

2:11 p.m.

Friday, April 2, 1993

[Chairman: Mr. Gogo]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll call the committee to order. A couple of administrative matters before we get under way. Because of the frequency of our meetings we don't have the minutes of yesterday's meeting and the previous meeting, so once they are available, I think if people can find the time to catch up on what we talked about – one of the items is that we finalized the ad. Do we have a copy for Mr. Evans?

MRS. DACYSHYN: Yes, I do. I did bring them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, a copy for everybody.

Brian, I'm taking 500 of those to the convention because I think people there should have them.

MR. EVANS: Uh huh.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm signing 500 letters today which are going out to all municipal districts and counties, the cities, MLAs, and ministers, asking if in any way you can further – like a weekly column or whatever to advise people and get things under way. Fifty-three reeves of the municipal districts and counties, all 106 chambers of commerce, all the Rotary clubs at the suggestion of Derek Fox, the postsecondary system, the Federation of Labour, the Building Trades Council, aboriginal organizations, agricultural organizations, the ATA, the Council on Aging – from Bettie Hewes – the seniors secretariat, and the Alberta Wheat Pool. Corinne has gone to a lot of work here to get people to identify and provide mailing lists. We had two individual requests: one from a David Elliott, a solicitor, and another from the Ombudsman. What I think we'll be seeing as more and more names are fed in to Corinne, suggestions by members, is that there are more letters going out. In our ad you see the cutoff date; we felt that was important.

We also felt, again at the suggestion of Bettie, that although this is a select special committee capable of making decisions, we wouldn't be making any final decisions on anything other than I guess in principle until we'd heard from various people. For example, we've spent a considerable amount of time on the question of the election of the Speaker of the Assembly and tossed around a variety of ideas. Because you don't have the minutes, I'll just share with you that the feeling was that every member elected to the Assembly should be eligible to be Speaker of the Assembly. We didn't put in any formal nominating process – we're going to wait here – but one thing I felt strongly about was if we could work out a time period whereby when members are sworn in they could then gather and in a secret ballot elect their Speaker and deputy sometime before the Legislature sat so that the Speaker could then be trained or whatever, in case it's a novice member who has no knowledge and so on. We had a great deal of discussion on that.

As you know, in your binder are the present systems. We went all the way from the British House of Commons with the senior member, the person with the longest service, conducting the election, unless they had a vested interest, to having the chief justice run the election. We had a great variety of suggestions made. I found that extremely meaningful. Although we hear that the public wants election of the Speaker, frankly, it's only when the Speaker gets in hot water that you hear that, and it's primarily from the editorials. As Bob Hawkesworth said, we do elect the Speaker. Kurt spent some time on this. It's just the whole

question of the secret ballot and the process: what I thought we would deal with today.

The other administrative matter was next Thursday, the 8th. Bonnie Laing had made a suggestion that, you know, if we're going to meet, let's meet in the morning and the afternoon. The difficulty with that is that we have two members of cabinet who have major commitments. However, we're going to do that next Thursday, the 8th. We'll go from 10 to 12, and then we'll have a working lunch and go from 1 to 3. We talked about that yesterday. Because the next day is Good Friday, it would give members a chance to get away. Then we'll take either 15 minutes for lunch and work or an hour for lunch. I think we can judge that. We won't discuss any meaningful business, obviously, if a lot of the members aren't here. I don't see how we can. It would be a novel experiment to try that, a working lunch in here.

As I said, the minutes will be coming out. Corinne has been kind of up to her ears. When do we expect them?

MRS. DACYSHYN: The transcripts are ongoing. I'm not sure whether I'll have the minutes done for the next meeting or not. With the list that I've been working on, I don't know.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's just that the minutes are so much easier to get through than the transcripts. Okay.

If you recall, there are 37 items. We'd selected eight for discussion, and we didn't give them a pecking order. Hon. minister, Brian, the feeling was that we should put those items in the ad we publish to attract public attention. Clearly, free votes or party discipline, that kind of thing, are a major item in the eyes of the public because they see or perceive that party discipline is so strong that when government says something members jump up and say "Aye, aye; three bags full." I think the free vote – maybe there's another term for it – is a very important item, so I draw your attention to the background that you have with you in terms of both the McGrath study and report and others. I think we should talk about that a bit today so we get a sense of what we mean by so-called free vote without the so-called whips being put into place.

Just by way of introduction, I'm sure we're all cognizant of the fact that under our system, which is the party system, the party electing the greatest number obviously forms the government. The head of that party becomes its Premier or Prime Minister. Under our British parliamentary system any budgetary matter is construed by most people to be a vote of confidence in the government. We should probably talk about that a little bit. No one for a moment believes that by implementing free votes the intent is ever to defeat the government. A classic example. This last summer the British House of Commons in England proposed to raise a member's pay by \$19,000. The government strongly opposed it. Obviously, of its 650 members the government controlled the House, yet the House of Commons passed that contrary to the government. I think that's an excellent example of when members speak.

What a lot of people are not aware of, in my view, is that cabinet sits at the wish and the will of its caucus. We've never discussed that around here, although I was reminded of that when I was in cabinet by a couple of people who weren't. I think Bob Hawkesworth would know that under the previous government in Australia the caucus chose the cabinet. The only say the Prime Minister had was the portfolio names. If there were 19 cabinet positions, the caucus chose them. In negotiation between its caucus and its Prime Minister, the portfolios were filled with those people the caucus chose. A very unusual situation.

Anyway, if I can refer you to the whole question of free votes in your binders, let's just have a general discussion as to what we mean by it, what the feelings are. Hon. minister, I recognize that for you and Halvar this could be kind of a sensitive issue. I'm sure we all appreciate the fact that when you're a member of the Executive Council, your views and your expressions might necessarily have to be different than if you're not. I'm not putting words in your mouth, but as chairman I'll understand if you're reluctant to comment on various aspects. I just say that because it's a matter of public record as to what's said around here, and I don't want the public record being quoted with a minister of the Crown having said certain things to the embarrassment of his or her colleagues, that's all.

Let me stop here and see what the discussion is. The Liberal Party I know has advocated the free vote for some time. I don't want to quote the position of the New Democratic Party. Perhaps you want to lead off, Bettie, with comments.

2:21

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Chairman, yes, you know we have talked about it, and I think we're all aware of the current public sentiments that make this a significant item on our reform agenda. I think all of us put in something about it in our wish lists, that we have to find a way that will free up the debate and discussions in the House without compromising the platforms of the various parties and without compromising the potential for a nonconfidence vote in the government.

Reviewing it, Mr. Chairman, I think the notion of the three-line whips is one that we can look at as a model; that is, if Bills are categorized, then it's clear to all that one whip is a Bill that is not considered a motion of defeat, is not considered a motion of nonconfidence in the government, giving individual members an opportunity to vote as their constituency or their conscience directs. The next level of course would be where there is some discussion in a caucus. A member says, "I intend to vote this way," and other members will vote a different way, and there could be a division. They would review that. Once again it would not be a matter of nonconfidence, but the three-line whip is: a loss of that Bill would be considered a loss of confidence in the government. I think the mechanics, the logistics of doing it require that all parties agree to this being the methodology that's used and then some system whereby the Bills as they come in are categorized so that everyone understands at the outset where it is.

Mr. Chairman, I don't need to go on about the feeling and the attitude of the public about it. I think we've seen enough at all levels of government in regard to this, and I think it's time that we found a system. When we first put it in, it may not be perfect; we may have to modify it. I also think that there probably can be a way that we could devise a system even for a vote with an expenditure where the finance minister would become involved in whether or not this would be a one, two, or three and whether it would mean nonconfidence. I think it's unfortunate, because some Bills – and you can think of some examples – that might otherwise be very essential to debate, where money could be involved, would not allow for a free vote.

Our caucus is committed to it. I'd appreciate hearing from other members whether or not they are committed as well to doing it. I think the mechanics we can certainly copy from Westminster or other jurisdictions that use it. I think it would be a tremendous advantage. I know Bob Elliott and Kurt have talked about the fact that as backbenchers it's not always easy to represent your constituents, and I think it would free up backbenchers and free up the whole process to be an infinitely more democratic one if people were not locked into a caucus position on any given Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If members would be tolerant with the Chair for periodically interjecting, obviously the Kilgour, Kindy situation where they opposed any vote will arise.

When we renovated the Assembly, I suggested to David Carter at that time that the infrastructure in the Assembly for each member's desk incorporate electronic voting; i.e., its capacity. In the American system – at least the state capitols I've been in – every member who votes, votes electronically, so it's on a board.

Our Standing Orders – and we haven't dealt with Standing Orders – make it mandatory that you cannot abstain from voting in the Assembly. The only way we know of recording votes is by division in our present system. It may be that if we had an electronic voting system, every member's voting record would then be either public or whatever. I just put that on the table.

There's no question in my mind that under our system he or she who controls the government also controls the Parliament or the Legislature. That's obviously no secret. The government is elected to serve for a term. Therefore, they will decide, I guess, in their own way. I think our role should be to try and find ways as to how we handle that. It may boil down to matters of conscience. It may boil down to a variety of things, but clearly we've identified that votes of confidence would always be the prerogative of government, and budgetary items, I assume, are votes of confidence.

I'm sorry to interject there, but I just thought that should be put on the table.

The NDs have a position; at least I've read their position in the past. Bob, do you want to comment on this?

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Well, my comments may end up having to be interpreted as mine and mine alone, although I think I'd be fair to say that our party would like to see individual members having greater freedom or responsibility to make their own decisions and that party discipline ought to be loosened. I think that's really what were talking about: the right of individual members to be able to speak and voice their conscience in opposition to or at variance with their party's discipline or their caucus discipline from time to time.

I think this is a little more difficult one than might appear on the surface. I think we'd have to go beyond simply saying that political parties in the Alberta Legislature will agree that this is going to happen, because the whole system that we live with is set up in a way that a party imposes discipline on its members. It's evolved: a leader, especially a government leader, can reward and punish; parties can approve nominations or not approve nominations, can suspend a member. We've just witnessed a little bit of a turf war about this very issue in Calgary Northeast in my city. There's a whole environment we work in here where if someone were to vote at variance with their party or their caucus, there are any of a number of people that will leap on that. The media, one of the other political parties would exploit it at a moment's notice. I mean, this is all part of what we live with. So let's acknowledge: what are the forces and the factors on us to toe the party line? They are very significant. So for us to say that it's simply a matter of policy that each political party would agree that from now on we'll have free votes, my prediction is that a hundred percent of the time the voting would end up being exactly what it is now: on the basis of party.

I think we need to look a little bit beyond simply adopting as a policy. I think we'd have to look much deeper or further to make the changes in the environment we work in to loosen the ability of a party or a caucus to impose discipline on an individual member.

You mentioned, Mr. Chairman, the House of Commons in Great Britain: well over 600 members. The Assembly itself probably

couldn't accommodate at the most more than 150 people. So it means that for any vote in the House of Commons you have to go outside into the lobbies and then march in, and they count you off. Here in our Assembly there's more than enough room for 83 members. You have to stand up in front of everybody and record your vote. There's lots to be said in a positive way for the system we have here, don't misunderstand me, but I think when you've got 600-plus members with the kind of architecture of the House of Commons in England, it's just made for circumstances that make it difficult for a party and a caucus and a Whip to impose a discipline on members. It's much easier, I think, for an individual member to express a viewpoint contrary to his party, and of course there's a tradition there too.

2:31

I think we might even want to look at elections financing. Our whole electoral financing legislation in Alberta is based on political parties. Is there some way we could be making it easier for an independent person to qualify for elections financing, raising money, and running as an independent? That's maybe one of the areas we need to look at.

Using the American example – and in our municipal councils it's the same thing: we have set terms. In the United States the government does not fall if they lose a vote in the Senate or the House of Representatives or in the state Legislature. They just have mechanisms to figure out how to govern until the next election date. Republicans vote for Democrat initiatives, Democrats vote for Republican initiatives depending on where you stand on a particular issue, so it's harder for a caucus or a party to impose discipline. The same in our municipal councils. We know that the third Monday in October will be the next election, and our municipal councils carry on until then. If the mayor's initiative fails in the city council, he doesn't have to go seek re-election nor does the council have to be re-elected. They just figure out how to carry on. So I don't know if we want to go as far as set-term elections; that would be pretty radical in terms of everything else.

Maybe one of the things we want to look at is strengthening committee structures. Here's an arena where we are right this very moment today part of an all-party committee, and I know the Constitutional Reform Committee was another one that was quite intensive and spent a lot of time reviewing an important issue. I felt that in many of those meetings and the discussions that we had, there were not hard and fast party lines and party discipline operating. Now, that may have been the issue we were dealing with, but if there would be some way to strengthen the way our standing committees or our all-party Legislature committees work, give them more responsibilities, then they could, because of the process of the committees themselves perhaps, be able to take on initiatives and pursue directions that might be at variance with the government.

Well, I don't want to take up all afternoon with a whole long speech, but I think the question of party discipline or caucus discipline on an individual member is very basic to the political climate we're working in and the structures that have evolved over time. This one is going to be a lot harder to implement than simply saying we want to implement it. I just think it's easy for parties to say, "We want free votes," but they'd have to change the way they operate pretty drastically to put it into real practice.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Bob Elliott, and then Bettie.

DR. ELLIOTT: A couple of comments about the presentations we've just heard, Mr. Chairman. Bettie made reference to caucus versus constituency representation and some of the things an MLA

is faced with. There's another dimension to that too. An MLA is not only governed by caucus discipline or representative constituency; a third dimension is the MLA's own conscience. We've got essays written on that topic. I know that I keep referring to Edmund Burke of 1779 and his essay on the topic.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Edmund Burke, you say?

DR. ELLIOTT: Yeah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He's the fellow who said that when in doubt, you wrap yourself in the American flag. That's his quotation, as I recall. But go ahead.

DR. ELLIOTT: No. A different Edmund Burke. This is the British House of Commons.

I think this whole business of a vote – Bob Hawkesworth made reference to it there: you stand up and your position is known. Then I want to ask: well, where do we weigh that against the secret ballot in our society? Now, we talked about casting a ballot, and there are displays in the book about how ballots are cast in some of our parliaments. It seems to me that we did use a secret ballot here, just since Christmas, in a vote in the House. If you want to refer to party discipline, if everybody had been doing the right thing, we could have got by with one ballot, not two, if I remember correctly. Anyway, it was two ballots on that particular issue.

MR. GESELL: We had a free vote.

MR. EVANS: That was a free vote.

MRS. HEWES: It was.

DR. ELLIOTT: Yes, it was. I don't know whether people were voting freely or whether they were tampering with the system. It was a fun day; I rather enjoyed it.

The secret versus a standing or public posted ballot, as you said, through the electronic system, where the stars shine and lights go off and on, and the process of whether you're dealing with a conscience, a caucus discipline, or a constituency representation are just some of the things that I think an MLA faces in the whole process of working in the Assembly.

I could list off other things that bother me. I sometimes feel that the most insignificant, unimportant, useless individual in the 83 seats in the Assembly is a government backbencher. Question period belongs to the opposition and the government: the speaking order, the whole thing. It's implied that the person who needs least to ask a question in the Assembly for whatever reason is a government member, because we supposedly have caucus. We have the hallways and private offices that other people don't have access to. So when I hear a discussion like we're having right now, I wrap it all up in the same package of fairness within the Assembly, that all members have some fair approach to the way in which they do their work, in representing themselves as well as representing their constituency.

I don't know where we are on the secret ballot thing, and I'd refer that back to Mr. Hawkesworth, when he was talking about standing and letting your position be known on something. Are there times when a secret ballot is appropriate, or should a secret ballot always be appropriate? Or should we always be standing to tell what our position is on every issue?

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Well, as I said, there are lots of positives to be said about the way we do it. You stand in your place, it's recorded, and my constituents or your constituents or any of our constituents can see what side we took on any given issue, and that's part of the accountability process. I'm not tossing aside the idea that on certain votes perhaps a secret ballot would be appropriate. As you quite rightly pointed out, we went through a process recently in appointing the Deputy Chairman of Committees on the basis of a trial run using a secret ballot in our Assembly, and I think by and large the feelings of all of us were that it was a good experience. On balance, I think we'd have to be careful not to throw everything into the secret ballot pot because then you lose the accountability too.

2:41

There has to be both accountability and freedom. Perhaps there are certain kinds of votes that would be appropriate in the future as secret ballots, in the form of elections. We'd have to continue, I think, in terms of policy issues and voting on budgets, Bills, and legislation to have a vote in public. If we wanted to look at the House of Commons in England, we might have everybody assemble in the two lobbies, yea and nay, walk through the turnstile the way they do there and count them that way. That may be one reason why there are so many government initiatives defeated by the members in the House. The Whip is not as strong there as it is in Canada. That might be one reason. It may not be the reason. If you talk to the members there, that may not be the reason at all. But as I look at it, I think that's one possibility, one factor.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just before we get to Bettie, Bob mentioned – and I sense the frustration. For example, if I'm a government member, I don't get the attention in question period and so on. It's not a bad idea sometimes to reflect on the way it was. The record for supplementary questions in the House, as my recollection tells me, was 12, with Grant Notley. I recall vividly when questions in question period ran out before the clock ran out. I recall vividly, as I mentioned, a dozen supplementaries by a member who, in his view, was on a hot issue. I recall vividly that there were no speakers' lists for anything. The Speaker followed *Erskine May* and judged who was for and who was opposed to an issue in a debate. I recall vividly that attendance in the House was never a problem, because each day you didn't know what was going to happen, including on private members' day. People would leap up to speak from the heart on an issue on behalf, presumably, of constituents.

All that's changed. We've reached the point where in my view the government, for whatever reason, tended to feel defensive and kind of circled the wagons, and everything was almost rehearsed. Whether that was part of a trend from other jurisdictions or just within this province, I don't know. So I have seen dramatic change over the years; I won't say positive change from the point of view of a member but probably a very positive change from the point of view of government. Having been in cabinet and privy to certain things and deputy House leader, as Brian Evans is exposed to now, you like to have your ducks in a row, your day's work mapped out, and you know what the conclusion is to the question. That's inevitable. Yet mention was made of the American system. The one thing in the American system that's clearly discernible is the issue of accountability to the public, where people's records are based on their voting records. I think that's why they have electronic voting, because it's there for all to see, a little bit like certain city councils.

There's a great tendency to try and take the best from all worlds, I guess, and that's kind of easy to say. Part of our consideration, remember, within our resolution is the workings of the House for the benefit of the member, to make the member more effective and to feel more effective. So we kind of get into a thing when we talk about free votes, of assuming certain things can happen automatically. We've tended to zero them in on what is confidence, what isn't confidence. Bettie Hewes related to identifying a Bill, like a third line whip Bill and so on. I think we're kind of on the right track. Let us never forget that the most powerful person in Canada is not the Supreme Court; it's the Prime Minister. The most powerful person in a province is its Premier, because of the appointment process and so on. So let's not be naive.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: The ability to reward and punish.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right; you've said it so well. Let us not be naive. Now, I'm not being critical of that; that's the way it is. We've got to recognize that and tend to educate. I was very encouraged by Mr. Getty and now by Mr. Klein, who endorse this type of thing. You know, it was Getty who created this committee. He wanted more open government and so on, and with that, part and parcel was this whole question of so-called free votes.

Just a final comment I'll make is that we always tend to associate results with the leader of the party, and that's not necessarily true. In other words, other people can tend to take over and say, for example, that boundaries legislation must be unanimous by the government party, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. I know many of you were very unhappy with some of the changes to your boundaries. Now, why couldn't we have a so-called free vote on that without defeating? I think you've related to that, actually. This to me is a very exciting kind of thing, not to upset governments but to make it more meaningful and acceptable to the public. If the public were demanding, and they're not, they would be demanding things like recorded votes to know where you stand too.

Bettie.

MRS. HEWES: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I don't think we should let this one get away from us if it's going to be difficult. It is going to be difficult, but I think what we have to put our minds to is the principle and whether or not this is right to do at this point in the evolution of government in Alberta. Logistically and from a partisan point, it's not going to be easy, Bob. Is it the right thing to do? I think we've arrived at a point where it is. I think it's not only right and moral and ethical, but it's important from the standpoint of the involvement of the public with their representative, which we seem to have drifted away from.

You talked, Mr. Chairman, about electronics, and I had some interesting experiences in city hall with and without. When I first went there, we didn't have electronic voting. One simply put up one's hand or pressed a light that said yes or no. It was quite neat. What happened was that you'd come to a difficult issue and certain members of council would look around to see how the vote was going. Perhaps nobody said much, didn't declare themselves. You'd want to be on the right side or the side of the mayor or whatever, so you'd look around a little bit, and then you'd kind of put up your hand the right way. Electronic voting stopped that. You not only had to have an opinion and declare it, but it was secret until the thing flashed up there. Then the public knew right away who voted and how, and of course the record knew, so it changed how we made decisions. I think it improved how we made decisions; I think it changed them for the better. And it

changed the public's involvement in that they could see immediately how their alderman voted on that issue.

Then some other different things happened because of not just that electronics, Mr. Chairman. Because of the opening up of city hall through television, they could see: my alderman didn't say a word, yet he voted against it, or my alderman spoke in favour and then voted against it. This was something I always referred to as legerdemain, not for attribution, because we had an alderman by that name who was very skillful at that, at saying, "I raise these questions about this development," et cetera, et cetera, and then he would turn around inevitably and vote for it. I suppose it is kind of amusing, but at the same time I think it's critical. It helps the integrity of the process, to me, if we can have a freer discussion.

I'm thinking, Mr. Chairman, about Mr. Evans' Bill on . . .

MR. EVANS: Children's access rights enforcement.

MRS. HEWES: . . . access, which I support. Mr. Gogo's, Evans', Gogo's, et cetera.

MR. EVANS: Gogo, Evans, Gogo.

MRS. HEWES: Right; that's exactly what it was.

I expect there were probably people on the government side who did not, people on the opposition side who did not, and people who did. So I think those kinds of Bills, which are very significant to people in our province and to the human condition, because of party discipline do or don't pass, and I think that's unfortunate. I think those are the kinds of Bills where you should be able to represent your constituency, your publics, whoever they are. I would have liked to have seen that come to third reading because I think it would have gone through and would have had support from the opposition.

I'm sorry that Bob has stepped out. What I didn't understand from him - he spoke to this issue but spoke to the difficulties, and I don't know whether he believes in it in principle. I'm not sure from what he said whether he thinks it's a good principle. If so, if we can agree on that, then I think we start working on some mechanics of it.

The other thing he mentioned that I just want to ask other members of the committee about was free votes and all-party committees, and I don't see those as being mutually exclusive. I think all-party committees is a good idea, and we should certainly do it regarding budget and so on, and we've spoken to that in the House. I think free votes is another matter, and I don't think those two things are necessarily tied up. So I would hope when he comes back that he will answer those.

The secret ballot I think has limited use in our House. It's fine for electing the Speaker and so on, but I would infinitely prefer to see people stand up and be counted. It's that kind of openness that we're looking for.

2:51

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before we hear from Kurt, I didn't mention, but years ago - and I hate to keep referring to years ago - we had Committee of Supply by subcommittee. I chaired one of those, and there was the opportunity for individual members to get at the officials because officials sat with their minister. We had no time limit for estimates in those days. We'd come into a committee meeting in the basement. I was the chairman of subcommittee A in estimates dealing with recreation and parks or whatever the name was. The deputy minister - it was on a Tuesday or Thursday I think - said, "Well, I sure hope this is finished in a hurry because I'm booked to go to Hawaii on

Friday." Well, he went three weeks later because people overheard, and I'm kind of proud of the fact. Peter Trynchy was one and Bud Miller was another who were very upset with various things that were going on in that minister's department and were just waiting to get the officials at that table. They probably achieved more there in terms of influencing government, whereas today we don't have that system, and they couldn't get into the two-hour period in our estimates in the House.

I mean, I only mentioned that because of Bob's reference to the power of the committee. Well, I assure you that members of the House had a lot of power because they had the officials at the table. Two weeks later Mr. Loughheed called me in and said: "What on earth is going on? Your committee hasn't reported." I said that there were some problems and so on. Oddly enough the problem resolved itself within three days, because they somehow got that straightened out. But there's a classic example. Although it's not a free vote, it's the closest thing you can sort of get to it.

The other comment: Arizona has electronic voting. I don't know what their Standing Orders are, but I do know that if you don't vote, your per diem is not paid that day. So they have a method to deal with abstainers in voting. I just learned that two months ago when I was down there. It's very interesting.

DR. ELLIOTT: It's an upside-down user fee; isn't it? They're not doing their job.

MR. GESELL: Mr. Chairman, this matter is very important to me. I feel that the present cynicism that we see out there in the public is partly because we as politicians need to establish credibility. That credibility I feel is established on faith, trust, and confidence out there. I believe some of the talk of Albertans about recall is a manifestation of that lack of faith.

Let me just talk briefly about recall, because I think it's related to the free votes. I think the recall solution is maybe a stopgap solution to what the real problem is, which is really the free votes. If we implement recall, the public feels that by that process they can control politicians, MLAs I suppose. However, as long as party discipline dictates how politicians vote, recall will just create the same situation over again, because you've recalled the one MLA that has perhaps voted against the wishes of the constituents and put a new one in place, and that one is subject to the same rules that the previous MLA was. So you have really not achieved very much. I feel the real problem is the free vote, because that's really what people are objecting to. When they say recall, they feel that they can fix that difficulty that exists.

I feel, Mr. Chairman, that actually not one of us will vote or debate lightly or carelessly in opposition to our colleagues in the House, particularly if we are in the same party. I think that's carefully weighed by individual members. You do it too often and you're going to be ostracized by your own colleagues in the House. You're going to have to be very careful in the way you do that, so there's a tendency to weigh what the constituents want and what the party actually stands for. I believe that happens in all of us; it's called conscience, I suppose, to some degree.

So I think there's a mechanism in our democratic system that assures some unanimity, because of that realization that, you know, you have other members, other colleagues who may have different ideas that you should respect as well. I think it's also extremely important that we allow people that are politicians that have been elected to represent constituents to vote in accordance with their conscience, with the principles that they hold, and most importantly, I feel, with the views that the electors, their constituents, have. I think it's critical that we do that. I believe that the

party is actually strengthened by diverse viewpoints, not weakened. I believe that enforced grouping, discipline that does not respect those diverse viewpoints, is really a travesty of our democracy. I feel very strongly about that, Mr. Chairman.

So I agree in principle with the idea of free votes – these are my opinions; they are not the opinions of caucus – and I feel that we should do everything we can in order to put them in place. Maybe the mechanics of how we do them, as suggested by Bettie – it might be that there may be certain matters that require unanimity. That's fine. I don't want the government to fall because of a particular vote. I think that process might have to be put in place, but there are a lot of issues that I think we should be able to vote on independently and freely.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thanks, Kurt.

Brian.

MR. EVANS: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. As I understand it, what we're talking about here is whether or not we accept the principle of free votes. There's been a lot of talk about the implications of a free vote and whether or not it can solve the problems or just in essence become yet another guise for party discipline. I think that's the point that Bob was trying to get at. We can argue that we have a free vote for the Speaker right now – we do have a voting process for the Speaker – but it takes a mind-set to change your attitude and the attitudes of other members who are here.

Mr. Chairman, you've talked about quite a substantial change in attitude in the way that things were done in the past which indicated to me much greater freedom than what I see here today, and you haven't gone into any detail about why that's changed, other than to suggest that it's easier for government. I think with this brief session that we've just had and the opportunity that I had as a Deputy Government House Leader to look at a very structured process – but, quite frankly, for me the old-time way of doing business, where you had much more spontaneity, would be vastly more exciting and, I think, thought provoking and meaningful than the process that we have today, which is undoubtedly very, very structured.

3:01

I think allowing free votes would be one way of moving away from that very structured process which is not reflective of what happens in the real world. Anytime an issue comes up at whatever level, there should be a genuine discussion of the principles, genuine debate on the pros and cons, and then a decision being made, which I don't think happens in our Legislature, quite frankly. I'm equally critical of the government side and the opposition side, because we often hear that we don't have enough time for real debate on issues. Quite frankly, to keep yourself concentrated on debate sometimes in the House is a monumental exercise in futility because in many instances there's nothing substantial being said. Certainly the time is being spent to make the same point over and over again, which often is not even indirectly related to the matter that's supposedly being debated.

I think if we were to take a more responsive and a more critical view of what we do in the Assembly and take on personal responsibility by encouraging free votes on a tiered level, we as legislators would find the experience of a legislative session much more meaningful. I think the people whom we are representing would also find it much more meaningful, and we might find that we even have people sitting in the gallery other than during question period. That would be quite a substantial change, Mr. Chairman, over what I've seen in the past four years that I've been an MLA.

I think this is an evolutionary process, and we shouldn't expect that tomorrow or next month or necessarily next year we could get to a point where everything that we debate in the House would and could be embraced as an opportunity for meaningful debate. But at least if we were to start with a tiering of issues and recognize that even when you get to matters of finance, if we are not talking about a substantial percentage of the budget of the province on any given vote, we could have meaningful discussion and we could have a vote which would not see the fall of the government and, quite frankly, would give all of us an opportunity to have that kind of meaningful input. I've been lucky enough in the past four years to chair committees with public input. I'm truly committed to that principle of giving individuals an opportunity to have their say, to try to make their point, and then to have a vote on it.

If a government Bill, for example, were to fail because after a reasonable debate and the principle of a free vote the decision was made that it shouldn't go ahead, I don't fear that society would cast out that government because one of the members of Executive Council, for example, brought forward that piece of legislation. I just don't think that's realistic as we approach the 21st century. I mean, we live in a very complex world, and there are many, many permutations and combinations, facts and figures that people out there in the real world recognize we have to deal with here as legislators. I don't think there'd be any negative connotation to a particular government Bill failing. In fact, I think probably the general public would feel much more understanding of what we're trying to do here if we got to the point of having some reasoned debate and then a decision which presumably the majority would conclude was either the right way to go or the wrong way to go. So as long as we consider the principle, I think my comment is, yes, we should encourage free votes in this House. I believe that it should not be an all-or-nothing matter, that we should try to agree on matters that can be brought to this kind of a vote and have the embracing of that concept hopefully by the vast majority of those who are Members of the Legislative Assembly.

It's an evolutionary process, so perhaps at some time in the distant future – and maybe it's not so distant a future – we can make almost any issue that would come before the House a matter that would be subject to a free vote and not the bringing down of a government as a result of that. I think that would make our jobs as elected officials infinitely more interesting, infinitely more accountable to the people whom we do represent, and I daresay that the people of the province would be much more responsive to us as the people who supposedly they have chosen to represent them in a setting that has a heck of a lot to say about how they go about their business and what the impacts are on their daily lives. I'm convinced that most people don't feel they have that kind of ability to impact the decisions that are made by their elected representatives at this point in time. The average citizen sees lobbyists as really the ones who determine government policy, and they're very cynical of that process, very cynical of political ideology as well. I think this is a great way to move away from that and to make ourselves much more accountable and to improve the entire legislative process.

I don't like the idea of secret ballots, because we are accountable to those who sent us here, and a secret ballot, any way you slice it, is really an opportunity to do what you like and to do it without any fear of being accountable to those who put you here. So I'd like to minimize that and encourage the free recorded votes as a general principle.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Brian.

I want to ask Bob Hawkesworth a question, and maybe Bettie Hewes is going to ask the same question. I look at this table and I see three members who, in my view, are quite young running for re-election. Dr. Elliott and I are not. Bettie Hewes as House leader for the Liberals has a special responsibility. Having been through 18 years of a very exciting time and then seeing things so structured or choked off, I sense there's a great deal of dissatisfaction among certain members. I can't speak for the ND caucus or the Liberal caucus, but certainly government members have come to me who don't feel that they've had an opportunity of getting through to government to effect change on behalf of their constituents. I'm very encouraged with these three people running - I would call it a new generation - that we're even into this kind of discussion.

The Conservative Party is a party system: we're nominated within our party, our constitutions within the party provide for annual general meetings, which we're going to have in a couple of hours, and resolutions come forward and are debated and pass or fail at a meeting. Those resolutions in the Conservative Party are advisory to the elected members and the government. In the New Democratic Party, as I recall - I want to ask Bob this question - they're mandatory. They're binding. In Ontario resolutions passed at the ND annual meeting are binding on its government, which brings in a new dimension. This may be Bettie's question too - I don't know - because she has a couple of questions to ask. I don't know what impact that would have, for example, on abortion. There's an official party policy. Is that binding on you as an elected member, Bob? I don't know this. That's another dimension when you raise the question of free votes. If you were going to vote in the House contrary to a resolution that's binding, would that expel you from the party? That's outside our ambit here. We have no jurisdiction there. I wanted to raise that and see if that is factual, that you cannot oppose a position which is passed by resolution.

Bettie, that may be your question to Bob. I don't know if that was what you wanted to ask him.

3:11

MRS. HEWES: Partly.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: No. Our policy is that if any party member or a candidate for the party has a position different from party policy on an issue, they have to state the party's policy on that issue and then that their position on it is their personal position. So if I were to take issue with our party's policy on abortion or capital punishment or any issue, I would first have to say: "Well, the New Democrats believe - this is our policy. From my point of view I believe X, Y, or Z." That's the requirement or the discipline that's imposed on us.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

Bettie, followed by Bob Hawkesworth.

MRS. HEWES: I have a couple of questions for Bob, but I just want to comment first. Of course, in our caucuses we have a shared ideology. That's very clear. I don't want anybody a part of the Liberal caucus who is not a Liberal, so there's a logical kind of evolution of decision-making where you tend to vote the same way because you have that basis.

I'm reminded, Mr. Chairman, of an interesting episode a few years back in our caucus where there were some differences in caucus members diametrically opposed on an issue. Both argued their points very compellingly and very persuasively on the basis of: this is Liberal principle, Liberal values, Liberal ideology.

Both argued totally opposing positions and both very persuasive. So then you know that this is time for a free vote; right? These are the kinds of indicators you get.

DR. ELLIOTT: It's time for a coffee break.

MRS. HEWES: Yeah. It happens, and it can happen even within what is considered to be a clear, well-defined, and closely held personal and collective ideology. I believe there's room for free votes in caucus. There's certainly room for free votes in the House. We have them in our caucus. I don't know whether other caucuses do.

Mr. Chairman, you speak about past experience. When I was working for a mental health agency and also for the planning council, I was often involved in requesting legislation or criticizing proposed legislation and so on and found myself quite frequently sitting in the gallery to listen to a debate. Debates were debates. People did get up and speak pro and con and suggest changes. I'd kind of forgotten that till you reminded me. It was different. This would be in the early '70s. There was a difference in the freedom of expression from different members who did reflect on what their back home situation said. It would be legislation related to social development or mental health that I was particularly interested in. It was very vocal and very exciting, and there were quite different opinions expressed, and that was when there was a government that was all one party pretty well. So we have some things in our past, although you can't go back, that I think were more open, as you indicate. Unfortunately, as government became larger and there was more need for management, I think we kind of went inward and closed down some of those things that had been tradition, and we closed them down with rules. I think that was done - hindsight is great - to make it more manageable, but in this day and age, with instant telecommunications and so on, I think we can find a better way.

I do want to ask Bob Hawkesworth, because I wasn't sure. Can you tell us if you believe in the principle of freeing up members to vote according to their constituency or their conscience? I found some difficulty following your line of argument.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Okay. Yeah; certainly I agree with that principle. I'm just saying that I think it's an easy one to embrace and much more difficult to implement.

MRS. HEWES: No doubt.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: I think it gets at a whole bunch of things that are deeply imbedded in the way we do politics in the system we have and the way we organize ourselves all the way from elections, the way we finance elections, through to the way we, I guess, conduct the business here.

Just maybe a couple more observations. Bettie may disagree with me on this, or she may agree with me. We've both had experience on city councils: she in Edmonton, me in Calgary. City council is a place where decisions get made, and I'm not convinced that the Legislature is a place where decisions get made. It's not a decision-making body. I think the Legislature is an accountability body, but I don't think it's any longer, if it ever was, a decision-making body. I think the decisions here are made in caucus or in a cabinet room or in a minister's office or the Premier's office. Not having had experience on the government side of the House, I stand to be corrected if anybody wishes to disagree with me here. Debate in the Legislature is not debate to persuade, as it is in city council. In city council you're trying to persuade your colleagues to support you on an initiative, so you

debate to persuade, because that's where the decision is going to be made. In the Legislature you debate, because the decision's already been made, to embarrass, to cajole, to discredit. You can name the different descriptions that the debate has attempted to accomplish, because by that time, when we get into the Assembly, the decision has already been made, by and large.

Free votes would mean moving decisions that are made elsewhere into the Legislature and making it a decision-making body. That's why I say that I think it's going to be a lot more difficult to accomplish in practice than it is to get support for the idea. It's going to mean a lot of changes in the way we do things. It means wresting control out of the Premier's office or out of cabinet. Again coming back to the principle of being able to reward and punish, it means wresting some of that power away from whomever, the leader of a party or the leader of government. That's why we may want to look at strengthening committee structures, changing the way elections are financed, maybe changing the actual way we vote. That's why I said earlier that we might have to look at some fairly far-reaching structural changes if we want to accomplish genuinely free votes by members in the Assembly.

3:21

MR. CHAIRMAN: If I could comment, I see under Premier Klein a system that's being put in place. Whether it will work or not, I can't sit in judgment. I see now, with the restructure of Mr. Klein's government, four standing policy committees, government members being chairmen, government members having a minister as a vice-chairman, and those four chairmen reporting to cabinet on the business of the standing policy committee, which deals with matters referred to it by the priorities and planning committee of cabinet. Very powerful organizations. I've attended some of those committee meetings, and I'm almost astounded at how they are able to deal with just the content of a minister's business; i.e., the minister is really challenged to justify. We have a minister with us who may be commenting; I don't know. That to me is such a shift from the system I've known. I'm really encouraged, because I know that a committee and its members have a lot of power because its chairman reports directly to cabinet. Very interesting. A chairman's report must be a summary of the committee members' business, not the chairman's opinion. So I find that very exciting.

The other comment I'll make – and you touched on it – is that if you read the history of elections in Canada, you find that invariably, 90 percent of the cases, a member is elected because of a member's leader and the policies of the party and the funds available to that member. So independents do not have a history of success in the country. You touched on that, Bob.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Yeah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't care how you shake it; there are not many Gordon Taylors, Ray Speakers who through longevity were able to be elected as independents. That is a very important fundamental thing under the reward and punishment system; i.e., the Sindlinger scenario. He won Buffalo; he lost Buffalo. What happened in the interim? He was excused, which is Latin for expelled, from the caucus. That's a very important consideration that people should remember, you know. I'm glad you raised it. Now, that doesn't mean the committee should expand its horizon to get into all those fundamental things, although the McGrath thing dealt with it, an independent committee in Ottawa, and so on. I just wanted to get that out there.

Believe me, with respect, minister, I'm aware of the sensitivity of talking about these kinds of things with a member of Executive Council. I don't wish to put the minister on the spot, but the organization of the standing committees, which is public knowledge – we're all a member of one of them – is a whole new, exciting way, and it may very well lead easily into the very thing we're talking about.

Bob.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Well, quite the contrary, if I may say so. I mean, you're talking about how government caucus organizes its decision-making, which may be quite dramatically different from ways that it's organized itself in the past. As a government member you may feel that it provides avenues for you to influence a process that didn't exist before then. That just underscores a point I was making, that the decision-making is taking place in a caucus committee and not in the Legislature because no opposition members sit on any of those standing committees that you made reference to. So my argument would be that while it may make it more effective for a government member – I don't know whether it does or it doesn't. I'll take your word for it that you feel it does. That may make you feel that you're having a better impact on the decision-making. That does not move us towards free votes in the Assembly because it doesn't change the location of the decision-making. The decision-making occurs in caucus, not in the Assembly. Maybe it'll never change. We could be talking here about a Utopian ideal that will never exist, that we can have free votes in the Assembly with the way our system of government is organized. It seems to me that to have genuine free votes in the Legislative Assembly, we would have to move more of the decision-making power into the Assembly itself. Reorganizing the way the government caucus does its decision-making may be good for members of the government caucus, but it doesn't move us in the direction of more free votes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I guess I'm relating more to Bob Elliott's point that he's made several times: how effective am I around here, because I can't . . . It makes a major difference, I know.

DR. ELLIOTT: Bob's right. It made a major difference to me, but it doesn't really address the Assembly issue.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Brian, and then Bettie.

MR. EVANS: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I think that it is related to the Assembly, and it may be just a start in the right direction, Bob. I'll tell you the reason I say that. When I was elected in '89 and until very recently, the process was that if a minister wished to bring forward an initiative – and that either came from a discussion that a minister would have when out doing his or her job or an initiative from that minister's department – the minister would go to a cabinet committee with that initiative, would have that vetted through a cabinet committee, would then, if that was approved at that level, go to cabinet as a whole, get to caucus. Again presuming that there was approval along the way – and I'm not telling any tales out of school; I think this is well known – caucus would have an opportunity to debate an issue, and unless there was a great consensus about an initiative, a majority opinion, an issue wouldn't get any further. We're talking about government policy issues here, which is something that we can't forget; government legislation is in answer to government policy.

Now, the way that we are doing business under Ralph Klein's government, I think, is abundantly more open. It begins with the same process. A minister, either through interaction with the



people that that minister deals with or through a departmental initiative, will say, "Okay, I'd like to have a policy change; I'd like to initiate some legislation, some changes in existing legislation," and would then go to agenda and priorities and get a very preliminary approval to go forward. The going forward then goes to the standing policy committee, which is made up of private government members and members of Executive Council. For the most part the debates then are also advertised, and the public's given an opportunity to attend. Okay? So there's a movement there to giving the public an opportunity to have some input, to hear the discussion, first of all, between members of that committee and the sponsor of a policy change, and then to have some input into that particular issue. Only after that does the committee make a recommendation that then goes back to cabinet and eventually then, through caucus endorsement, gets into the House. So there is much more of a thorough review, at least from the government's side, but you as a member of an opposition party would not be excluded, as would any other member of the public not be excluded, from the opportunity to listen to the presentation by whoever is bringing the policy forward and then to have some input. Now, I know that John McInnis has attended one of our standing policy committee meetings, the one that I co-chair, natural resources and sustainable development, when we were dealing with budget. John made a few comments, but essentially he was there to listen and to get a sense of what the process was about. I think that's a step in the right direction.

3:31

Your concern is, "Well, should we not be getting every member of the House involved in a policy decision?" I think we have to discuss that a little further. Again, ultimately that policy initiative is an initiative of the government, and the government is accountable to the citizens every time we go to an election to find out whether or not that's along the same line as the majority of the citizens of Alberta want that government to move. At least it's a step in the right direction and I think could result in an enhanced free vote situation. You can't really have a free vote unless you have an informed vote, and some of this preliminary process gives you the opportunity to get more knowledgeable about what's going on. You know, if we started from scratch every time we got into the Legislature, I daresay we wouldn't accomplish very much really. You know, I don't think we would. We'd have to do a lot through subcommittee and that kind of thing. Maybe that's what we're talking about: changing the subcommittee format so that there is more opportunity for involvement at the level of all elected officials regardless of what party they're from.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thanks, Brian.  
Bettie.

MRS. HEWES: Well, Mr. Chairman, it may be a step, but as far as I'm concerned, it's a side step; it's not a forward step. I think that from the standpoint of government members the committees may be an advantage. I didn't support them; my caucus didn't support them. We didn't believe they were appropriate.

Okay. Let me tell you my experience. I did go to a committee meeting, Mr. Schumacher's committee. When the agenda was circulated, I was pleased to see that there was an item on the open part of the meeting that I wanted to hear, so I went to it. First of all, we had the film clip on New Zealand, which was interesting but not particularly germane to any of the items. But that was okay; it was interesting. So we saw that. Then the next item, the one I was there for, Minister Cardinal was to speak to. When the chairman called on him, he simply said, "Oh, I'm not ready to do

that." So then Chairman Schumacher said, "Well, now we come to the closed section." So I stood up to excuse myself, and he very courteously said: "We're glad you came. Have you any questions to the committee?" I said, "Oh, yeah, I do; I have a lot of questions." First of all, I wanted to know how they developed their agenda. There was no real answer to that. He indicated that various publics could come and submit briefs and so on and that they saw people as requested. I asked if I could put an item on the agenda, if that were possible. He thought about that for a minute or two and said: "Well, we hear from the public. You're a member of the public. I suppose that, yes, you could come and put something on the agenda as a member of the public."

MR. HAWKESWORTH: But not as a member of the Legislature.

MRS. HEWES: Well, then he kind of backtracked a bit and said: "In fact, you might even have a slightly different position." You know, I'm paraphrasing here because I wasn't sure about his exact words, but I've thought about it since. Perhaps I would bargain from a slightly preferential position, but I would still be a member of the public; that is, I am not part of the process in any sort of ongoing way even though I'm a member of the Legislature. He indicated correctly that this is new and that the procedures are evolving, that they aren't yet carved in stone.

I asked, Mr. Chairman, if the committee would come to recommendations. Well, yes, they might; this too is not exact. Well, would those recommendations be available to me? Could I know what this committee was advising? I mean, this is a committee of the government that is holding public meetings with the public present and presumably making recommendations. Well, no, those would not be public. I would not have an opportunity to participate in that discussion or to know what that committee from the public discussions was recommending to government, that he would recommend only to cabinet. I had a number of other questions to the committee which, I would suggest, they really had some difficulty answering because again I think, in all fairness, that we still don't quite know exactly how these are going to work down the road. I asked about the budget, and he said that, yes, they were reviewing the budget. I didn't feel terribly satisfied.

If this is supposed to be the new, open way that we are now reaching out to our public and making decisions differently, then it is still very much, as Bob Hawkesworth suggests, an internalized government process and has really very little to do with me. I think that, from your standpoint, that may be a step, but for me it's just a side step.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before we hear from Bob. When I came here, I can't recall as a government member being allowed on the third floor of the building. That's how secretive cabinet was. They may not have walked on water, but, boy, people sure thought they walked on water. Now I see these new thrusts of the Premier. As I said at the beginning, I don't know how it's going work, but I've been very encouraged because it's opening up.

The other comment I'll make is that we had a suggestion some time ago from Bob Hawkesworth that we're going to deal with in Standing Orders, and that's how we'll influence free votes. Under our parliamentary system no one is entitled to see a Bill until it's introduced in the Legislature. One of the suggestions Bob made is, I think, from the Ontario model, and that is that there be discussions with the public of a draft Bill by an all-party committee. You might then find many things the government had hoped to do, frankly, disappear or are dramatically altered because of that process. If we end up where there's all-party agreement instead

of the three readings of a Bill over a period of time, it could go bing, bing, bing in a single day. We can't look at this in isolation. I see a whole host of things.

I had said to the government members that I'd try and get them away by 3:40 because they have an important event on today, tomorrow, and the next day.

MRS. HEWES: Really? What's that, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's a debate on free votes.

MR. EVANS: With real Albertans from every corner of the province in attendance.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Bob.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Well, let me make one observation of my own here – I won't make a long one – in response to Brian's observations or comments. I served for almost six years with Ralph Klein on Calgary city council. The way our council was structured, we had four standing policy committees. I don't know whether he got some of his ideas for reorganizing government caucus based on his experience on Calgary city council, but that's the way our council was organized. After having served three years, my first term, I was elected chairman of the city's finance and budget committee. Now, I don't think it was any secret to anybody on that council that I was a New Democrat, and the majority of the members of city council at that time, it was no secret to me, were Conservatives. Here was a New Democrat being elected chairperson of one of the most significant of the four policy committees of city hall. Now, what are the chances that a New Democrat would be elected chairperson of the Legislature policy committee in this place or that an NDP MLA would be chairing one of these four policy committees that you're referring to? Boy, if that ever happened, we would have come a long way towards establishing free votes in the Alberta Assembly. I just make that observation in terms of the contrast between the way city councils sometimes operate and the way we sometimes operate.

3:41

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, it could have that person from another party, because as I've said, the role of the chairman is not to dictate, unlike the American system, where the chairman decides what matters will be heard. I think Minister Evans has said that the priorities committee of cabinet decides the agenda for those committees. It's not up to the chairman. It's up to the chairman to conduct the meeting.

Anyway, I sense it's kind of exciting for change that we're all part of. Some of us won't be here to see much change, Bob, but that's why I'm excited about this committee. It's the beginning of something new. We'll have a selling job to convince people, I think, to utilize whatever recommendations we come up with. Whether they do or whether they don't – this report will go to the House – we'll have copies of this report, whatever we decide.

Well, we're within 35 seconds of what I'd hoped to achieve. We'll be coming back to this next week. Could we have a motion to adjourn?

MRS. HEWES: I'll move it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Carried.

[The committee adjourned at 3:42 p.m.]