or thereabouts. What is the reason for this overexpenditure?

MR. CARDINAL: Again, caseloads in child welfare were higher than expected. To serve the increased caseloads, we increased the number of staff to provide more direct service to the clientele. These additional staff were redeployed from other areas of the department. You'll notice as we restructured the department – you know, we had over 5,400 staff, I believe, when we started. I believe we still have over 5,000 staff. What we did was basically shift staff and redeploy them in the high-needs area. That was persons with disabilities and children's services and the actual frontline work with the clientele, including training and career planning and so on. So that is the reason for that change.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

One very quick question, Mike Percy.

DR. PERCY: Thank you. Mr. Minister, I'd like to just jump back. You mentioned Michener Park. That would be under vote 3.5.6.

AN HON. MEMBER: Michener Centre.

DR. PERCY: Michener Centre; that's right. At one time there were efforts to bring forward a Bill to set up a foundation to help provide some continuity of funding for Michener Park.

THE CHAIRMAN: Centre.

DR. PERCY: Centre. Michener Park is at the university. Has anything happened along those lines over the past year, to proceed with such legislation?

MR. CARDINAL: Of course our priority, as I've always mentioned, is persons with disabilities, for which my department spends over \$400 million. Part of the cost, of course, is the Michener Centre. What has happened in the past two years, I find, is that the requests not only from individuals involved but also the parents – wherever possible and whenever possible, we should provide the opportunity for individuals to participate in the daily life of Alberta. Therefore, we've tried wherever possible to assist in moving individuals from the institution to either their home community or another community and providing the support systems, but while we were doing that, we also appointed an advisory committee – which will come up with a report, I believe, by July of this year – to look at how we may improve that particular facility and provide the service required for those people that have to stay in an institution.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, hon. minister.

Because of the time, I'd now like to move to the date of the next meeting, May 10. The Minister of Education, Halvar Jonson, will be appearing before us.

I'd like to extend my appreciation on behalf of Public Accounts to the hon. minister Mike Cardinal and his staff. Thank you for answering the questions. If you could, written replies through Corinne, please?

Once again, to Mr. Valentine, the Auditor General, and Mike Morgan, thank you.

With that we stand adjourned. Thank you.

[The committee adjourned at 10 a.m.]

