

2:15 p.m.

Friday, March 26, 1993

[Chairman: Mr. Gogo]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll call the meeting to order then. Could we first go to the agenda for today? It may not look big, but it's a large agenda, and we may or may not get through it. Because it's Friday, we'd like to allow people to get away, though, as close as possible to 4 o'clock. Any comments on the agenda? Could we have a motion to adopt?

MRS. B. LAING: I move that we adopt.

MRS. HEWES: May I ask a question, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: A question.

MRS. HEWES: On the forthcoming items, these were the items that we sort of picked off the top of our wish list?

MR. CHAIRMAN: They're not exclusive, though.

MRS. HEWES: Yes. That's one question I wanted to ask. They are not exclusive. Is it your intent to go into discussion on those today, or are they just here for the record?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The budget's going to be a major item today. This Chair must meet with Members' Services to get approval for a budget, and I need your help in determining a budget for '93-94. I meet next Thursday?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: April 7.

MR. CHAIRMAN: April 7. So I want to spend some time on the budget today and resolve things such as what traveling we're going to do, what advertising we're going to do, what we do about a report and inviting people in. So we may not even get through Election of the Speaker, although I believe that if you've read the material supplied, there's not much doubt about the conclusion we'll come to. Probably the method is the only outstanding issue there.

Any other questions?

Okay. Could we go, then, to the two sets of minutes that you have from November 17? You'll recall that we had the two meetings: in the morning with the media and in the afternoon with the shopping list. We'll begin on page 9.92. Are there any questions?

MRS. HEWES: I'll move the minutes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any questions? Carried. Now, that would be - we better do this with two motions, I guess - the a.m. Now the p.m., starting at 2 p.m.

MRS. HEWES: I'll move those as well.

MR. FOX: That's a good slogan by the way: AM for PM.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. By the way, a major gasoline outlet in America is AM PM, if that's what you were thinking.

The budget estimates I'd like us to spend some time on. I know you're all of the same view; that is, a big question mark about where the government of Alberta is headed in terms of election timing and other things. I've no idea other than there's a flurry of

nominations going on. I think we should plan on having a conclusion to parliamentary reform in the form of a meaningful report that the House will hopefully adopt following arguments by the various caucuses. I think we should plan on this committee carrying on to a final report, because I would anticipate an interim report during a sitting of the House. That's what I would hope. The only caveats would be what travel we might do, what time may be involved. So I think we should plan on setting a budget that would carry us through to a meaningful conclusion.

For example, the first item there: it costs us about \$1,500 a meeting, I think. Doesn't it, Louise?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: It does based on full attendance.

MR. CHAIRMAN: My memo to you spells out five meetings in fiscal '93 - Corinne, right? - because the rest is really fiscal '92. My sense is, in accordance with the suggestion made by Bettie Hewes some time ago, that we'd have an interim report and a final report. I think that was an excellent suggestion, and if we could look at it in this context: following April 8, depending on how far we got, we could have an interim report. Assuming the House is to sit mid-April or the third week in April - I don't know; I just hear rumours as to when the House would sit - I'd like very much for us to try and get an interim report in during the first few weeks of the House, and then, God willing, if the House lasts to June 4 or 8, maybe even a final report. That's the sort of sense I have. So if we're talking about a budget and we say \$1,500 per meeting, for example, in terms of attendance, then that's \$7,500 in fiscal '93, I think Louise says, just off the top of my head.

Then we have to consider such things as advertising, and I think we should be advertising and inviting position papers. Then we should be considering inviting people in and deciding whether or not we're going to travel and, if so, where, as well as having, as I say, people other than academics make presentations and then the writing of the report, maybe two reports. It's that kind of thing.

Let's have a discussion just on those items, and I'm going to ask Louise and Corinne to talk to a couple of things. One: that's per diems, I guess, when we say \$1,500?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Yes, and that's when a meeting runs under four hours.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah. Well, it would probably balance out because we don't have full attendance on the one here.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Right, and not everyone claims either.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The other item, then, would be advertising. If you recall, the constitutional committee kind of stubbed its toe initially. I think the Weekly Newspapers Association - I heard the figure of 52 weekly publications somewhere. I don't know how accurate that is.

MR. FOX: That's about right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Initially they were only going to advertise in the daily publications, and that was changed very quickly. So the figures I got with regard to the dailies and weeklies - who produced this information for me, you or Louise?

MRS. DACYSHYN: I did.

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

MRS. DACYSHYN: Uh huh.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You may want to comment on that because it's about \$50,000 for a seven by nine advertisement.

MRS. DACYSHYN: That's correct.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Once in all the daily press and once in all the weekly press: \$50,000. That's a seven by nine ad. I've been advised that you should never advertise a single day; you should always advertise double. I don't know the merits of that argument. That's just in the press. Then if we look at publications, *Alberta Report*: I don't know what their circulation is. Do you know offhand?

MRS. DACYSHYN: No, I don't.

MR. CHAIRMAN: *Maclean's* has an Alberta edition. We'd be talking about \$8,600 if we put an ad in those, and the senior and ethnic publications would be over \$10,000. So you'd be looking at a cost of - what? - \$68,000, and that's really for a single ad. That's a one-time shot. I don't know whether that's a dollar a head for the number of readers or 10 cents a head per number of readers. I know an election campaign costs 30 bucks a vote, but I don't know what that would be. Let's have a little discussion on the advertising aspect and see what you think.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Chairman, we've got two submissions here; right? If I understand you correctly, you suggest that if you were doing a daily, you should run twice.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, that's been suggested. I don't know the credibility of that. I would hope you people could advise me.

MRS. HEWES: They've included in the first one from Parallel an additional amount of \$47,000 to run them twice. I'm wondering: does that mean twice in the weeklies as well as the dailies?

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's no production costs; is that it?

2:25

MRS. DACYSHYN: That's correct because your original ad wouldn't be changed. What you would be doing, if you were running the dailies and weeklies only a second time, would be adding another \$47,000 to the \$49,000.

MRS. HEWES: See, I'd be inclined to do the dailies twice, if we're going to advertise, and the weeklies once. I think people pay more attention to the weekly newspaper and read it perhaps more carefully.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's run a whole week, right? It sits around.

MRS. HEWES: Yeah. You've got a week to do it.  
I'm not sure. Was that cost figure suggesting doing the weeklies twice as well?

MRS. DACYSHYN: That's correct.

MRS. HEWES: Yeah. So that would come down somewhat.

MRS. DACYSHYN: Yes.

The weekly newspapers usually run on Wednesday or Tuesday, and the people at both daily companies that I got the quotes from

are suggesting putting in either a Friday or Saturday ad. That way, then, you are sort of catching everybody. It's almost the same, they're suggesting, as running the same ad twice, because you're catching everybody throughout the week.

MRS. HEWES: The other thing, Mr. Chairman, is that although their costs would be different, I would imagine we are talking about some sort of mail-out to some special groups as well as securing advertising on the free advertising shows that are available for all community activities. That would be anticipated to be done. Is that right?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. For example, the academic institutions would be one. I think the chambers of commerce are very important. There are a variety of organizations who should receive a written request from us. We've had a couple of inquiries now from people about whether or not we would be entertaining presentations.

MRS. HEWES: Uh huh. That has to be strategized for time so that there's some impact timewise, it seems to me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, that raises an interesting question. If we were to have the ad in place and it were to be published, for example, a week today, if it were, how much time would you allow, then, for people to respond? You certainly don't want it to be like in second reading of certain Bills: 48 hours. You've got to allow a fair amount of time. If you're dealing with chambers of commerce, you're dealing with volunteer groups who have civic affairs committees and so on. They've got to have time to put it together. It really stretches it out. So that should be considered when we write them.

MR. FOX: Mr. Chairman, I guess the purpose of advertising is to solicit input from people, and we need to think about what form we want that in. Obviously we'd be soliciting any written submissions that people or groups might want to send to us, and with that in mind we certainly have to give them time to prepare them. I think we might, as well, want to be encouraging them to come and make a presentation to the committee, if we decided for example to have hearings in Lethbridge, Red Deer, and Grande Prairie or Vegreville and Pincher Creek instead of Edmonton and Calgary. I'm not suggesting extensive public outreach in that sense. It's not quite the same issue as the Constitution was but to have an opportunity for people to come and express their point of view on the items that we identify as being of concern to the committee. So if we decide we want to do that, we'd certainly want to put that in an ad as well. You know, people are invited to contact the committee with respect to making an appearance at either one of these two hearings or send their ideas in.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I guess that goes back to Bob's suggestion on the symposium. I think that's an excellent idea as opposed to, say, the public hearings. I don't know the difference, but I think it's very important that we don't try and restrict ourselves to the Edmonton/Calgary corridor. I think that could be a mistake. Then in addition we would have to allow for the printing of public notices in various communities somehow, if we're going to generate interest. Right? I don't know how we'd manage that. Well, let's take Vegreville for an example and say that on Tuesday evening from 7 till 9 and Wednesday afternoon from 2 to 5 we could meet in the Vegreville town hall. We would then somehow have to publicize that. I would assume that would be in the press. It's really not all that easy to generate interest.

MR. FOX: Well, I think this issue is somewhat different from the electoral boundaries thing. I mean, that had an immediate impact on every community, and it wasn't difficult to get people to take an interest in the process and come and make submissions. While I recognize that a good majority of Albertans are concerned about the parliamentary process, I don't think there'd be large numbers of them anxious to make representations to the committee about things like sitting times, election of the Speaker, you know, some of the issues that are on our agenda. So I think we could err by trying to be too extensive, by going overboard. We have to manage the cost of this whole process. I think we need to decide what we're going to do, how we're going to approach this, what we hope to achieve in terms of public input.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, one area that would generate much interest, I think, is access to information.

MR. FOX: That's an issue that more people would take an interest in.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Because the flip side of that is privacy, I'm sure. Rights to privacy and so on would be part and parcel of all of that, and that alone could generate a lot of interest; right?

MR. FOX: Uh huh.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't see any option about the advertising other than refining how it might be done. I think Bettie made a good suggestion: the daily press could have two ads and the weekly press one for the very reason that the weekly press stays around a week at least, whereas the daily press could go out and then be discarded.

What do you think, Bonnie?

MRS. B. LAING: I think that's a good suggestion: have two in the dailies and one in the others.

For timing would you consider having hearings in a month's time? It puts you near the end of April. With the other committee I was on, I know that we gave them a month to send in submissions, that type of thing, because they do need lead-up time. I think if you sort of did a geographic region rather than, you know, several small communities, most of them I believe would still travel to the larger areas to make a presentation.

MR. FOX: You know what we could do: include in the ad a description of the mandate of the committee or principles or objectives – I forget how you describe those six points that we agreed upon – articulate those, invite submissions from people, and put a deadline on that but also include the option for them to request a personal presentation or an oral presentation. Then when we see what kind of feedback we get – if we get three people in the province of Alberta that say that they want to make an oral presentation to the committee, then that's easy to cope with. If there are 50 people and they're all from the same place, well, that's easy to cope with too. Maybe we could devise a public hearing strategy based on the kind of response we get to the request for a submission.

MRS. HEWES: So the ad, Mr. Chairman, would outline what we're here for, what we want to hear from them about, invite them either to say: "I want to send a submission, and I will" or "I want to speak to you" or both. Then we plan the schedule around what comes in.

MR. FOX: Yeah, rather than us planning a schedule that might not relate in any way to what people want us to do.

MRS. HEWES: That's very practical.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: If I may, Mr. Chairman, that's what's happened with other select special committees in the past. Depending on the response from different areas, some areas have been targeted for the committee to travel to, but because there was no response, the travel was canceled or moved to where the response was greater.

MR. FOX: Okay. I'm suggesting that we don't make any plans to travel unless we're convinced that there's a need for that.

MRS. HEWES: Yeah. Easier to bring people here maybe. That may be a choice.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Less expensive too.

2:35

MR. FOX: Yeah. It may be that the only requests for actual oral presentations would come from the Alberta chamber or the Association of Taxpayers or the universities in the province or something like that, and citizens at large would send us their ideas on paper.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So we would say in the ad that we would welcome your written submissions or presentations. After the description in the ad we could add: if you wish to make a personal presentation, please notify. We don't want to commit ourselves without the demand. I don't know the wording of that. You don't want to commit yourself to something you're not prepared . . .

MR. FOX: . . . to follow through on. Like if one person from Fort Chipewyan said that they wanted to make an oral presentation, I don't know if you'd take an entire committee to Fort Chipewyan for one presentation.

MRS. HEWES: No. We invite them to come in and pay their expenses.

MR. FOX: Well, I think we'd have to be very leery of that too. I mean, if we got 200 requests from 200 different communities, we'd have to look at it.

MRS. HEWES: But you can't stop people. Once you invite them to say something, you can't stop them.

MR. FOX: Yeah. We want to do everything we can to facilitate their input.

MRS. HEWES: You can't make it impossible for them to do so. I think that's something we'd have to consider.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Or we could put in the ad: if you wish to make a written submission, et cetera, et cetera, and then leave out the balance. Someone may phone and say, "My preference would be to make an oral presentation." You don't have to have that in the ad. If you got that request, then you could deal with it; right?

MRS. HEWES: I don't want to put words in your mouth, but I don't think that's what you really intended. I think you were

trying to leave those options there in the ad at the outset: that an oral presentation could be available as an option. You have to be a little careful about that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, we could very easily accommodate an oral presentation as long as it occurred on our terms; i.e., we schedule meetings, that's the day we're going to meet, and we make provision in that meeting to hear 10- or 20-minute presentations at this location. That's not difficult at all.

MRS. HEWES: But if I call you from High Level and say, "Mr. Chairman, we want to make an oral presentation from the Better Business Bureau of High Level, and we've got 15 people, will you pay for us?"

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, then, the answer very clearly would be no. I don't think that would be unusual. I don't think we pay for presentations to PUB, you know, which advertises for hearings and is prepared to listen to people. All I'm concerned about is that they have the opportunity to make an oral presentation. I guess my experience tells me that most of the oral presentations would be the reading of their written presentation. At least my experience tells me that.

MR. FOX: Uh huh, with a chance for question and answer.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For dialogue.

MR. FOX: What if we said in the ad that the committee requires and invites input from Albertans, and those who are interested in making a submission to the committee, please contact, and then we've got a phone number and an address. They can either write or phone. If they phone, then they're talking to Corinne or Louise. They say, "I want to make a submission. How do I do that?" You say, "Well, you can either do it in writing or make a request for oral presentation. We haven't decided whether or not the committee will travel within the province or just what form that might take." You know, there's more opportunity for clarification over a telephone than there is in an ad.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: The contact would also sound out the person to see how easily they can travel to meet the committee.

MR. FOX: Yeah, because we're really tight here. You know, let's be practical. We've got a session likely to be called on April 22 with an election perhaps to be called anywhere from one to eight weeks after that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Who knows? That's right.

MR. FOX: Who knows? You know, we've got a job to do in the Assembly, and we can't make a commitment now to some imaginary or perhaps needless travel schedule until we find out what people want, what their needs are with respect to the work of the committee.

MRS. HEWES: It's also possible, Mr. Chairman, that some written submissions may have the kind of innovative idea in them so that we would want to invite them to come. I think that's down the road. I would hope that we'll have some of those kinds of things.

MR. FOX: Right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I guess the dicey area comes back to a comment that Derek just made: we do not determine election dates. If we advertise and create the expectation that people can do the following, we're doing that in all good conscience, in all sincerity. If the government should pull the plug - I'm not expecting the government to hold off on an election because of this committee - I hope people then would understand. You know, that's something we have no control over, right?

MR. FOX: Well, it would be up to Bettie and me to try and foster that understanding in the broader community. Ha, ha, ha. Another broken promise: what a government.

MRS. HEWES: The work of the committee, however, is significant and has got to go on regardless, in my view, of the timing.

MR. FOX: Just an editorial comment, if I might. I think we can identify things on the list here that are clearly in our domain, things that aren't of great interest to the public and don't matter to them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Like Standing Orders.

MR. FOX: Yes. Some of the Standing Orders things about the times during the day that we sit or how we structure the little rules that govern our debate in the House aren't directly relevant to people. We can make decisions and recommendations on some of those things and have some concrete proposals for the Legislature to deal with in relatively short order. Some of the issues are much broader in their scope - like you said, freedom of information legislation, for example - and clearly have a great impact on the people. We need their guidance before we can make recommendations on those. So maybe we can divide the agenda a little bit and deal with the things that we can deal with effectively before session starts and follow up on the others.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That raises another question with me. If you remember Bob Elliott's comments - I think he's away today at NADC or something - the MLA is saying: "Hey, man. You know, I've been here all this time. I belong to the government, and I can't even get to say a bloody word around here." I can always remember that comment, which raises the question of MLAs, our colleagues, making presentations. Now, that would deal mainly with the internal working of the House, I'm sure, as opposed to other issues, so we could accommodate them much easier, I presume. I guess my question is: rather than rely on the caucuses, do we write to all our colleagues or simply copy them with what we're doing and say that if you have suggestions to make and so on? I think it would be a good idea to make sure every member has the opportunity to make a presentation.

MR. FOX: Just send them a copy of the ad in a letter under your signature with a little note: any submissions you might want to make, please forward.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

Now, let's see if we can nail down the advertising, though, in terms of the principle of twice in the dailies, once in the weeklies as opposed to once in both or twice in both. I think that was a good suggestion that Bettie made.

MRS. DACYSHYN: May I say something? The total cost that I've put in about running the ad a second time, the \$47,000, is simply double the cost of the dailies and the weeklies that I put

above. So if you were only going to run the ad twice in the dailies and once in the weeklies, your costs would be somewhere around \$37,000 plus \$20,000, which would be the dailies' amount doubled, if you were going to run it two weekends in a row. So that would reduce the total amount by about \$27,000.

MRS. HEWES: So we just add another \$10,000 to the \$68,000. That'll make it \$78,000.

MRS. DACYSHYN: Right.

MR. FOX: Reduce the cost by \$37,000. Right?

MRS. DACYSHYN: Right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah, I've got \$37,000.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: What about the *Alberta Report*?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, what about the other publications?

MR. FOX: Are we agreed that we need to run twice in the dailies?

MR. CHAIRMAN: What do you think?

MR. FOX: Their biggest circulation day is Saturday; isn't it?

2:45

MRS. DACYSHYN: Yes.

MRS. B. LAING: The *Sun* doesn't do Saturday.

MR. FOX: Right. So it would have to be . . .

MRS. HEWES: Friday.

MR. FOX: Yeah, that's their big edition. It would be Saturday in some papers and Sunday in some others, or alternately Friday, Sunday in the *Sun* papers and Friday, Saturday in others.

MRS. HEWES: Isn't the cost frightful? It's just wild.

MR. FOX: It seems high to me.

We're obliged when advertising, informing Albertans to give everyone the opportunity to see the ad. If they don't get or read a newspaper of any sort, that's beyond our control, I think. I wonder if in the interest of economy we shouldn't just be doing it once, one ad: the Sunday papers for the *Suns* because that's their largest circulation day or Saturday for the *Journal*, the *Herald*, the *Daily Herald-Tribune*, whatever.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There are a couple of other things, I guess, that should be considered. One is that last October as minister of advanced education I had concluded about 10 reviews of the department and was formulating a strategic options paper to deal with some very fundamental questions. In October I booked *Provincial Affairs* for this week to talk about that. Monday I got a call - I wasn't there, so I didn't get the call - from the Premier's office: will Mr. Gogo be doing *Provincial Affairs*? Obviously they had it booked all that time. I assume that the Premier's office was aware that I wasn't the minister; that's a fair assumption. In a long-distance phone call I said: tell them I'll do it. So yesterday I did it for tomorrow night on this committee and

requested that people contact the committee or their MLA with suggestions. That will be broadcast tomorrow night, so that's a freebie. I didn't have time to talk to anybody about it; I had to make that decision.

I did that yesterday. I talked about access to information, election of the Speaker, those kinds of things, in very general terms. I hope it will generate some interest, that people will respond.

The other thing, Derek, is that the print media will probably editorialize too. You know: finally they're going to let fresh air into the dome, or whatever your term was. So I'm inclined to think that in addition to our ad it will generate some interest.

MRS. HEWES: We may get some stuff.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, it may be that one ad is sufficient.

MR. FOX: Yeah. I know that in the weeklies that I deal with in my constituency, I'd write an MLA report for them based on the work of the committee, and other members should be encouraged to do that too. So there are other ways of publicizing the work of the committee.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Chairman, that's a very good thought. Timing is everything. When you send out the letter to our colleagues, you might suggest that they could drum up interest in their constituencies and that if they have methods of advertising the committee's work, they please do so. If every MLA wrote to their local print media and went on the air as you have, I think it would help.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Should we then only go with the one ad? I think that was Derek's point.

MRS. HEWES: I think so. It would save a lot of money.

MR. FOX: Yeah. Give everyone the opportunity to have seen the ad. If they don't avail themselves of that, there's nothing we can do about that. If we get into advertising more than once and going beyond weekly and daily newspapers, it's really hard to set limits because there are so many publications, all of which are worth while in their own right. It would be nice to give them all some business, but where do you draw the line? If you're going to advertise in *Alberta Report*, then you have to advertise in *Maclean's*. If you're going to advertise in *Maclean's*, then what about another magazine? And on and on and on.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I wanted to raise that issue because at law just as they deem you to have received something from a government agency within three days following mailing, it's also law that if it's published in a daily or weekly paper, it's deemed to have been published. No reference to *Alberta Report* or anything else. So that raises the question: should we restrict ourselves only to those that normally would contain legal notices, et cetera, which would be the press? I don't know whether we should be looking at *Alberta Report*. I'm sure Byfield will look at it and say something about it. I don't know where you draw the line. If we talk about *Alberta Report*, *Time*, and *Maclean's*, where do you draw the line? That's your point.

MR. FOX: I think the only place we can reasonably draw the line is with newspapers, dailies and weeklies, because after that it becomes subjective.

MRS. DACYSHYN: One item that might help you make a decision with respect to those three publications is that there is a deadline of April 1 and April 5 for May 3 and May 10 editions of those. So even if we had an ad agreed to, written, and gone by April 1, it wouldn't be published until the May 3 edition of *Maclean's*.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, we just dealt with it then.

MRS. HEWES: I would not be in favour of it anyway, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So we're restricted, then, to the daily and weekly press.

What about the agencies? Would we do this directly with the press ourselves?

MRS. DACYSHYN: No. I believe the best way to go would be with either of the agencies that I've outlined. I have provided at the back copies of the phone book pages so that the committee can choose another firm if they wish. I've only done two summaries, and these recommendations were made by the personnel administration office, the two that I've outlined.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: These people would also prepare the ad and, I would suggest, present it to the committee for approval. You might want to make some changes before they go ahead with this. So they prepare the formal ad. Once it's approved by the committee, they take care of couriering it to all of the papers so none of them are missed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Who have we had the best experience with?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Well, I suggested that Corinne get it from PAO because they do it all the time for the ads they put in for positions they're advertising. It seems that Mr. Nicol is recommending Parallel Strategies.

MRS. DACYSHYN: He says that they've had the best success with them.

MRS. HEWES: It's at a better price.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: At a better price as well, yeah.

MRS. DACYSHYN: Baker Lovick did handle the constitutional reform committee, and they've told me that they have experience writing what Mr. Woronuk called a "nonpartisan ad." That's what he called it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't think writing the ad would be a problem.

Should we go with Parallel Strategies then? I don't think it's all that significant, but that way we're not picking winners and losers. I frankly don't care. Any suggestions? Any comments? I mean, we don't want to send out letters and say, "Do you want to bid again what you've already quoted," and so on. We don't want to get into that kind of nonsense.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Well, the other thing is that that takes time. The committee is short of time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We want to get this done fairly quickly.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: So that person can be contacted immediately, given a copy of the transcript so that they can get a flavour, with the ad presented to the committee hopefully next week. I'm hoping.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, definitely it would be done next week.

MRS. B. LAING: I move that we go with Parallel Strategies as recommended.

MR. GESELL: That's one time in the dailies and once in the weeklies?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MR. GESELL: I just want to supplement that once we get past that, because I think there are some additional things we can do that might be beneficial.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

Any comments on Bonnie's motion?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In favour?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you very much.

MR. GESELL: Mr. Chairman, would you allow me to make some comments? We briefly touched on them. We have to advertise. There's no way around it. My personal experience has been that where an MLA puts out a column or something like that – and I know Derek does that from time to time – that's more effective than advertising, in the majority of papers. So perhaps as a supplement to this – if it were possible, I don't know – you'd like to provide all MLAs with a very brief outline and invitation for people to react to those MLAs. They might actually act as couriers for this committee. I think that may have better impact. If we can make that coincide to some degree with the ad, I think we would have pretty good coverage. I know that works really well in the weekly papers. I'm not so sure about the dailies, but I think it would work there as well.

2:55

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would you want us to do a draft letter to them?

MR. GESELL: I would suggest a very brief draft that they could maybe modify and edit and use. Most MLAs have a good relationship with the papers in their area, and if they were given some basic information that they could pass on, I think that would work pretty well.

MR. FOX: Just further to that, John, do you have a written text of your *Provincial Affairs*?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No.

MR. FOX: You're like me; you just get up and wing it. But someone may be able to make a copy of that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A video.

MR. FOX: Well, just written copy that could be the basis upon which MLAs might want to write an article for their local paper, and weekly papers in the cities, too, like the *Edmonton Examiner*. That could be useful. You know, it would be presumptuous of us to suggest that MLAs all write the same article, but at least the information. They could glean the essence of it from that.

MR. GESELL: It could be put down in point form.

MR. FOX: Yeah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, if I were to do a draft letter, though, with the items in point form – even off our agenda, about forthcoming items.

I think you mentioned this before. The public is not concerned about speaking limits in committee, et cetera. That's an internal kind of thing for members, right? Access to information, election of Speaker by secret ballot, whistle blower protection: that kind of thing I've heard people talk about.

MR. GESELL: Free votes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Particularly free votes. Reading your memo, particularly free votes.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Would you also want the public to write in with comments on other areas that haven't been documented?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah, any other suggestions that are made.

MRS. HEWES: These are for instances?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah.

MR. FOX: Don't forget we have a statement of principle. Or what did we call the terms of reference of the committee that we established early on, the points that we debated?

MR. GESELL: We had terms of reference; then we had six guiding principles or something like that.

MRS. HEWES: No. It's the covering statement.

MR. FOX: Not the one that came from the Legislature as a mandate for the committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Topics for review, weren't they?

MR. FOX: No, no.

MR. GESELL: No. Brian Evans put forward some basic principles that should guide us.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's right.

MR. FOX: And I added one, too.

MR. GESELL: You added one. That's right. So we had six of them, I believe.

MR. FOX: We approved them.

MRS. DACYSHYN: They're in the section called Minutes Index, just behind the minutes. I believe it was the second set of minutes in that, the October meeting.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Chairman, I concur with Kurt's point about requesting our colleagues' help in this process. Can I just take that one step further? Would it be your intent, then, to do the other letters to coincide with these ads and with columns from MLAs; that is, the letters to special-interest groups, letters to councils?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I thought there'd just be a covering letter, and we'd attach the ad.

MRS. HEWES: Sorry; I'm not making myself clear.

At the same time as the ads go into the papers and the MLAs write columns, simultaneously you and this committee will write a letter to every chamber of commerce and all of the other special-interest groups in the province to say that we are doing this. Is that your understanding?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. The difficulty is knowing which groups to write. For example, could we write the Alberta Chamber of Commerce and request they contact their members? Would that be sufficient? I don't know. How many chambers of commerce are there, just to quote? Are there 47, 107, 207? I don't know. The postsecondary institutions almost by definition have a vested interest because of their studies and so on.

MR. FOX: There are 28 of them, aren't there?

MRS. HEWES: Cheap shot.

MR. FOX: Well, there were 29. An honourable recognition is what it is, not a cheap shot.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I appreciate that.

Which other groups? It's identifying those groups.

MRS. HEWES: The AUMA and AAMD and C and so on. Then I expect a call would tell us whether or not they will transfer the information to their individual members or whether we have to.

MR. FOX: Yeah. I would think that some groups, like the Alberta Federation of Labour, for example, and the AUMA, the AAMD and C are organizations that we could write to without feeling we needed to contact . . . Well, maybe that's not accurate either.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's the old story that embarrassment always comes when you forget somebody.

MR. FOX: That's right. I'm thinking about municipalities, for example. It may be that town, county, or village administrations have some ideas that they want to pass on to us.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: I'm sure that the chamber of commerce, for instance, can be contacted and asked to provide the committee with a list of all of their members. We can write to them. The same with other groups.

MRS. HEWES: They would do it for us. They would transfer the information, not us.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: But what if they take a week to do that? We can have it all go out in one shot.

MR. FOX: Chambers meet once a month.

MRS. HEWES: Too slow.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Bettie mentioned simultaneously, when the public first sees the ad.

MRS. HEWES: I just think there's something to be gained by having this in people's minds at the Rotary Club and so on, as they hear it from several sources.

MR. FOX: Boy, when you think about it, if we wanted to send a letter to every municipal government, to every institution of learning or study – and there are some others: the Law Reform Institute, for example, citizens' groups, community organizations. The Rotary Club has an abiding interest in this sort of thing. It gets to be overwhelming.

Don't they have people that glean these ads anyway? I've not worked in a civic administration, but I'm sure that the powers that be in the city of Edmonton would be made aware of an ad like that appearing if the individuals themselves weren't aware. Isn't there someone in the administration that would see it?

MRS. HEWES: Yeah, but I think, Mr. Chairman, Derek, that part of our responsibility here is to tell people that this is going on. Whether or not they respond is their problem.

MR. FOX: Prerogative.

MRS. HEWES: Prerogative. I think it's important that we sort of raise the consciousness in people's minds.

MR. FOX: That the work's going on.

MRS. HEWES: Yeah. That there is a recognized difficulty and that people are working at it. So I see that as a legitimate part of our obligation on the committee.

MR. FOX: Yeah, I'm just trying to cope with the . . .

MRS. HEWES: Numbers.

MR. FOX: Yeah. The logistics of identifying all of the groups to which we'd want to write.

MRS. HEWES: I do think, Mr. Chairman, that there is a benefit by having it happen when the ads are happening, that it doesn't seem to be an afterthought to the ads.

3:05

MR. GESELL: I would tend to agree with that, but I think we actually need to do it. If we are wanting that to coincide and if we are writing to, say, the provincial body which is then distributing to the chambers of commerce, say provincially, who are then distributing, are you asking me to do that two weeks ahead of that time – that deadline we're aiming for, May 3 or whatever it is – so they have sufficient time to distribute to their membership so that they will receive it actually on the day that it will hit the papers and so on? I think it would save us a lot of time if we were to concentrate on the provincial bodies and maybe ask AUMA, for instance, to distribute to their member municipalities.

I've just gone through that process with some changes that I'm proposing to the County Act, and they're quite helpful in doing that. There's no problem there.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Chairman, can I ask a question? Is there any problem in time? That is, did you have to wait until their newsletter came out?

MR. GESELL: Well, I wasn't that concerned with the timing, because there was sufficient time in what I was doing, but we are, I think, limited by time here. We're going to have to make allowances when we send to a provincial body so they actually have the time to distribute and, after that distribution, it then corresponds with the ad that is in the paper and all the other things: it comes together at the same point.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah. I guess I keep coming back to not disappointing people. If we don't do it quickly enough, they don't have the time. The volunteer component is going to take time. Everybody's out, like the ATA, and we don't have staff for all of these things. All we can do is see that it's advertised, and then if we can do things through MLAs, with their weekly calls or whatever, that's in addition to that. I mean, to me it's a great opportunity to reform the parliamentary system. It may catch on of its own volition once it's advertised; I don't know. Calgary city council, Lethbridge council, Edmonton council: I know those people will become involved because their legislation is as a result of our legislation, and I'm sure they'll read into things.

MR. FOX: Well, we have in our shop there mailing lists. If I wanted to send a letter to the mayor and council, reeve and council of every jurisdiction in the province, it wouldn't take much. We push a few buttons, and it starts to happen. You know, we could probably do that. As extensive as we could make that mailing, I guess I do fear that we miss people, but if it's sent directly to the individual organizations, then at least the letter gets read as part of their next agenda. It's on the record, and what they do with it is their own . . .

So some obvious ones are other jurisdictions that deal with matters like this: you know, the municipalities in the province, I would think the institutions of higher learning. Would it be possible to get a list of citizens' groups that advocate for citizens or that do research, like the Law Reform Institute?

MRS. HEWES: Uh huh. It shouldn't be difficult. I'm sure we've got one someplace.

MR. FOX: Yeah. The Law Reform Institute, the Association of Alberta Taxpayers . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, Mr. Kenney has already written us requesting.

MR. FOX: . . . and the Alberta Federation of Labour.

MRS. B. LAING: Even the real estate board often has a political action committee that's interested in these things.

MR. FOX: Sure. The real estate board: that's a good idea. The aboriginal organizations.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Who could produce an inclusive list for us? Who do we know with a research component that could produce this list?



MRS. KAMUCHIK: I was going to suggest that the committee can outline the special interest groups that they would like to invite. We could try to find the sources for these to produce a master list, and then, as Mr. Fox mentioned, it's a matter of inputting the names of the groups and associations and marrying that with the same letter and getting the chairman to sign it. Setting up will take a bit of time, but we could start on it right away. That's the thing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The government departments must have horrendous lists of various groups in Alberta.

MR. FOX: Oh, sure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I mean, it would be this thick, I'm sure.

MR. GESELL: I'm just wondering. When Jim Horsman went around with his task force on the Constitution, I assume he contacted most organizations that would have an interest.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Excellent point.

MR. GESELL: Are we going over information that already exists?

MRS. HEWES: There must be a list someplace.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could we find out, Louise?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Yes, we can and we will.

MR. FOX: I'm just thinking about other organizations. Bettie mentioned the Rotary clubs. There are other service organizations that take an interest in civic affairs but, as well, some agricultural organizations. The Alberta Wheat Pool for one has had to go through the legislative process to get some amendments to the Act that governs their affairs. There are a lot of groups that we should try and notify if we can, and that's probably the best place to start, like Kurt says.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On that note, you recall Premier Klein's new government structure, the standing policy committees. I've attended a couple of those meetings. The structure is that ministers have to make a presentation to the committee and the public, and then they're questioned by members on that standing policy committee. It's generally budgetary items, I guess. Kurt, I don't know which ones you've been at, but I think of the ones I've been at with Dianne Mirosh and so on. The public is in attendance, and I can only quote from the Schumacher one, Bonnie, where he then says to the audience: we've got 12 minutes left before the House sits; are there any questions? They stand up and put questions. It's a very open kind of thing.

There's no doubt in my mind – and this is what I'm leading into – that there are many groups that would like to have the opportunity of questioning officials in a minister's department in the estimates process; i.e., instead of our two-hour limitation in estimates. You might think that's internal; I think it goes well beyond internal. People would like to see that. So that would generate certain groups to say, "Hey, I want to get involved and make a presentation because I want to affect that item." Now, who those people might be I don't know. I think of library boards; I think of a variety of things. To me that's very important.

MRS. HEWES: Yeah. Hospital boards.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, no question. You know: "I've heard from the minister, but I want to talk to those bloody officials that keep signing the letters."

MR. FOX: That was the subject of a motion that I've actually had on the Order Paper about establishing all-party committees to review budget estimates and solicit public involvement.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, if you recall, the McGrath committee in the House of Commons made some excellent suggestions as to the independence of those committees and what they could or should be doing.

Can I ask you about the writing of the ad? Who should write the ad for the publication?

MRS. HEWES: Why don't you tell Parallel what you want it to say and let them write and set it up? They're the experts at it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MR. FOX: Tell them what our mandate is. Give them those six principles.

MR. GESELL: But we are going to be a little bit vague about the verbal presentations, I gather. We're going to leave that open so that if we get the requests, we can handle them. If we don't get the requests, we don't necessarily have to have them.

What about the symposia? I'm looking at the things we need to do and the time frame that we have to do it in, and it's a crunch. It's going to be very difficult, particularly if these ads are going out in early May. Are we still thinking about the symposia?

MR. FOX: You mean early April for the ads.

MR. GESELL: I thought if we get it in in early April, it would be published in May.

MR. FOX: No; that's for *Maclean's* magazine.

MR. GESELL: Oh, I'm sorry. That was for the magazines. Okay.

Well, what is the time frame for publishing for the newspapers?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We could have it next weekend, couldn't we?

MR. FOX: When's our next meeting?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Wednesday.

MR. FOX: If we approved an ad on Wednesday, it might be tight to get it out for weekly newspapers during the week of the 5th.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: If it's not approved until next week by the committee, then it would be the following week if they get it by Friday, Saturday. I think with the dailies it's not as big a problem.

3:15

MR. FOX: Some of the weekly newspapers have an insertion deadline of Thursday for publication the following Monday. If we approve an ad on Wednesday, it wouldn't be . . .

MRS. KAMUCHIK: They could probably fax, so there's that. That would save time.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: But it could be a week later.

MR. FOX: Yeah, it could be a week later, which bumps into Good Friday and Easter Monday. We could have the daily ads, you know, ready likely for April 3 and 4, but it would be very difficult to have . . . Well, maybe the advertising company can advise us of that. Maybe they're capable of getting an ad in its approved form on Wednesday and having it out on Thursday. I suppose they should have that ability, for Pete's sake; they want \$1,200 for courier fees or whatever to do it.

MR. GESELL: For ads, I think that will function. We still have to keep in mind that we want to coincide things here. We also need to prepare and distribute that little item for the MLAs.

The point I was getting to is: if we are talking about the details of what is going to be in the advertisements and if the idea of holding symposia is still with us, it needs to go in there. Otherwise, the time frame is going to be too limited, unless we are moving away from the symposia.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I thought we were going to wait and see what reaction we got.

MR. GESELL: And then try to do it. I'm just wondering whether that is possible, because then what do we do? Do we advertise that?

MRS. B. LAING: Were we not going to just ask experts in the field? That was my idea of the symposia.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, we're coming to that item further down: special interest groups that we'd like to specifically hear from.

MRS. B. LAING: Yes. It's more our request, isn't it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Corinne?

MRS. DACYSHYN: There's something that I should say. I'm not sure what I missed exactly; I had to leave for a moment. If we had an ad that the committee agreed to by even next Wednesday, they need 48 hours to put it in the daily papers. So if we had an ad agreed to on Wednesday, it could be in next Saturday's paper.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Saturday, Sunday.

MRS. DACYSHYN: The 3rd. Right; the Sunday *Sun* and the Saturday *Journal* or whatever. The weekly papers need a full week. If we had something ready to go next Wednesday, it wouldn't be in for two Wednesdays. So it wouldn't actually get in the weekly paper until April 14.

MR. FOX: Yeah. A lot of them publish on the Monday and Tuesday, so the week of April 12 would be the earliest.

MRS. DACYSHYN: That's right. The Monday being Easter Monday, that might be another problem; I'm not sure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, we have a tremendous number of items that we can deal with without the public; i.e., the legislative process in terms of the Standing Orders and all that. We've got a good workload of our own, you know, so it's not as though the committee won't have a lot to do. What we want to do today is finalize what I'll present to Members' Services Committee in

terms of the budget, so I want to look at the cost more than the others, not that the others aren't important.

If we could go on to committee travel and travel for invited guests. Originally, if you recall, we thought a trip to Ottawa and side trips. I think Queen's Park and Quebec were suggested. My suggestion would be that we build into the budget what we want to do. If we cannot do it, then it's not a problem. If, on the other hand, we don't build it in and want to do it, then heaven help us. We're not going to be able to do it. Now, we have projections here as to travel. What I think we should do is try and decide about the traveling for cost purposes for the budget. If I could recap, for example, we're talking roughly \$50,000 for advertising, Corinne?

MRS. DACYSHYN: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We may want to pad that a bit; I don't know.

MRS. DACYSHYN: I would say that if the experts are invited to meet with the committee, say next Wednesday even, there will probably be more production costs than we see here. This was for basic editing of an ad as opposed to meeting with the committee to write it.

MR. FOX: Well, my sense would be that we pass the information on to them that this is what we want in the ad, and they'd better have it written by next Wednesday.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Maybe they can get in touch with the chairman.

MR. FOX: I mean, I could write an ad by tomorrow. I do it all the time. They should be able to present us with a proposal for the ad just for our approval and insertion. That should be more than covered by what their estimate is to produce an ad - \$920 to \$2,000 - shouldn't it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do we budget a trip to Ottawa and those side trips? Does everybody have a copy of this projection of the travel costs, Louise?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Yes, they do, Mr. Chairman.

MR. FOX: Mr. Chairman, I've expressed my feeling about the travel before in previous meetings.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Bringing people here?

MR. FOX: Yeah. I don't think it would be useful, given the costs involved, for the committee to travel out of province. We have to recognize that budgets are tight. I'm impressed with the amount of information we've been presented with by Parliamentary Counsel and Louise and Corinne and other sources on just what some of the practices are in other jurisdictions. I think we can access that information without traveling. I know it would be useful to meet with other parliamentarians and talk, but if we can identify what we think we need to know and who we need to find it out from, we could probably be a lot more efficient with managing our budget if we didn't travel outside the province of Alberta.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Chairman, I concur, with some qualification. It seems to me that communications the way they are, we can find out what we need to know. I think there's a possibility that down

the road we may find that we want one or two members to make a move to Victoria or Ottawa to find out something, so perhaps you'd like to consider putting in an amount that would be there if necessary, but make sure that everybody understands that it's not projected at this time. As yet I don't have in my own mind any questions that I really am clear that I want to ask in Ottawa that I can't ask over the telephone.

MR. CHAIRMAN: My fear, though, is that if we don't include something – if you recall, Kurt made the point very strongly at a previous meeting that if we were going to meet with anybody, we meet with them while they are in session and not when they're not in session.

MRS. HEWES: Exactly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: My concern, going to Members' Services to get a budget approved, is if we don't include some travel. We don't have to take the travel, but if we include the travel for budget purposes and have it approved and choose not to go, fine; we don't go. I mean, surely we're not going to go because there's a budget to go, but we will make that decision. We may say, two people go here or two people go there, and that can be accommodated. I'm just concerned that if we make that decision, I don't want to be fighting with Mr. Kowalski and company to try and get a special warrant for \$2,300.

MRS. HEWES: Well, that's why I would suggest that you put something in with that kind of qualification added to it and perhaps cover yourself for maybe two committee members to Ottawa, two committee members to . . . You could do it all at once.

MRS. B. LAING: Yukon is one that's very different, isn't it?

3:25

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, when we come to election of the Speaker, for example – I don't know if we'll get to it today – if you recall, Ontario has a system; Ottawa has a system. Others have a quasi-system. It may be that someone said, "Why don't we send someone to Queen's Park and talk to whoever elected Mr. Warner there?" I don't know that. You know, we build in \$10,000 for travel; I don't know what even a guesstimate is. We can have Louise crunch the figures in such a way that next week, because that would give us some breathing time, we would have a rough figure. I could justify it to the committee that we would plan to do the following, and if we don't do it, we don't do it. That also raises the whole question of having people come here and what that cost might be, which will be these costs in reverse, I take it.

MRS. HEWES: Except that if you were sending committee members, you might send three, for instance the chairman and two others, and the reverse would perhaps be just one. It might be wise to put in a travel amount, say one round-trip Toronto-Ottawa-Quebec for three people. What would that amount to? What are we talking about there?

MR. FOX: Yeah. We've got several options here. I agree with Bettie's suggestion that we look at it. What if you devised one trip where two members did the Ottawa-Toronto return, another two members did the Ottawa-Quebec City-Charlottetown return? Let's say six of nine members, two going one trip, two going another, two going another, just to see what that would cost in

terms of the return trip – three days, two nights' accommodation – and then we know what we're dealing with. Is that reasonable? All of these trips seem to be routed through Ottawa. Maybe a trip like a Regina-Winnipeg thing or a Vancouver thing just in terms of gathering information.

MRS. HEWES: My inclination, Mr. Chairman, is that we're not going to be doing any of it.

MR. FOX: Yeah. None of us will have to.

MRS. HEWES: I don't think we're going to be doing any of it, but apart from that, I sympathize with the position you're in in presenting a budget. I think you want to cover the exigencies.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Louise, why don't you bring something back next week on the basis of just what Derek suggested?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: So that would be two members traveling to various points. What about what Mrs. Hewes also suggested, that travel could also be to cover for the payment of travel expenses if the committee was inviting someone from Ottawa, one or two people? So that would add to . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: But it may be doubling of the cost.

MRS. HEWES: I think we have to also put in an amount if we wanted to have somebody from our own province, someone who presented an excellent brief and we want to talk to them. We'd want to be able to say, yes, we can accommodate you.

MR. FOX: Yeah. We could have a ballpark figure for travel. And your political assessment is exactly right: it's not likely, given circumstances, that a lot of this will occur.

MRS. HEWES: I don't think the need's there.

MR. FOX: Yeah, but in the event that it's deemed necessary for either a couple of members to fly to Ottawa and Toronto or, alternatively, to bring someone here from Ottawa and Toronto or to use that money for the committee to travel to Lethbridge and Medicine Hat because there were a great number of submissions that came from those areas and we want to hear from those people, at least then we've got a budget to manage, I suppose.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I can't predict, but if we build in \$6,000 to \$10,000 or something – if you'll work it out for next week on the basis of these suggestions – then I think that if we want the Clerk of the House of Commons or Parliamentary Counsel or so on to come here . . . I'm only thinking of a unique thing that operates somewhere implemented in the McGrath report. I don't know what the hell's been done. I've read the report. It may be that our judgment is: let's send two people down to talk to so-and-so or bring so-and-so out here. So as long as we have that figure next week that I can then take the following week to the Members' Services Committee, it's all right.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Right. I take it, then, that there will be no staff traveling with the committee?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We wouldn't be recording anything, and we shouldn't need babysitting.

MR. FOX: We haven't decided that the committee would travel. In fact, some of us feel the committee shouldn't travel. There may

be a member or two of the committee traveling on occasion or, alternatively, people coming here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, build enough in, and then let's thrash it out next week. It's just what you've got to have instead of a single figure.

MR. FOX: Do you know anybody who might be fluent in French that could be of use to members of the committee elsewhere?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: If I think hard enough, I might be willing.

MR. FOX: I was just asking.

MRS. HEWES: We sort of need four bullets, Mr. Chairman. We travel there, however many; they travel here. Then in the province we travel there; they travel here.

MR. FOX: Intraprovincial.

MRS. HEWES: Yeah, I guess. We sort of need four items in it, I think: ballpark costs.

MR. FOX: Yeah, and that gives us an outreach budget to manage, to try and make the best use of.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Who would write our report?

MR. FOX: Kurt.

MR. GESELL: I beg your pardon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Who did the constitutional report?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: I believe it was Garry Pocock, who was attached to FIGA, and then it was edited by someone, an outside person. I recall the Senate committee had employed the services of Cathy Krysa. So it's been done by outside people who would attend the meetings and put the report together for the committee's approval.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We should have someone perusing the minutes and so on.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Right. I'm sure there are many individuals out there that are qualified. I just know of these two. I know Mr. Pocock couldn't do it. He's now the ADM for constitutional affairs at FIGA.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But as to the budget indication, any idea what it would cost? What did it cost for the other, do you know?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: I have no idea. It's been such a long time since the Senate committee sat and did its report. I guess it would depend on the number of meetings, how extensive the report is expected to be.

MR. FOX: Yeah. I would think the preparation of the report is not . . . You know, we don't want something that's elaborate in any sense. It just needs to be a report from the committee that outlines briefly our deliberations from the process, but more importantly the recommendations. I would expect a lot of our recommendations would be tailored toward either immediate changes to our Standing Orders or Bills that may be introduced.

It would be nice if the expertise to do it was in-house, because someone familiar with the procedures of the Legislature would have a much easier time making the recommendations conform with the language commonly used.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have that built into the motion that was passed by the House, you know. The reality is that (a) if we're going to have to have a report, we should have someone hired to write it or someone in-house can do it. I'm thinking really of two things: one, if there's any budgetary requirement, we'd better include it in the budget; and two, we should be contacting someone to get them under way to make the framework for it. The publication and the printing and so on: it can be a simplistic report. Again, it can be xeroxed. We don't want to frame something for posterity.

MR. FOX: Ideally, I suppose it would be something Parliamentary Counsel could do, but with a session coming up, they're going to be overwhelmed with their immediate demands.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: That's the fear we have.

MRS. HEWES: Perhaps a conversation with them would be useful, Mr. Chairman. They may have a stable of people they call on from time to time to do this kind of thing that either are in-house that they know . . .

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Parliamentary Counsel?

MRS. HEWES: Uh huh.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: No, I'm afraid not.

MRS. HEWES: They don't have any such thing?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: No, unfortunately we have very few resources.

MRS. HEWES: They may know some people, then, that could be seconded from someplace else.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Why don't we ask for opinions?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Sure. In fact, the members of the committee may have knowledge of people they can draw on.

MR. FOX: The difficult thing here is that there's a principle too. I don't know. We solicited input from people on the advertising, so we at least had a range of things to look at. Going out to hire somebody is fairly arbitrary unless we have some way of soliciting or inviting quotes. I don't know; it's hard to deal with.

3:35

MRS. KAMUCHIK: I think any invited quotes involves time: getting in touch with people, finding a list of people to invite for submissions. As well, not knowing how extensive the report is. Is it going to be an interim report? How is it to be made up? They would base their quote . . .

MR. FOX: Why don't we try and find out if there's anybody who works for the AG's department or with FIGA? I mean, I don't know what the current legislative demand or departmental demand is in those two departments. I know if we were doing - and we've done stuff like this in our caucus where we make a report

on good government recommendations, do Bills. Well, our research staff does it. You know, they're not that difficult to do for people with some experience, and it may be there's someone in the minister's department who could be seconded.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Should we second a researcher, for example?

MRS. HEWES: That's right. I've got a couple of great people, but keep your hands off, please.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, let's ask Parliamentary Counsel first.

MR. FOX: It couldn't come from any caucus. I think it would have to come from a department.

MRS. HEWES: Just kidding, Derek.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: That's a problem. I'm sure the government caucus also has some excellent researchers too, so if you want to keep it apolitical . . . I know in our area we don't have anyone.

MRS. B. LAING: Education has some writers.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pardon me, Bonnie.

MRS. B. LAING: The Department of Education has some writers that they hire on a job contract. Perhaps we could get some names from them as well.

MR. FOX: But if it's someone already in the employ of the Legislative Assembly, then it's not . . .

MRS. HEWES: Additional costs.

MR. FOX: Well, not additional costs. It's not a matter of us making some judgment about who to hire without really having . . .

MRS. HEWES: But if I were going to write the report, I'd want to be here now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Exactly.

MR. FOX: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So let's get some advice.

MR. FOX: Our meeting agenda is not that onerous. You know, as the solutions come, it's going to be primarily the recommendations that need to be . . .

MRS. KAMUCHIK: When you mention submissions, some of them may be very extensive. Would the committee want these summarized? What's happened in the past is that they're down to one page. The constitutional reform committee had seconded John McDonough from the Department of Health, and he went and reviewed all the submissions and shortened them down to a few important points. That would save committee members time in reading especially the longer ones. Some would be short and to the point.

MR. FOX: John was with the library research team?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: He was, yes.

MR. FOX: Yeah. Well, that's great. Surely we've got to be able to find someone that has, you know, 50 hours to put into this project. It wouldn't take that long.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Maybe the library knows. I'll check. Because they used to have . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. We've got roughly the framework. What we want to do next Wednesday is finalize a budget I would present to Members' Services. We may have other members at that meeting for their suggestions.

We've only got about 20 minutes. Number 5, Suggestions as to Presentations from Special Interest Groups. We talked a little bit about this earlier. If we had specific special interest groups in mind, we could invite them. Now, we talked about this earlier. We've had two letters so far - they're in your binders - from people who have an interest or want to know what we're all about. How do we approach special interest groups, and what do we mean by special interest groups?

MR. FOX: Well, we outlined a number of them in our discussion earlier. If we can send a letter from you to them with a copy of the ad, it invites their submissions. I think that's the best we can do. You know, we need to look at the timing of the mailing of that letter with respect to likely dates of insertion for the ads and the time line we want to set with respect to having received their submissions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Speaking of submissions, did we get a thing from Graveland yet, the media? If you recall a meeting with him, he was going to submit.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: That's right.

MR. FOX: No, he didn't.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I've never seen anything. That's interesting. Of course, there is restricted access. At least I thought . . .

MRS. HEWES: Yes, I thought we'd have heard. That's funny.

MR. FOX: Are you suggesting we have a press conference to chastise him in the Confederation Room?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Do I take it, then, the number of meetings for the committee will be as outlined in the notice for budgeting purposes?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, that's phase one. If I could draw your attention to our undated notice, it carries us through to April 8. We would at least double that number of meetings. I just don't know when. I don't know what your schedules are like.

MR. FOX: Well, next Wednesday. We've obviously got that meeting scheduled and need to make some final decisions with respect to advertising and solicited input.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And budget.

MR. FOX: Then there are three more the following week. Is that the extent? Oh, no. One on Thursday the 1st . . .

MRS. B. LAING: One on the Friday.

MR. CHAIRMAN: First and 2nd.

MR. FOX: Friday the 2nd?

MRS. HEWES: There are three next week.

MR. FOX: Oh, I'm sorry.

MRS. HEWES: I've got three the following week.

MR. FOX: Because some of what we're doing relies on public input, we will not have received any of that, and we've got five meetings scheduled. It may be that we can dispense with things within our realm here that we can deal with without using all that time. Just in terms of these meetings, I have a concern that we've only scheduled two hours for meetings. I'm not sure that's the most productive use of our time, speaking as someone who travels from outside the city.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, in talking to members, I tried to build in such a way that if they had other commitments, they could spring up a minimum of two hours, tying in with other meetings. Both Bonnie and Kurt are on standing committees that meet alternate weeks; plus, as you know, Bonnie is the chairman of the Calgary caucus. Bonnie is also the chairman of the Private Bills Committee, and they are now looking at things coming in that deal with private bills. Kurt, as you know, is doing this new special project. What's that called?

MR. GESELL: M and E.

MR. CHAIRMAN: M and E.

MR. GESELL: Machinery and equipment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah, the equipment tax.

I know opposition members are busy too. My difficulty with the party Whip, who also allocates responsibilities, is to try and get members. He and I had a discussion. He said if you can restrict the time to two hours, they're going to be there the same day anyway, or hopefully . . . But I don't know how that applies, especially with the session coming on, to rural members who schedule pre-session meetings around their constituencies. Fortunately, Vegreville's not as far away as Medicine Hat or someplace else.

MR. FOX: I guess we all have other obligations, including committee obligations. Next Wednesday, for example, Legislative Offices is scheduled from 9 to 4, which is when our next meeting is scheduled from 2 to 4. I would much prefer, say, in the week of the 6th, 7th, and 8th . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Put a whole day in?

MR. FOX: . . . to try and find a day we could devote, because the discussion becomes more coherent, I think, if we really wrap our brains around some of these issues and try and come up with concrete recommendations rather than two hours here and two hours there and two hours the next day. I'd rather adjust my schedule such that I don't have to be in Edmonton every day that week, for example.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The rewrite of Standing Orders for members of this committee may be the biggest single item, not in principle

but in terms of detail, because that's where I sense most of the frustration from members is coming from: about speaking limits, about this, about this, about this. I'm sure that's going to engender a lot of discussion around here. I don't know how much time it will take. We're going to have a list of special-interest groups.

3:45

MR. FOX: John, I think this committee will have to meet during session. You know, the input will be requested mid-April for sometime in May. We're certainly going to be in session. Whether we'll be out in a hurry again is anyone's guess. So the committee will be meeting during session to at least decide where we go from there and what we do with the input that's been submitted. We can take that into consideration as well, trying to free up time during session, and that has somewhat different budget implications for the committee's work.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, you know, after my years as minister and Deputy Government House Leader, I can't believe how much time I have now that I never had before. I mean, even here in the House I was kind of at a loss. I couldn't believe it: two hours without a commitment. I never experienced that.

Well, I think now we're really talking about attendance. I know I am booked the week to be here. Is Bob Elliott on Leg. Offices?

MR. FOX: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He's on Members' Services.

MR. FOX: I'm the only one here on that committee.

MRS. B. LAING: Is that on Wednesday the 7th?

MR. FOX: Wednesday the 31st, but we start at 9, and it is difficult for me to get away from that meeting to come to this one. I'm just thinking about, you know, the five meetings after that, all of which are scheduled for two hours. I'm suggesting that if we could find the time . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I thought you'd appreciate the variety.

MR. FOX: The variety, yeah.

You end up spending more time driving in and back than meeting. Maybe I'm talking out of turn here, but that's just how I feel. I don't know how other people feel if we could schedule one day and a longer period of time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I know in talking to our colleagues, it was really their suggestion that if we could restrict this part, like cabinet will be over. Those are the kinds of comments I got back from two of our members. They'd squeeze it in, so we'd kind of schedule that. My objective is to make sure we have a quorum for the committee.

I want to go back very quickly to the advertiser that's going to draft this ad and so on. We should give them an idea as to date for submissions in the ad. That's one thing we should do. Are there any suggestions for guidance to these people as to dates for submissions that we'd list in the ad?

MR. FOX: Well, the ad would appear on or about April 14, best case scenario, so do we time it for the daily papers for the 17th and 18th?

MR. CHAIRMAN: For publication?

MR. FOX: Yeah, for the daily papers.

MRS. HEWES: Well, the trouble with going a week ahead of that is that it's Easter weekend. People are out of town.

MR. FOX: Yeah. We could probably get the dailies teed up for April 3 and 4, but what's the point of doing them 10 days in advance of the weekly newspapers?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: In order to time the mailing to the special-interest groups, the more time we have the better. We may have to pull lists from various sources, and we're also limited in staff.

MRS. HEWES: Yes, indeed. I understand.

MR. FOX: Why don't we target insertion in weekly newspapers for the week of April 12 and dailies for the weekend of the 17th and 18th?

MRS. HEWES: That's good. I agree.

MR. FOX: And you normally allow a month? Is that what you're saying?

MRS. B. LAING: We did with the human sexuality curriculum comments. We found a lot came in either right at the end or within a few days after the deadline, and because of the sensitivity of the subject, we took everything that came in regardless of how late it came in. That tended to happen, so we gave them a month to make the submission.

MR. FOX: A month seems like a long time given our constraints.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, deadlines are certainly motivators, so they're important.

MRS. HEWES: And if people want more time, by and large they will call and say, "We're going to be another week."

MR. GESELL: I'm wondering, Mr. Chairman: 30 days sounds like a reasonable period to me, but sometimes people – and maybe Bonnie has an answer – wait until the last minute and then send it in. So if we were to make it two weeks, we might be better off. I'm not quite sure. But that seems like a relatively short period of time to allow people, and it wouldn't be acceptable. We obviously would see a request for an extension right there and then at the beginning of it.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: They might give up even before trying too.

MRS. B. LAING: You might also get some negative public reaction for too short a period of time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So are we saying 30 days then?

MR. GESELL: I think 30 days would be reasonable.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I like Bettie's point, and that is if someone says, "Hey, we're in the middle of preparing this and we haven't got it ready; could we get it in a few days after?"

MRS. HEWES: We're going to say yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sure.

MR. FOX: Then that would be Friday, May 14. The election's being called on May 17, so maybe you're right.

MRS. HEWES: I don't think it's . . . I've got a wager on the 31st.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I also notice you've never won a lottery.

MR. FOX: I won a ham at a bingo.

MRS. HEWES: That's like cannibalism.

MR. FOX: Really?

MRS. HEWES: A ham?

MR. FOX: A ham at a bingo.

MRS. HEWES: A Fox eating a ham: that's cannibalism.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't think we should get into the election of a Speaker by secret ballot. The words are a little misleading because we've always had an election of the Speaker. It's just the method. I like the term "election of Speaker by secret ballot." I think that's a very important term.

MR. FOX: Our process really has been an acclaimed appointment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah, but by definition there's always been an election of a Speaker, you see, and it's kind of misleading, as though we don't elect a Speaker. I just like the words "by secret ballot." That was an excellent exercise in the House. With the Deputy Chairman of Committees it took two ballots, didn't it, or three?

MR. FOX: Two, I think. It was fun, yeah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Raised some eyebrows.

MR. FOX: If I recall the process, the nomination of the Speaker is ratified by members, but if there's only one candidate, it's not really an election. It's an acclamation; right?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right.

MR. FOX: I mean, how can you vote when there's . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, in our system, as you know, you had to be nominated within the Assembly. The other very unique thing, unlike the House of Commons, is that Speaker Carter says it's mandatory for everyone to vote. In the House of Commons it's not mandatory; it's optional under the federal House rules. Here he was going by Standing Orders though. The question was being put and everybody in the House, if you recall, had to vote. That was unique, and that's the kind of detail we get into. I don't know how you can make it mandatory, because if you recall, no motion can be entertained once an election is called. Under the House of Commons' rules no motion is entertained in the House. Even a motion to adjourn is not in order because, for the sake of argument, the Chair is defeated. I mean, there are some different things.

MR. FOX: So in effect we would be trying to come up with things we can properly make recommendations on without the benefit of significant public input in our meetings over the next two weeks. Perhaps that would be the basis of an interim report to the Assembly within the first few days of session, and the rest would wait until some time later.

3:55

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I was going to raise that question with you. We got a letter from Mr. Kenney and David Elliott. We have those two items. I was going to ask the committee if rather than wait for our ad to go, we could decide this next Wednesday, because we could contact these people and say, "We're prepared to hear you if you want to make a presentation on this given date" even though the ad is not in. I was going to raise that right now.

MR. FOX: Yeah. You mean to extend an invitation to people who have already made a request of the committee.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Chairman, in addition to that – and I have no objection to it – would it be your intention to put on the next agenda that we try to go at the Standing Orders? I think there are some things in Standing Orders that could be corrected that we could even have in place this session. It just could be agreed to in a government motion to change them. Just do it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, yes, and it would obviate, even if this committee agreed to it and made a suggestion, for example, the House leaders. Then by motion of the House, which I presume would be a temporary Standing Order change or something, we could accommodate that, like time limits on speaking or something like that. Yeah, there's no reason why we . . .

MRS. HEWES: No reason why we can't do that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. No reason at all. That would mean we'd have to wait for the interim report, you know. But we could do a lot of that if we can get agreement of caucuses. I mean, presumably you'd have to go to each caucus.

MRS. HEWES: There are a few things the House leaders have talked about for several years now, the members' statements and so on, but I think there is substantial agreement.

MR. FOX: Yeah, members' statements, sitting times, et cetera, et cetera.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Is there any other business for today? We're within four minutes.

I'd like you to keep your binders with you rather than you taking them, Corinne. Is it a problem for people taking them back to their offices?

HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Then we will meet next Wednesday. Could we have a motion to adjourn? So moved by Kurt.

[The committee adjourned at 3:58 p.m.]