

Title: Tuesday, March 21, 1995 Designated Subcommittee

Date: 1995/03/21

[Chairman: Mr. Magnus]

Time: 3:02 p.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Ladies and gentlemen, we have a quorum here now. We'll get started. We have completed the first hour with the Liberal side of the questions. We have completed the second hour with the Conservative side of the questions. What we are going into now is the third hour, which is the Liberal questions, and we'll start now.

MS CARLSON: Can we just have a point of clarification before we begin? You didn't take the full hour last time, and in accordance with what's happened in the other subcommittees, we would like to take advantage of that remaining time if your members don't wish to do so.

THE CHAIRMAN: I appreciate your question, Ms Carlson, but the simple fact of the matter is that the last couple of motions in this – and I don't want to get into a huge wrangle here because we do have to get the Premier out of here by 4 o'clock. If it meets with the committee's approval, we'll adjourn the meeting at this time. The government side has concluded their questions. When we come back, it will be the Liberal side for one more time, and we'll go on from there. I talked to Frank Bruseker about it, your House leader, and he's happy with that.

MS CARLSON: So we're going to use the full four hours allotted at some point. You previously said that the government side had completed their first hour of questions; in fact, they never did.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, according to this and according to the statement that was voted on, yes, we have. So without any further ado – we have talked to your House leader about it; he's in accord with this – we'll go ahead with the Liberal side of the questions, because we need to get the Premier out of here in about 58 minutes.

MS CARLSON: Okay. Fine.

THE CHAIRMAN: Who's first?

MR. SEKULIC: Mr. Chairman, I'll go back to follow up on some questions I asked last week. Mr. Premier, what I'd like here is a list of public opinion research surveys conducted by the Public Affairs Bureau, and I'd like those itemized by firm, by cost, and by topic area for the fiscal years '93-94 and '94-95. What I'd like as well is provision of copies of these issue surveys as they were done by Stratix Research poll of 1993. What I'd like an answer to as well is: has there been a policy developed with respect to public release of polls that are conducted using taxpayers' dollars?

Mr. Premier, before you go on to answer this, if I could just refer to comments you made in *Hansard* in the same committee last year. It's September 30, 1993, page 159. You indicated that you would provide – would you like the quote, just so I can refresh your memory?

MR. KLEIN: Sure.

MR. SEKULIC:

Mr. Klein: Well, it's a matter of policy, and I can see no reason why not, because these polls, as Linda pointed out, are really to get public attitudes on issues: where the government is going, what's important to people.

Then you were asked by Mr. Decore at that time, "Is that a commitment, Ralph?" and your response was, "Well, I have no problems." So I guess I'd just like confirmation.

MR. KLEIN: That's basically the answer I gave today, it seems to me, in the Legislature.

MR. SEKULIC: So you're consistent, and we will be provided with the results of those polls.

MR. KLEIN: Yeah. You know, our attitude is that we ought not to be doing public surveys or polls unless we're willing to release the information.

Relative to the specific question with respect to Stratix Research, is that 1993?

MR. SEKULIC: It's 1993, yes.

MR. KLEIN: Gerry, as I understand it, that was released.

MR. BOURDEAU: Yes, Mr. Premier, it was released. It was released in I believe the August period of 1993. It was released to the media, and it was also released to anybody who requested a copy of it.

MR. SEKULIC: Thank you. Okay. The next question I have is: can the Premier provide a list of advertisers retained by the Public Affairs Bureau, once again by firm, by cost, and topic area, in the '93-94 and '94-95 fiscal years?

MR. KLEIN: Yes.

MR. SEKULIC: Great.

MR. MITCHELL: One of the problems for us and for the public as well would be to know when a poll's been done if they would have to request . . .

THE CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry, Mr. Mitchell. Could you speak up? I can't hear you.

MR. MITCHELL: One of the problems with this issue of releasing polls, of course, would be that if they're done and nobody knows about them, they won't be able to request them. So I wonder: is the Premier making the commitment – I'd like him to confirm what he said in the House today – that when a poll is done, it will be released, and we don't have to guess whether or not one's been done.

MR. KLEIN: I don't have a problem with that.

MR. MITCHELL: So is that yes?

MR. KLEIN: Yes.

MR. MITCHELL: Great. Thanks.

So could we, then, get copies of the polls that the government has done, let's say, since 1993?

MR. KLEIN: Well, that's the question that Mr. Sekulic asked.

MR. MITCHELL: And we're getting them.

MR. KLEIN: Yes.

MR. BOURDEAU: Could I augment, Mr. Premier?

MR. KLEIN: Yeah, sure.

MR. BOURDEAU: One element of that is that the Public Affairs Bureau doesn't do all the polling in government in any way, shape, or form. Some of the departments do their own polling, so we don't necessarily have easily at hand what all those polls would be.

MR. KLEIN: And not all of these polls are commissioned by the so-called government. In other words, I can share with you that a decision to do a survey, as a matter of fact, is very seldom a cabinet decision or a decision of caucus. You know, these are done by the departments at the discretion of the department.

MR. MITCHELL: That's fine. So could you establish, Mr. Premier, out of your office a policy that says that those will all be public, if they're all being done with public money?

MR. KLEIN: I have no problems with that.

MR. MITCHELL: Okay. Great. That's really great.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mitchell, are you finished?

MR. MITCHELL: Yeah, on that.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Sekulic.

MR. SEKULIC: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Premier, you just responded that in fact a Stratix Research poll had been released in March of '93, I think.

MR. KLEIN: I don't know when it was released, but I understand it has been released. Perhaps Gerry can augment.

MR. SEKULIC: I'm just trying to confirm that. There's an indication that Stratix Research Inc. received \$43,613 from the Public Affairs Bureau for the fiscal period '93-94. Now, that's the polling that you're referring to. Has that been released yet? If not, would you then release it?

MR. BOURDEAU: The last poll that we did with Stratix Research was in the spring of '93, and that was released in the summer. That was the last actual tracking study we did. We haven't conducted one since.

MR. SEKULIC: Okay.

MR. MITCHELL: I'd like to pick up where I left off the other day with the minister responsible for science and research. We sort of got cut off. I guess the first question that I had asked was: how much is spent on R and D in the government now? The answer was \$200 million. Is that right?

MRS. MIROSH: Did you get a copy of this? I think your researcher was to receive a copy of this. It has the breakdown. This is the copy that gives you the breakdown. It was tabled in the House, so it's public. It gives you the breakdown of all the departments' spending on page 14. It's now at \$195.75 million. It's not all research; some of it's programs. Community Development, for instance, has listed \$14 million, which is actually for operating museums, but because paleontology is operated out of

those museums, it's considered research. It also operates museums. So those are the kinds of activities that are ongoing.

MR. MITCHELL: So what role are you playing in co-ordinating these activities or establishing priorities or working on reviews of what research would or wouldn't be done within government? What is your role?

MRS. MIROSH: Well, currently, we are examining with all of the ADMs who sit on this particular committee, TRAC – it is chaired by Dr. Brian Barge, who is president of the Alberta Research Council – and trying to identify and separate exactly what is research and what is program. There are commitments that departments have made through their three-year budget plan. The Science and Research Authority chaired by Dr. Church is now setting up terms of reference for accountability and priority setting. So once we have all of that data in place – and I hope that will be completed by the end of this month – we can then go back to the authority and examine in fact if these research projects are viable, if there is some accountability, if they should continue, if there is some leverage for this province. We consider that for every dollar the province spends, there should be at least a \$4 leverage minimum. If that's not occurring, then we feel that they should be evaluated and then discontinued. But we have to examine the contracts that have been established. It's taking a considerable amount of time.

Then my legislation as well will be introduced, hopefully at the end of this week or the beginning of next week, that will establish the legislation for the authority. So you'll have a clearer idea of what we're doing. We're very excited with the response that we've been getting from the community. We've had two workshops in Edmonton and Calgary. We're having another one in Lethbridge and another one in Grande Prairie. The input that we are getting from people in business is really overwhelming. There's a number of small- and large-sized businesses who want to partnership with government in research projects.

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A good example is probably Northern Telecom. You always talk about the NovAtel fiasco. I'd just like to tell you that that NovAtel fiasco is now creating 3,000 new jobs. Northern Telecom is taking over the assets and are partnering with us in research through TRILabs here in Edmonton. That NovAtel fiasco is now producing \$1.2 billion in revenue for this province. In Calgary they have a manufacturing plant, and in Lethbridge another cellular manufacturing plant has increased from almost zero jobs to 500 jobs. Sometimes research appears to look like a failure because of the cost, and it does take anywhere from 4 to 8 years to research anything before it moves into commercialization. So it's not until it moves into commercialization.

MR. MITCHELL: So what technology is being commercialized by Northern Telecom that was developed by NovAtel?

MRS. MIROSH: TRILabs. Actually, I would invite the Liberals to review the labs, to come and have a look. It's a partnership with Northern Telecom, with AGT, the University of Manitoba, and the University of Alberta.

MR. MITCHELL: What technology, what patents from NovAtel are being developed by Northern Telecom that's producing this \$1.2 billion in assets?

MRS. MIROSH: Well, I don't know specifically the patents, but certainly the technology that was produced as a result of the research from NovAtel is in cell phones and now in Millennium telephones. This technology was produced from that research. The first Millennium telephone was in the Calgary airport. Those are the kinds of technologies, the technology of the cell phone as well that are now being commercialized.

MR. MITCHELL: So did we have to go through NovAtel to get to this, or could we have gone straight to Northern Telecom?

MRS. MIROSH: Well, actually, the president of Northern Telecom himself has said that they would never have invested in Alberta if it weren't for this province's investment in telecommunications. They have in fact closed down a plant in Ontario to open up this one in Calgary because of our investment.

MR. MITCHELL: The \$195 million you're talking about in technology and research: does that include what goes on at the university specifically, or is that strictly government departments?

MRS. MIROSH: Strictly government. The university is excluded.

MR. MITCHELL: Do you have a handle on what's going on in research and development at the universities?

MRS. MIROSH: Well, the minister responsible for advanced ed would have to answer those questions. We do partnership with scientists there, and we work together with them to try to develop partnership research so that we're not duplicating research. We have two members from the University of Alberta and one member from the University of Calgary on our authority so that we can work together to reduce this duplication.

MR. MITCHELL: You don't have any idea, though, how much is actually going on. So it might be much more than \$200 million or might be much less than \$200 million?

MRS. MIROSH: From all the departments?

MR. MITCHELL: No, from the university.

MRS. MIROSH: Oh, from the university. I can't answer that question because I'm not the minister responsible for the university. I'm sure that he could.

MR. MITCHELL: What I'm getting at is that it seems to me that a former president of the University of Calgary had pointed out to us that maybe the most logical place to have science and research as a program, which is what it is in the Premier's office, would be in advanced education. If advanced education really has the weight of research somehow under its purview, maybe that's where it should be. If you can't tell us, for example, how much is being done there – it seems to me that if you're going to do research and you're going to co-ordinate it, there's a huge amount of it being done at universities.

MRS. MIROSH: Well, I can tell you that the minister of advanced education has it under review. He's hired Dr. Cloutier, who comes from Montreal, who used to be the president of the Alberta Research Council and is now reviewing research activities in the university. I'm not exactly sure when that review will be completed, but we are working with him in trying to bring some of these ideas together and develop a good research strategy.

It's to everybody's advantage to work together within this whole province so that we aren't duplicating, so that we're developing research that will move on an international scale so that we become globally competitive. This is why the Premier's going to Houston. He is examining a medical research facility there. He will be bringing back business to this province. So we want to be on the international global market.

MR. MITCHELL: I'm glad you raised the question of medical research. It's a question that I wanted to pursue too. We have a study of the economic role and impacts of medical research in the Edmonton region by Nichols Applied Management done for the University of Alberta. They point out that the University of Alberta hospital is internationally renowned for its medical research and for the economic significance of that research to this region. I wonder whether you've taken an interest in the fact that, you know, gynecological and obstetrical services are being moved to the Royal Alex. What's your assessment of the impact that will have on this world-class research potential?

MRS. MIROSH: You're asking me questions that are really not in my ministry. It's the Minister of Health.

THE CHAIRMAN: That question is really out of order, Mr. Mitchell.

MR. MITCHELL: I guess what I'm getting at is that, you know, we have a special office, a minister responsible for co-ordinating research. You haven't been able to tell me how much research is going on in the universities, yet that's probably pretty significant. You know, it seems to me that you should be able to tell us the significance of the move or you should want to know and want to follow up on the significance of the move from the U of A to the Royal Alex to research into women's health.

I'm worried that the co-ordination, in fact, isn't occurring. It's useful, I'm sure, to have you look at the \$195 million, but it seems to me that you would have a responsibility to look at all the rest of it. I mean, if you're not looking at it, who is, and how's it being co-ordinated? I'm sure that the minister of advanced education has a lot of other things on his mind. So how do we get to the root of that?

MRS. MIROSH: We are currently looking at setting up the authority to do that.

MR. MITCHELL: So, then, these are relevant questions.

MRS. MIROSH: Well, we haven't advanced to the stage where we have the mechanism in place. It doesn't happen until our legislation goes through the House. We have the accountability process for all departments to adhere to. We also have the priority established. That mechanism is just now building. It's still in the process.

MR. KLEIN: I think that what's important here, Mr. Chairman, is that we are in fact doing something. You know, we had all these research activities in separate departments. Now we're trying to pull it together so that we can leverage the money that is now dedicated to research within government against dollars that are out there in the private sector. I guess it's a matter of taking one step at a time. Certainly, as the minister has indicated, there's tremendous co-operation now developing between government and the universities.

There's also one other fund out there that is very significant in terms of research. That fund, as well, will not be brought into Dianne's portfolio, and that is the Alberta heritage medical research fund, which now stands at \$600 million and grew from seed money of \$200 million. Basically, what Dianne is trying to do is in fact model to a great degree the Alberta heritage medical research fund.

MR. MacNICHOL: Mr. Chairman, if I could just add something. In fairness to the minister this TRAC group has monitored what goes on in advanced ed and all the other departments. They do meet quite often and talk about that.

MR. MITCHELL: Which group's that?

MR. MacNICHOL: The TRAC group.

MRS. MIROSH: This one is made up of the ADMs.

The Alberta heritage fund for medical research is exactly what our legislation is going to be based on. That particular branch has peer evaluation on an international scale, and that's why you see reports like that. It isn't only local evaluation; it is national and international evaluation.

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MR. MITCHELL: So that group would look at the move of obstetrics and gynecological services from the U of A to the Royal Alex and say, "Is that good or is that bad for women's health, for research?"

MRS. MIROSH: Well, they fund research all over the province. The location where the research takes place is really irrelevant. It's the quality of the research that takes place. The Royal Alex is a quality hospital, as a person who's an alumnus of that hospital. It has a separate obstetrical building.

MR. MITCHELL: But of course there's a great deal of concern about whether that kind of research would be done as successfully at the Royal Alex as it has been done at the U of A when the U of A is so much more tied to the faculty and the facilities of the university.

MRS. MIROSH: But the University of Alberta research in all areas has been partnershiped with us outside of the campus buildings. The TRILabs I was talking about are not located on the campus. We have partnershiped with the University of Alberta in research all over Alberta. The location of the research is not the issue; it's the quality of the research.

MR. MITCHELL: Well, it depends on what you're researching. It'd be tough to research dinosaurs in downtown Edmonton.

MRS. MIROSH: But the research is taking place in a museum.

MR. MITCHELL: I would say, though, that in fact there is a very, very strongly held opinion amongst these people at the university that this move to the Royal Alex will erode the quality and the ability of that research to be conducted at the standard and the level that it was conducted at the U of A. Now, has your group looked into that? Have they done a study, have they somehow assessed that, or was that just an afterthought? Or has it been a thought at all?

MRS. MIROSH: No, our group has not been requested to do that at this time, but I am confident that Dr. Spence has a good handle on all the research that's taking place in the medical community.

MS CARLSON: I'd like you to just expand a little bit on the information that was provided to us about your trip to Texas, Mr. Premier. Can you indicate what the purpose of the Texas reception at the Lakeside Golf Club on March 23 is and who you're going to be meeting with there and what prospects you foresee with respect to attracting investment to Alberta.

MR. KLEIN: We have sent out well over, I would say, 250 or 300 invitations to business leaders, not only throughout Texas but other states as well. This is an opportunity to get to know them, to make a presentation to them relative to the Alberta advantage, as we will be doing at a seminar the following day that's being organized and hosted by the government of Alberta. In addition, there will be numerous other meetings set up with firms who have indicated that they're interested in Alberta, that they know about Alberta, and that they're interested in investing and doing business here.

This is all part of what we said we were going to do as, I guess, the second phase or the other phase of our program; that is, to get out there and sell the Alberta advantage in terms of our corporate and personal income tax structure, in terms of being the only jurisdiction in Canada without a provincial sales tax and some of the other prohibitive taxes that have been introduced by other jurisdictions and really to tell the Alberta story.

Certainly I've received numerous replies from individuals who have received my letter and who have indicated that they're looking forward to participating with the Alberta delegation in exploring economic opportunities in this province.

MS CARLSON: Two hundred or 300 invitations, you said, have been sent out. Will the same people be attending the Texas reception, the dinner that same night, and then the seminar which the government of Alberta is hosting on the following day?

MR. KLEIN: I would imagine that many of those people will be there, but the seminar the next day is to really get into detail relative to the opportunities that exist here. The reception is more of a social gathering and an opportunity for me to give a broad overview relative to what is happening in this province.

MS CARLSON: And the dinner?

MR. KLEIN: Pardon me?

MS CARLSON: The dinner. You talked about what you'll be doing at the seminar and the reception, but what about the dinner?

MR. KLEIN: The dinner is a very small dinner, as I understand it.

MS CARLSON: Okay. Small seating. What does that mean: small seating?

MR. KLEIN: Well, I don't - Jim, do you have the itinerary here?

MR. DAU: I don't have that with me.

MR. KLEIN: There was a dinner list, I know, of about 20 people or so.

MS CARLSON: And do you have a list of who those people will be? Would you provide that to us?

MR. KLEIN: I can provide it to you.

MS CARLSON: Okay.

Of the 200 or 300 invitations that went out, how many have you got confirmed so far, and could you provide a list of that? It should be simple.

MR. KLEIN: I just don't have it in front of me.

MS CARLSON: No, no. You could provide it.

MR. KLEIN: Had I known that you were going to ask that question, I could have brought that information along. The agenda is out there. It has been made public.

MS CARLSON: Well, in fact I have your itinerary, and it doesn't list those businesses. We would like to know.

MR. KLEIN: It'll be worth while.

MS CARLSON: Well, will you provide the information or not? [interjection]

MR. KLEIN: Pardon me? [interjection] Yes, I do a report after, but why is it of interest to you who I'm meeting with?

MS CARLSON: I think it's very much of interest to all of the people of this province.

MR. KLEIN: No, I mean the whole list. I don't have a problem. What do you intend to do with it?

MS CARLSON: We intend to share with those people from the province who wish to know who it is that you're meeting with.

MR. KLEIN: Okay. Fine. We'll get you the list.

MS CARLSON: Okay. So that will also include the petrochemical companies that you're meeting with on March 24?

THE CHAIRMAN: I can't hear you, Ms Carlson.

MS CARLSON: I have a problem with that, Richard. We could hardly hear – I'm sitting right next to Grant, and when he was asking his questions, you guys were gabbing there. You should be paying attention to what's going on here.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, there's nobody gabbing right now, and I still can't hear, and as chairman I do need to hear.

MS CARLSON: I asked if he would provide also the names of the petrochemical companies that he's meeting with on March 24.

MR. KLEIN: I'm going to get the detailed itinerary; okay? It's on my desk. That is for my information at this particular time. I'll be glad verbally to share what I can out of that itinerary.

MS CARLSON: Okay.

MR. KLEIN: But, you know, when we're sharing, it goes two ways. Right?

MS CARLSON: Agreed. Agreed.

So can you tell me what the difference is between the Alberta delegates' function that's being held later that day, on March 24, and the reception?

MR. KLEIN: I will just as soon as I get the itinerary. Okay? Then I'll be able to give you a clear answer.

MS CARLSON: Great. That's wonderful.

MR. KLEIN: But again, you know, I ask: what has this got to do with the estimates?

MS CARLSON: Well, I think it has a lot to do with the estimates. If the Alberta taxpayers are paying for a reception and a seminar that the Premier's hosting, then it's every bit of our information. I think it has a lot to do with what's happening in the estimates. This is where the money's being spent.

MR. KLEIN: Are we not examining the estimates in a global sense to determine whether in fact we're meeting our budget projections?

MS CARLSON: I think this is part of being able to understand . . .

MR. KLEIN: Well, I don't have a problem sharing it with you. I just don't have the information in front of me.

MS CARLSON: Okay. That's fine. You can provide it. That's no problem.

I'd like to move on to northern development now, if I may.

MR. KLEIN: Just as soon as that comes up, I'll come back to you.

MS CARLSON: Right.

In your business plan, part of what you state under Critical Success Factors is, "Present northern concerns and advice to government." With that in mind, I'd like you to tell us to what extent you've gone to the northern communities and evaluated the impact of the VLTs there and brought those concerns back to the government here. How many dollars that we see in the estimates are attached to that? So could you give us a little report on what you've done in that regard?

MR. JACQUES: Your question started off relating to the public meetings, as I recall. The public meetings that we held this past year – and if you hang on just one second, I'll tell you the locations because they are very important to understand the scope of the work that we're undertaking. Just bear with me here.

MS CARLSON: Actually, my question asked about "presenting northern concerns and advice to the government," which is under Critical Success Factors.

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MR. JACQUES: Yeah, but I have to explain that the vehicle which we use to obtain the information from northern Albertans – by the way, Edmonton is not northern Alberta – is through a series of public meetings. We have probably in the order of some 100 to 125 briefs that are submitted to us over the series of those five public meetings.

What we do as a council is review each and every brief. There are a total of nine members on the council, of which I'm the chairman, and there are four that are appointed by order in council on a yearly basis. I can go over the list of the current ones, if you wish. For example, we have Jerry Noskey from Red Earth, who was involved in various aboriginal programs; Diana Knight, who is from Little Smoky, and she's involved in a mixed farming operation; Gwen Tegart from Fairview, and she's a beekeeper; Floyd McLennan, who is the mayor of Grande Cache; Irwin Packham, who is a businessman from High Level; Jim Carbery, who is the manager for native affairs at Syncrude, and he's based in Fort McMurray; Don Lussier from Athabasca, who is the past vice-president of finance at Athabasca University; and the last public member is Marlin Sexauer, who is a surveyor out of Whitecourt.

What we do as that group of people is we meet first thing in the morning following the public meeting. We go over each and every brief that has been submitted, and we basically decide on a course of action that should be taken for that brief. They can vary: everything from the brief being submitted to a particular line department to get further information as to what relationship that department has had in terms of that particular subject matter. In some cases I will even take it up directly with the minister, again depending on what type the brief is.

What we also track throughout that process is: what do we see in commonality? In other words, what issues are northern Albertans telling us are a concern to them and are a concern to their community? If we see some patterns emerging there, then we put it on a list and say: "All right. Is there some vehicle or some way that we can bring together the people who are concerned about this subject, be they stakeholders or just interested people, in a meaningful way to develop some input that we in turn can then publish on a more global basis, and can we present that to government?"

We've had various examples of where we have been responding directly to the issues raised by northern Albertans. The fish and wildlife conference that we had in Grande Prairie in December of 1993, where we had in excess of 150 delegates, was a very controversial one because it involved the whole issue of quotas. It involved the whole issue of the federal government through natives. But it was one conference where we ended up making some very specific recommendations to the minister, some of which have already been acted upon and some of which are still receiving study, and he will be getting back to us very shortly.

We also, for example, in the latter part of January had a telecommunications conference. A very important subject within the communities of northern Alberta, which they have identified over a period of time, was the issue of saying: "Look. We represent roughly 60 percent of the total land area of this province. We only have 10 percent of the population. We have some very unique problems up here. One of them is this whole issue of accessibility in terms of telecommunications."

So what we did is we had a conference for two days in Edmonton with 150 people in attendance, most of whom were from northern Alberta, but we also had some people from AGT, for example, from DMR. We also had a study position done so that there was some gathering of information that could provide a starting point. Out of that we have produced some conference findings – it's a public document – and we will be using that in turn to now set up a process of saying, "How can we assist these northern communities and the stakeholders in addressing the very problems that they have raised?"

In regard to your question of do we go out and seek issues, do we try to stir up issues, no. What we do at these public meetings

is listen. We have no agenda when we go there other than to listen. The people tell us. Everything is recorded. It's an open forum, and we get a vast, vast scope of projects. Where there is commonality involved, yes, we address them, and we try to address them in ways that we get everybody's viewpoint on the table from northern Alberta. At this point in time I cannot recall, other than maybe one to two instances over the last year and a half, when the subject of VLTs has even come up in a public meeting.

MS CARLSON: I find that to be very surprising, because under your Critical Success Factors it says here, "Communicate with northerners on social and economic issues," and there's no greater impact socially or economically right now on communities than the VLTs and the redistribution of dollars therein. So you're telling me that you've made no attempt to raise that as a concern or communicate with northerners in this regard and that you don't intend to do so in the future.

MR. JACQUES: What was your question? I'm sorry; I didn't understand the question.

MS CARLSON: That you have no intent to raise this as an issue. VLTs have a huge social impact and a huge economic impact on all of the communities that they're in. Yes, I realize that Edmonton is not considered to be northern Alberta, but there are many VLTs in Grande Prairie and Fort McMurray and in many of the other small communities in northern Alberta on which they do have both an economic and a social impact.

MR. JACQUES: I agree with you that there are VLTs in northern Alberta, and I certainly agree that Edmonton is not in northern Alberta. In fact, I should point out: do you know where the geographic centre of Alberta is?

MS CARLSON: Where?

MR. JACQUES: You have to understand or at least know the north. Yes, I understand there are VLTs. I've seen VLTs.

MS CARLSON: You're not answering the question.

MR. JACQUES: Well, you're asking me: is it an issue? I'm saying that I don't see it as being an issue. You're making a broad, sweeping statement that this is a concern of urgent nature to northern Albertans. I mean, I would ask you to look at the minutes, for example, of all the northern meetings that were held by the Lottery Review Committee to take a look at the issues that northern Albertans raised even when they were dealing with the specific issue of lotteries. I mean, I sat there for that four-hour meeting in Grande Prairie on January 25 – I didn't see anybody from the Liberal caucus there – listening to the northerners talking about that whole issue, not only VLTs but talking about the programs in terms of lottery dollars, talking about agricultural affairs, talking about AADAC, talking about the Wild Rose Foundation. I mean, if you want to make an issue, sure, you can put anything on the table, generate enough controversy on it, and say that it is an issue. I'm saying that we're approaching it in a responsible manner. We're responding in a responsible manner.

MS CARLSON: I'm responding to the critical success factor that you have listed in your business plan which says, "Communicate with northerners on social and economic issues," and you're

telling me in your answer that VLTs are not significant from a social or an economic perspective in northern Alberta.

MR. JACQUES: We communicate with northerners. We don't communicate to northerners. We act and respond to the issues that northerners raise with us. We do not go out nor do we have the mandate. I'm sure you're familiar with the Act, you've read it, and you understand fully the terms of reference in which we operate. That is not within our mandate.

MS CARLSON: So your mandate is not to communicate with them.

MR. JACQUES: I said: communicate with them, not communicate to them.

MS CARLSON: Well, I'm saying: communicate with them. You're telling me that's not . . .

THE CHAIRMAN: We're getting into a bit of a spitting contest here. I believe it's pretty clear as to what both members have said.

MR. MITCHELL: I'd like to pursue this further with the Premier.

MR. KLEIN: Pardon me? I'm sorry. I was just trying to get some information.

MR. MITCHELL: No problem. In fact, I don't want to come between you and any information you want to give us on that trip to . . .

MR. KLEIN: Well, I'm willing to go through the whole book here with you, absolutely. Are you ready?

MR. MITCHELL: No. Why don't you just table the book?

MR. KLEIN: No, I'm not going to table this. This was prepared for me, not you, Grant.

MR. MITCHELL: Right.

MR. KLEIN: Okay.

MR. MITCHELL: I'd like to ask you a question about casinos.

MR. KLEIN: Great.

MR. MITCHELL: Good. What sort of polls have been done out of your office to determine what people's reactions are to video slot machines?

MR. KLEIN: As you know, there is a review ongoing. The MLA for Lacombe-Stettler is conducting a review in accordance with a promise that I made to, first of all, representatives of the Calgary and Edmonton community associations, who were concerned that VLTs were cutting into bingo and traditional casino gambling, but mostly bingo.

Secondly, I met with about 80 mayors and reeves and councillors from throughout Alberta in Bonnyville who expressed the same concern, only their request was for a better distribution of funds from lotteries; i.e., casinos and 6/49 and all the other lottery games that are allowed. My commitment to them at that particular time was to set up a council, set up a committee to look at all

issues surrounding gambling: perhaps how a gambling fund should be administered, how gambling dollars should be reported, and how gambling dollars should be distributed back to the community and for the community good.

3:42

This involves horse racing. This involves bingo. This involves lotteries: 6/49 and all the other games that you could buy at the local grocery store or wherever they have a western lottery designation. This involves VLTs, which are also under lotteries. This involves casino gambling, as we now know it, and there are numerous casinos operating throughout this province. This also involves, I guess, this evolving thing relative to so-called enhanced casinos.

As you know, there have been proposals by, I believe, Northlands. They've made representation. The Calgary Exhibition and Stampede has made representation to go into this so-called enhanced gambling, where some of the rules are changed. I would imagine it would require some changes to the liquor Act, to allow liquor to be served in the casino area. I would imagine it would involve, if it were ever to come to fruition, changes in rules to allow certain other games in casinos that are not now allowed in casinos, such as slot machines. The other component, of course, is the whole issue of gambling on Indian nations, and, again, that is an evolving issue.

So, yes, as I understand it, the chairman of the committee has received over 5,000 written and oral presentations. She has a tremendous task ahead of her in pulling all this together and then making recommendations as to how we address gambling in a global sense, not to single out one component of gambling but to look at gambling overall.

MR. MITCHELL: Have you been approached by any business interests specifically to set up profit, Las Vegas type casinos in Calgary or . . .

THE CHAIRMAN: That question is right out of order.

MR. KLEIN: Well, I don't mind answering that.

Yes, I was approached about a year and a half ago. I met with a fellow by the name of John Riley, who was a lawyer in Las Vegas. John Riley was the former chairman of the Nevada State Gaming Commission and is now a consultant. He talked to me very briefly about so-called enhanced gambling in this province. At that time he was referred to the then minister in charge of lotteries, Ken Kowalski, who indicated to him that changes at that particular time were not being contemplated.

MR. MITCHELL: Are they being contemplated now?

MR. KLEIN: Well, I don't know if they're being complicated – I'm sorry; I know they are complicated. I don't know if they are being contemplated. Basically, this is what Judy Gordon's committee will determine.

MR. MITCHELL: I went to the Calgary Hospice last Friday and had a tour, met with many of the workers . . .

MR. DOERKSEN: I can't hear you again, Grant. Sorry.

MR. MITCHELL: I went to the Calgary Hospice on Friday and met with many of the workers . . .

MR. HAVELOCK: Which hospice? There are a couple of hospices in Calgary.

MR. MITCHELL: It's called the Calgary Hospice.

MR. HAVELOCK: Because there's Beswick House and there's also the . . .

MRS. MIROSH: Agape.

MR. HAVELOCK: The Agape Manor.

MR. MITCHELL: No. This was the Calgary Hospice, and you know the quality of people there, their dedication and their determination. For 15 years they have been able to fund their operations, millions of dollars, almost exclusively without any government support. There've been two grants amounting in total to \$90,000.

MR. KLEIN: Something like that, yes.

MR. MITCHELL: Now they're closing their doors. I'm wondering: because they're having such difficulty raising funds, and group after group is indicating their conviction that video slot machines are overwhelming the traditional non liquor driven, non 24-hour, nonprofit, volunteer-supported casinos and bingos – these are being overwhelmed by these video slot machines. I think the hospice is proof positive. In one sense the government is saying to communities, “You've got to do more.” On the other hand, they're turning around and competing for the very resources that these communities, these volunteers, these charity groups need to do what it is they're being asked to do. How do you respond to that? What do you think about that?

MR. HAVELOCK: Mr. Chairman, is that relevant to what we have before us?

MR. MITCHELL: Yes.

MR. KLEIN: The way I respond to that is that that is precisely what Judy is trying to sort out. Now, it has been indicated to me by many, many community groups that VLTs are okay if they get a share of the pie; right? If they get a share of the pie. Let's get off this thing about these nice warm, fuzzy, cuddly casinos that are operated by volunteers, so to speak. Very few volunteers are involved in this day and age. Secondly, that is big-time, heavy-duty gambling – big-time, heavy duty gambling – and don't tell me it isn't.

MR. MITCHELL: Well, it's not liquor driven.

MR. KLEIN: It is big-time, heavy-duty gambling.

MRS. MIROSH: Gamblers don't drink.

MR. MITCHELL: They sure do when it comes to video slot machines.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mitchell, you've asked the question. Could we get an answer?

MR. KLEIN: Then, Grant, I would challenge you, as I did your sidekick in the Legislature. You go out; right? You go out and tell these bar owners and these hotel owners who have video machines: you walk up to them and say, “I want you to get rid of these machines.” You tell the customers, “I don't want you to play this.” Why don't you do that? Well, why don't you do that?

MR. MITCHELL: I have.

MR. KLEIN: Oh, you haven't. Come on. I'm sure someone would be glad to come along, and we'll take a television camera.

MR. MITCHELL: Who are you recognizing, Mr. Chairman?

THE CHAIRMAN: The minister is still answering.

MR. MITCHELL: Do you know what the hotel owners say? They're telling me that they wouldn't have those in their establishment if they didn't have to compete with the establishment across the way, because they're seeing what that is doing to individuals who are literally addicted to that form of gambling. It is a highly addictive and insidious form of gambling, and this government is becoming more . . .

MR. KLEIN: That's what Judy's committee is trying to decide.

MR. MITCHELL: Am I recognized? I was talking.

MR. KLEIN: Well, I'm not going to sit here. Have you got a question to ask?

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we get a little calm here for just one second? This question is not only not on the estimates; it's not on the Premier's department at this stage of the game, Mr. Mitchell.

MR. MITCHELL: The Premier just spent 10 minutes talking about gambling.

THE CHAIRMAN: Because out of the goodness of his heart . . .

MR. KLEIN: Because you brought it up. I'm trying to say that if you have some useful advice to give, give it to the committee. Give it to the committee.

MR. MITCHELL: Good. Can I ask that? The Premier went to some lengths to outline the mandate of the committee, but he was very careful in that description to admit that in fact the Judy Gordon committee does not have the mandate to assess whether or not there should be video slot machines. She has the mandate to assess how the money raised by gambling should be spent, but nobody is assessing – except that when asked to do so by B.C., AADAC said you shouldn't have video slot machines. Your own agency has said that.

MR. KLEIN: That's the opinion of that agency, and I'm sure that you have your opinion as well. I guess we could look at other provinces, like Saskatchewan.

MR. MITCHELL: Like Nova Scotia, who has taken them out.

MR. KLEIN: Well, we could look at Manitoba, and we can look at Saskatchewan, I guess, and we can look at the so-called enhanced gambling in Ontario, where they're now moving to full-blown, huge casinos with slot machines in the casinos and liquor in the casinos. We see that now in Montreal. We see it in Manitoba. They're now contemplating this in Saskatchewan.

MR. MITCHELL: They have a sales tax too. Are you going to do that?

MR. KLEIN: No, of course not.

But if you want to be the saviour of all of Alberta, then you go out and tell these people who have them to get rid of them. Do it.

MR. MITCHELL: So you're being driven by a special interest group. Is that it?

MR. KLEIN: No, I'm not being driven by anyone. I'm not being driven by anyone at all. What I'm saying is that Judy Gordon has a very difficult task ahead of her, and she's hearing from people from all around this province relative to gambling in general.

You seem to think that it's all right to lose money playing blackjack. Is that okay with you?

3:52

MR. MITCHELL: No.

MR. KLEIN: All right. Then why don't you get rid of blackjack? Is it all right to lose money playing roulette?

MR. MITCHELL: I think that there's been an accommodation in our society about nonprofit, non 24-hour, non liquor-driven casinos and bingos that support our volunteer groups and our charitable associations.

MR. KLEIN: Is horse racing liquor driven? You can buy a drink anywhere at a racetrack; right? Are you saying they should get rid of liquor at all racetracks?

MR. MITCHELL: They are now being absolutely eroded and overwhelmed by video slot machines. You can't deny that, Mr. Premier. You can't deny it. Tell me that it's not true.

MR. KLEIN: I'm waiting to see the results of the Gordon report.

MR. MITCHELL: Have you done a poll to find out what people think about video slot machines?

MR. KLEIN: I'm waiting to see the results of the Gordon report.

MR. MITCHELL: So is that no, you haven't done a poll?

MR. KLEIN: Not as far as I know. Have you done one, Gerry?

MR. BOURDEAU: No. I'm not aware of any polls.

MR. KLEIN: Have you done one, Grant?

MR. MITCHELL: We haven't done one.

MR. KLEIN: Well, if you do one, will you share it with us?

MR. MITCHELL: Absolutely. Yeah.

MR. SEKULIC: Did you have more, Grant?

MR. MITCHELL: No. Go ahead.

MR. SEKULIC: Okay. Mr. Premier, I was wondering: could you indicate what resources are allocated through your office to provide support and co-ordination for your position as the chairman of the Alberta Economic Development Authority given that AEDA is responsible for planning the Premier's trade missions and outlining expectations?

MR. KLEIN: Yes, AEDA was very involved in putting this together.

MR. SEKULIC: What resources in terms of human resources? Who have you, I guess, seconded.

MR. KLEIN: Basically, AEDA is volunteer driven.

MR. SEKULIC: So there are no human resources from your office?

MR. KLEIN: We provide Art Smith with an office in the Department of Economic Development and Tourism in Edmonton and the clerical and secretarial resources that he needs. He's provided with an office in McDougall Centre in Calgary, and he has a secretary. We make resources available to him – that is, secretarial resources and staff resources – as required out of Economic Development and Tourism.

MR. SEKULIC: I've noted, Mr. Premier, your office staff also includes project consultants and project officers, and I was wondering if you could provide me with descriptions of the projects that they've undertaken within your office during fiscal '94-95 and what projects are planned for fiscal '95-96 and how much will be spent on those projects. So just a description and the nature of the work that's being done.

MR. MacNICHOL: Well, in our office and the Premier's office we use the words "project officer" as somebody that's assisting the SPCs or things like that. We do very little . . .

MR. KLEIN: . . . in terms of projects. The only real projects – well, there might be some projects, Gerry, within your department, the Public Affairs Bureau, and certainly there are projects within personnel administration.

MR. MacNICHOL: But in the Executive Council it's the people. That's where most of the money goes, in the salaries for the jobs to support cabinet and the Treasury Board and all those people.

MR. SEKULIC: One final question here is your expenditures in your southern office. I'd like to get a better grip on the nature of the work that's being done out of your southern office and what you'd expect.

MR. KLEIN: Is that Lethbridge?

MR. SEKULIC: Pardon me. Calgary, to be specific.

MR. KLEIN: The Calgary office? Much of the same government work that is carried out here. I use that office quite extensively. Ministers use that office extensively to conduct meetings, to do the same kind of work in Calgary as they would do here in the city of Edmonton. The people there are perfectly capable of addressing correspondence, of funneling phone calls, and of arranging meetings between ministers and MLAs and people who have business to do with the government.

MRS. MIROSH: And delegations. International delegations.

MR. KLEIN: Delegations; right.

MR. MITCHELL: Northern development. I'm interested in getting the Premier's insights into why he would have authorized

the renewal of the Bovar agreement to manage the Swan Hills waste management plant, which provides a cost-plus guaranteed profit arrangement which will likely cost Albertans as much as \$300 million in subsidies over the second five-year process of that contract which was renewed by the Premier.

MR. KLEIN: Well, it's not in my department any longer, and the chairman of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation is a member of this subcommittee. Perhaps he'd like to respond.

MR. HAVELOCK: Well, the agreement was renewed. At the time they went through an extensive hearing process with the . . .

MR. SEKULIC: We need the background.

MR. HAVELOCK: You want some background? All right. Well, do I have time? As Mr. Mitchell is aware, a number of years ago the province went through an extremely difficult, challenging, and exciting process with respect to special waste disposition, and I'm sure you're familiar with the history. We had a number of communities come forward, and they wished to participate in having a facility locally.

MR. MITCHELL: We know all about this, Mr. Chairman. I'd really like to get an answer from the Premier on why he renewed the agreement.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mitchell, I believe the Premier has deferred . . .

MR. KLEIN: We still have a plant to operate. There has been an operating agreement, and there's a commitment to review and amend that operating agreement from time to time. Why wouldn't we?

MR. MITCHELL: I guess \$300 million in subsidies would be one good reason.

MR. KLEIN: Well, we don't know that. As I said in the Legislature just recently, the nature of that plant has changed dramatically. The asset value of that plant has changed dramatically. The way in which that plant will operate in the future has changed dramatically. There is a waste stream that not only will be generated in Alberta but conceivably throughout this country.

MR. HAVELOCK: To supplement that, quite clearly at the time the hearings were going on with respect to expansion of the facility, it was determined that there would be sufficient waste within all industries of this province to support the expansion. What's happened subsequent to that is that, for example, there have been new technologies developed which can handle some of the waste. Some of the waste generators have also adopted some new methods of disposing of that waste which are environmentally safe and secure. The industry is very competitive also. A number of things did occur which have certainly impacted on the operation of the facility. One of the reasons we've gone to importation, for example, is to reduce that subsidy. I feel confident that if we can attract some waste, the bottom line is that it will help reduce that subsidy. We are also discussing the matter with Bovar as to the province disposing of its interest in the facility.

MR. MITCHELL: Did the Premier explore other possible arrangements; for example, a management contract rather than a cost-plus guaranteed profit contract?

THE CHAIRMAN: I will give a three-minute warning here on the Liberal side of the questions.

MR. KLEIN: The answer is no, that wasn't reviewed at that particular time. I don't know if it has been reviewed since.

MR. HAVELOCK: At the time the discussions were ongoing, there were certain parameters established by the private sector to become involved in the facility. The government felt they wanted to have a private-sector partner.

Again, when the facility was constructed, it was felt there would be more than sufficient waste within the province to generate not only a breakeven but a profit for all the parties involved. Again, some things have changed since then, but no, I don't believe they looked at a management approach at all. What we're doing right now, Mr. Mitchell, is sitting down with Bovar to look at the entire agreement, primarily to either dispose of our interest and/or to reduce the subsidy or eliminate it as much as possible.

MR. KLEIN: Now do you want to ask me about the Houston trip?

Okay. What I don't have, Debbie – I'm sorry; Art Smith has it – are the responses. I understand that between the dinner, where I'm speaking and which is being sponsored by the . . . Oh, the dinner, by the way, is not a government-sponsored dinner. It's being sponsored by a private businessperson for the government. Both dinners, Thursday and Friday nights, are sponsored by the business community. The luncheon where I'm the guest speaker is on the Thursday. You understand that Wednesday is a travel day. I arrive in Austin; I'm meeting with Texas Governor George Bush in the morning, then going on to Houston, where I'm speaking to the Greater Houston Partnership, which is like the chamber of commerce and other business organizations. Then I'm meeting with the *Houston Chronicle* editorial board. The former president, George Bush, has asked that I meet with him – I don't know what the agenda is – so I'm going to try and work that meeting in. He's quite intrigued with what is happening here. There is the Texas reception; okay? The Texas reception, as I understand it, is being sponsored – is that sponsored by Texas or is that sponsored by us, Rod?

4:02

MR. LOVE: I think it's ED and T.

MR. KLEIN: Okay, and I just don't have the number of people who will be attending that reception. Then there is a dinner that is privately sponsored for a small number of people. The next day there is the Alberta advantage seminar. That takes place all morning. This is where Pat Black, Murray Smith, and myself will be participating with members of the Texas business community to talk about some of the advantages. There's a luncheon; that's being hosted by the Canadian Consul General in Houston.

MS CARLSON: We have a copy of the itinerary. What I asked for was the names.

MR. KLEIN: Right. Okay. I'm getting right to that. Then I'm meeting with Celanese Hoechst, Exxon, Union Carbide, and then Dr. Deisseroth of the Texas medical centre, University of Texas, Anderson Cancer centre. That meeting is taking place with representatives from the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research. Then there's a barbecue that evening that is hosted by members of the Alberta business community, who are traveling at their own expense. There are 36 members of the Alberta, not just Calgary, business community – I'm sorry; I get hung up on that

– who have been confirmed as of March 9, and I'm sure that list is much longer now.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Premier. That concludes the second Liberal hour of questioning at this point in time.

I'll take just one minute on a small explanation of what we're doing here. Through consultation with myself, our House leader, and your House leader, it had been agreed that the Premier, because of a previous commitment, had to leave at this time. This committee will continue, though, because in consultation with government members they've all expressed a desire to ask questions about NADC, about Mrs. Mirosch's department, and about the department that Mr. Dixon is responsible for.

So at this stage of the game we will begin the Conservative second hour, if you would like, or the remains of that second hour and conclude this meeting, with any luck at all.

MR. MITCHELL: As you know, the Standing Order indicates there is a minimum of – well, it has to be four hours. We've used about two hours. We only had a few minutes on a question from Mr. Doerksen, which constituted the first effort on the part of the government members. If they don't want to use that hour, then we'll use it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, unequivocally, Mr. Mitchell, within the agreement reached by the two House leaders and down here there is no requirement whatsoever for the Conservative side to give up their portion of the hour. That will not be allowed; as simple as that. What it amounts to now . . .

MR. MITCHELL: Has the agreement been passed in the Legislature?

THE CHAIRMAN: The agreement has been passed.

MR. MITCHELL: In the Legislature?

THE CHAIRMAN: It's been tabled in the Legislature, and it's been agreed to in this committee.

MR. MITCHELL: Standing Orders are passed in the Legislature, if I'm not mistaken. The fact is: we've got four hours. If they don't want to use it, we will. So get to work, guys.

THE CHAIRMAN: I'll look for a little help here.

MR. WORK: My understanding of the agreement between the two House leaders was that since it's an agreement pertaining to procedure in a subcommittee, it would not be appropriate for the Assembly to direct the subcommittee how to conduct its affairs. Hence the way it was worded in that agreement, that the House leaders would recommend to the subcommittees themselves that they adopt this certain procedure. Consequently, my understanding of it is that it's entirely within the jurisdiction of the subcommittee as to whether or not they've adopted that.

So to answer Mr. Mitchell's question, no, it has not been adopted by the whole Assembly and it has not been adopted by Committee of Supply. If it's been adopted anywhere, it would be in this subcommittee.

THE CHAIRMAN: And it was the first order of business as we sat down to this meeting today. [interjection] Mr. Mitchell, hold on. I have the floor. [interjection] I'm sorry. I have the floor for a moment here.

We did agree to this set of rules, which was the agreement between the House leaders. The very last motion put at the first half, if you would like, of this subcommittee meeting – I just found it here – is quite straightforward. It says:

If that meets with the committee's approval, we will adjourn this meeting at this time. The government side has concluded their questions. When we come back, it will be the Liberal side for one more time, and we'll go on from there.

That, as I understand it, was voted on, and it was agreed to by members of this committee. I'd say the first hour is now a moot point. It's been agreed to. It's within *Hansard*, or at least the Blues of *Hansard*, and that's the way we're going to handle it. So at this stage of the game it is the Conservative second hour, if you'd like, and we will ask questions of NADC again or any departments within Executive Council, because none of the government members actually had questions for the minister. It was just the Premier.

MR. MITCHELL: Which is amazing.

MR. HAVELOCK: We have access to him, so we can ask him whenever we want, Mr. Mitchell.

MR. MITCHELL: Yeah, but not in a public forum.

The fact is that we moved to adjourn, and we did not move to say that there wouldn't be four hours. There's a Standing Order that says four hours. We want four hours. If the members of the government can't conjure up enough questions to ask the Premier in public, which one would think they would want to do, then we are happy to ask questions. We feel that you are exploiting the rules in a way that limits the openness of debate in this subcommittee.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, we can argue about this, I suppose, for another hour, which I'd prefer not to do. The simple fact of the matter is that nowhere within any rule that anybody can find does it state that the minister has to be here. The minister's department also includes northern development. In this case, it also includes Mrs. Mirosch's department and Mr. Dixon's concerns. So the bottom line is that we can ask questions of any of those three. Quite frankly, this is the government's turn to ask questions. They can ask them of anybody they want, and they have chosen not to ask them of the Premier at this stage. So we will start with the government's . . .

MR. MITCHELL: Are they going to use their second hour?

THE CHAIRMAN: Pardon me?

MR. MITCHELL: Are they going to use their full two hours?

MR. HAVELOCK: Why don't you let us get started, and then we'll see.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are now starting the second hour.

MR. MITCHELL: Our position is that if you don't use it, we will.

MR. DOERKSEN: Mr. Chairman, I have to ask a question though. If the hon. Leader of the Loyal Opposition doesn't want his House leader – whether or not the House leader's agreement with our House leader is appropriate, is he disagreeing with his own House leader?

MR. MITCHELL: You guys can play with the rules. The fact is that it's four hours . . .

THE CHAIRMAN: Hold on. Mr. Mitchell, the rules are quite straightforward here. A ruling from legal counsel makes mention of the fact that these are maximum time frames. And you're right; within Standing Orders, which we must agree to, it states that you have to have unanimous consent to get out of here before four hours. But we've already consented, if you like, to the first hour being used up on the government side. We are now in the second hour.

MR. MITCHELL: No, we didn't. We just consented to adjourn because the Premier had to go early. That's why we consented. We said, yes, if the Premier has to go, we're happy to let him go, and we'll come back some other time.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mitchell, I was directly involved in this conversation with Mr. Bruseker. It was not a question of adjourning this meeting for the last hour. The meeting was scheduled from 3 o'clock in the afternoon until 5 o'clock. What we did ask Mr. Bruseker is: because of the Premier's schedule, at this point would we let him go? We've done that.

MR. MITCHELL: This is the last meeting. The last meeting we adjourned somewhat early.

MR. HAVELOCK: Is this running against the clock?

THE CHAIRMAN: No.

MR. DOERKSEN: Well, let's resolve it quickly and let's get on with it, because I have other things to do.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let me put it this way: I'm making my ruling, and you know the recourse on that.

Government members, questions please. Jon.

MR. HAVELOCK: Thank you. I'd like to ask a question of Mr. Dixon regarding the personnel administration office. I'm in this book, the business plans, A Better Way II. I'm on page 10 of Executive Council. I'm looking at the total budget dollars, the '93-94 actual and then the '95-96 budget. Rather remarkably, the budget has gone up \$1.2 million, if I'm reading this correctly. It has to be one of the few departments that actually went the wrong way. I'd like to have some explanation as to why that happened.

4:12

MR. DIXON: Well, the reason for it is that the Auditor General recommended that systems that are valued at more than \$100,000 be capitalized and taken out of operating expenses. The government accepted that recommendation. As a result, for the '93-94 budget, where we made a significant investment in human resource information systems, about \$1.8 million worth was separated out of the total operating expenditures, as it would have ordinarily been expressed, and put into the capital account. So when you take both of those figures together, then you find that there isn't that kind of significant difference at all.

MR. HAVELOCK: So you're saying the capital account went up \$1.8 million?

MR. DIXON: Yes.

MR. HAVELOCK: As a consequence, then, your total spending on the operating side would be \$5.7 million – am I doing this correctly? – excluding the capital.

MR. DIXON: No. It would be added onto the \$6.4 million.

MR. HAVELOCK: What I'm looking at is that '95-96 dollars are \$7.5 million. Right?

MR. DIXON: Okay.

MR. HAVELOCK: You're telling me that out of that, \$1.8 million is capital.

MR. DIXON: No. The capital for '95-96 is \$269,000.

MR. HAVELOCK: Well, if it's \$269,000 . . .

MR. DIXON: That's right.

MR. HAVELOCK: You've gone from \$6.3 million to \$7.5 million. I take out the capital; that's still an increase of close to \$1 million. So that doesn't explain it, unless I'm missing something here.

MR. DIXON: Well, the \$1.8 million that was capitalized in '93-94 then is amortized over the next 10 years. So there's an amortization cost that goes back up into the operating budget as well.

MR. HAVELOCK: So if I leave out the amortization aspect, then the true operating budget for this department has not increased?

MR. DIXON: That's right.

MR. HAVELOCK: All right. If I carve that out then, what am I looking at as the true operating budget if I was using '93-94 as the base at \$6.3 million? What's it at now?

MR. DIXON: I'll have to take a look.

MR. HAVELOCK: Well, take all the time you need. It seems we have a good amount.

MR. DIXON: Well, I guess another way to look at it is that in '93-94, if you took our capital and our operating expenditure and added them together, that would be \$8.3 million. If you took our '94-95 and added them together – that would be capital and operating – \$8.1 million. Then in '95-96, adding them together it would be \$7.8 million. So in total it's going down.

MR. HAVELOCK: It's going down. I notice that you've reduced your FTEs by 37 from the '92-93 base. Is the majority of that reduction due to a reduction in the operating as opposed to the capital?

MR. DIXON: It's a bit of both. There's the investment of \$1.8 million. It means a reduction in systems operating expenses for us of \$240,000 a year and onward. It also means a reduction for departments of something like \$460,000 a year in administrative and operating costs. So there is a reduction there in operating costs. There is also the reduction by virtue of having a reduced salary component.

MR. HAVELOCK: Okay. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Havelock.

MR. DOERKSEN: Gerry, I'd like to direct some questions to you on the RITE line. Again looking at your budget on the RITE line, it's gone from the '94-95 forecast of \$2.1 million down to roughly \$1.7 million. It's a \$400,000 savings. How do the changes there affect that service, that reduction in numbers?

MR. BOURDEAU: Well, Mr. Chairman, it hasn't affected the service at all. In fact, the service of the RITE system has been improved over the last two years, and we're on a three-year program to update the technology. The RITE system has been around for 20 years, and it was very much a top-heavy system of individuals providing a service through the operators.

About two years ago we did a study, and we looked at the operation. What we were trying to achieve was a better way to do that business with less emphasis on the manpower and more emphasis on the technology. Up until that time, the technology was not there that allowed us to redefine the system, if I could put it that way, but about two years ago AGT introduced technology into the province, that we were able to sort of piggyback, that allowed us to introduce a whole new concept of how the RITE lines operate. So while the budget has gone down, the services have actually improved. What we've done is we've moved the RITE system into six centres in Alberta from approximately 35 operating centres before.

The technology has allowed us to introduce what we call a 310 number. We are the first government in Canada to actually try this out. What it is is a seven-digit number that allows you to dial toll free into the system. It's 310-0000. So we introduced that technology, and with that technology we were able to have just six RITE centres in the province, which we're aiming for in the third year of our program, which is part of our business plan, and we'll have improved services.

The services are now based on 8 a.m. to 6 in the evening. Before that, they were 8:30 to 4:30. The service is now on a voice mail system half of those times and through the weekend. So it allows, basically, 24-hour toll-free service for Albertans into the government system. The services also allowed us to set up a system within government – this is for government employees – to telephone direct, to use direct dialing now into certain centres. This is not comprehensive across the board yet, but it will be very soon.

So while the costs have gone down, the service has become sharper. It's become more instantaneous, and it's become more user friendly, too.

MR. DOERKSEN: Is it a system based on the amount of usage? In other words, if I use it for five minutes or 10 minutes, is there any difference in charges? Does volume have anything to do with it?

MR. BOURDEAU: No, not really. It's based on the system itself. Right now the way that is broken down is that public works is in the process of going in to privatize the actual technology that's in the lines the government has in place. That portion of the service is carried by public works. The portion of the service that we carry is the staff, the centres. We maintain those, and we manage the technology in the sense that public works provides it and the Public Affairs Bureau manages it. The amount of time you use the lines, no. It's very much like a 1-800 system. What you pay is a flat fee for that, and the number of calls really

doesn't make a difference. Right now the RITE system takes about 3 million calls a year. That's been pretty steady for the last few years.

MR. DOERKSEN: Incoming or outgoing?

MR. BOURDEAU: That's coming in. I'm not exactly sure of these figures, but in the last four or five years that's been pretty steady. There was a small increase when we introduced the 310 because it was easier to use, but it's been pretty steady, and the cost factor has been pretty steady too. Now that we're pulling back a little bit and moving into six centres, we estimate that the savings will be somewhere in excess of a million dollars a year.

MR. DOERKSEN: I think I've asked you this question in another forum. It comes from my previous remarks. What are you doing for training government employees or MLAs or anybody who has access to the line to make sure that they're using it? Because, particularly if we're not using it for long-distance calls, if we use the old 1-403 and dial long distance, that's not going through the RITE system. So it's advantageous – it should be almost mandatory – that government employees use the RITE line, because then the long-distance charges don't get added on. Have you done any training exercises to make sure people are using it?

4:22

MR. BOURDEAU: We have, Victor, a fairly extensive training system in place. It runs through the departments on a fairly regular basis. We've also introduced, based on some of the conversations that we had in our SPC and some of the observations and concerns that members had, help lines. We've put in two help lines in the province. The idea behind those is that any user of the RITE system could phone in if they're concerned about how to use it or if they're concerned about how it works. There's somebody on that line that will explain it to them. We've introduced a number of very inexpensive reference, call them, brochures or pamphlets, some of them just very small, almost like tip sheets, that give you numbers and points on how to use the system. It's something we've done in the last six months to a year. I think people are finding them very helpful. So we're constantly working on that. We realize, technology being what it is and technology as it changes too, that some individuals look at the change and they say, "Boy." It intimidates them, if I can put it that way. We're always looking for easy ways to help people use it, and as the technology matures too, we're also finding that it gets easier to use.

MR. DOERKSEN: Well, maybe a better way to ask that question: is this still a problem that people are not using the RITE system and in fact charging long-distances calls?

MR. BOURDEAU: I don't think it's a serious problem. I think what you're going to find is that there are probably pockets – and I don't have that sort of information in front of me – where people could better utilize the system. We're constantly, again, looking and working with public works to help us identify those areas and deal with the individuals or groups to help them use the system better. We're going through a transition with the technology too. We're sort of one step away from the best technology, and that's the area of government usage of it, within government calling out, if I could put it that way. It still can be very difficult at times since you have to look up a certain number and you have to add on the prefix and all the digits, and all of a sudden you get sort of an 18-number dialing sequence before you can dial an individual or their company or whatever it may be that you're after. We

expect in the next six months to a year to have technology available to allow us to eliminate that and make it even easier to call them in government or for government employees to use the system. I think that'll be the last bridge we go over when it comes to whether people are holding back from using the technology for whatever reason.

MR. DOERKSEN: Okay.

My final question on the RITE line is from your business plan which is on page 18. You have a new strategy here which talks about "investigate effectiveness of 'tele-democracy' service." I wonder if you want to give some comments on that in terms of what direction you're taking with that.

MR. BOURDEAU: We're just starting to look at it. Basically, what it is – maybe I'd better back up a little bit. We instituted a lot of 1-800 numbers in government to get opinions from Albertans, to get their observations, and we found that to be very useful. There were well over 200,000 calls into the 1-800 numbers last year from Albertans. The extension of that is a forum that we call tele-democracy. It's a technology that I believe the Reform Party has used quite extensively. What we're looking at is: is it the type of technology that we want to introduce to allow Albertans another avenue of access into government information? It would allow them to phone in and by hitting another number, they can leave an opinion or they can get more information on something, and then they sort of go down through the sequence and are able to leave comment. We're looking at it at this point. We don't know whether it's the best technology, whether it's cost efficient at this point, but we expect it will probably come to our next SPC, and we'll have more information to provide.

MR. DOERKSEN: Okay. Thank you.

MR. BOURDEAU: Thank you.

MR. HAVELOCK: I had difficulty hearing that answer because of the comments being made by the only Liberal opposition member left. It would appear, Mr. Chairman, that the Leader of the Opposition and Mr. Sekulic took off within the first 10 minutes, after we started to ask these questions after receiving a rather severe tongue-lashing for not having asked any. I'm shocked and amazed.

MS CARLSON: Mr. Sekulic was nauseated. He had to leave. He had no choice.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you for that illumination.

MR. DOERKSEN: Because we ask questions that are to the point?

MS CARLSON: Because they're puffballs.

MR. DOERKSEN: You don't want to know about the RITE system?

THE CHAIRMAN: Excuse me. Excuse me.

MR. DOERKSEN: It's not important to your constituents?

MS CARLSON: We all got trained on it.

THE CHAIRMAN: In the six years I've been chairing meetings, I haven't lost one yet. It's been real close today a couple of times.

We have a speakers' list, and while we appreciate the comments from various members, Mr. Pham has a question. Thank you. Please.

MR. PHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In fact I have enough questions here to last for three hours, so the women know why we make such a big fuss about asking for two hours or one hour.

I have a few questions I would like to direct first to the chairman of the Northern Alberta Development Council. Mr. Chairman, can you tell us what have been the major activities of the council in the past year?

MR. JACQUES: I'm sorry. Just repeat that one more time.

MR. PHAM: What have been the major activities of the council in the past year?

MR. JACQUES: Well, if we reflect over the past year, as I indicated earlier, there have been at least five public meetings. We had somewhere in the order of 100 briefs. In turn, we had a series of about 12 administration meetings whereby we would review not only the status of the briefs that were presented at the public meeting the previous evening and the disposition of those briefs, but we tracked each brief. So as we go into each administration meeting, all of the brief detail in terms of disposition and where we are in the cycle at that particular point in time – in other words, until there is closure in an official way of a brief, in terms that the final response has been given to the presenter, it's always going to feel like an active basis. So each month as we go through this – and this is with all the members of the council, as I indicated earlier. That would take up probably the majority of our time in terms of dealing with the issues.

Out of that comes this parallel tracking issue, and that is: what are those issues that are being raised that northern Albertans are saying are very important to us? Maybe it happens in Fort McMurray. Maybe it happens in Bonnyville, maybe in Cold Lake, maybe in Grande Prairie, maybe in Grande Cache, wherever. We start to see or can see certain patterns emerging. When that happens, we then generally strike up a little ad hoc committee of the council itself, the public members, and ask them to take a look at this subject matter and say, "Is this something that we should or could handle on a broader basis or generic basis within the total northern Alberta operations?"

Let me key in on a very specific example of that that occurred this last year. In fact, it occurred this calendar year on January 31 and February 1, where we conducted a teleconferencing communications workshop in Edmonton. I think I referred to that earlier to Debby's question. The subject matter was Telecommunications: Improved Access by Shared Resources. Now, we have in front of us the conference proceedings of January 31 and February 1, 1995, which were held at the Edmonton Inn. Rather than going through all of the conference deliberations, maybe what I could do is deal with a little bit of the introduction, a little bit of the background.

THE CHAIRMAN: I should warn the member responsible for NADC that you only have 20 minutes to answer this question.

MR. JACQUES: Thank you.

MR. PHAM: My supplemental question: we are asking for the names of the people who attend those conferences.

MR. JACQUES: I don't have that information with me, but I certainly could.

I'm going to read right from the introduction that's in the conference proceedings, because it's very important to all Albertans and particularly to northern Albertans, and I'm reading verbatim as it was contained in the report under Introduction.

The Northern Alberta Development Council advises the Government of Alberta about northern issues. The Council also helps northern Albertans address their concerns regarding government services in the region.

The NADC area represents 60% of the land base of the province and 10% of the population. Much of the region is still developing its resource base. The North's population is younger than the provincial average. Education, literacy and income levels are below the provincial average.

The distance to markets and delivery of services in this vast part of Alberta are challenges that northerners address on a daily basis.

4:32

The NADC holds public meetings to hear briefs related to social and economic development in the north. These public briefs are the entry point for our role in resolving community concerns with government departments, helping communities find solutions and compiling input for policy review.

Another way we gather information and recommendations is through research projects and conferences. Conferences are very helpful in preparing strategies that are suitable for the north. We take comments made by conference participants seriously and use their ideas in our final recommendations to government and other stakeholders.

Northern organizations told the NADC that the need to do more with less, meant that they must find new methods [and new ways] to serve their clients. These briefs gave some specific examples where northerners could benefit from improved telecommunications including the delivery of medical services to remote communities, and the delivery of long distance education and training. They pointed out opportunities to improve access to databases and libraries outside the north. There is a growing need for service providers and businesses to be able to electronically transfer information.

In northern Alberta, long distances between small scattered populations makes the delivery of services more difficult. This only increases the importance for good telecommunication services. Unfortunately the costs are often very high to provide telecommunication services to communities that are most in need of long distance education and remote medical consulting.

As the NADC began to examine these issues, we learned that public organizations were trying to address the issues of cost and access but they face three main obstacles:

- Organizations have to identify their priorities, their vision and needs. They must understand what their core businesses are so that the business, rather than the technology, drives their decisions.
- Groups often work individually. There is sometimes weak coordination between sectors. Agencies run into issues that others have already faced.
- It is difficult to keep up with the changes in telecommunications technology.

In response, the NADC formed an advisory committee of representatives from school divisions, health care, post-secondary institutions, libraries, industry, municipalities and government. Industry Canada and the Northern Development Branch provided funds and commissioned the consulting firm DMR Group Inc. to conduct a study. Our purpose was to facilitate discussion among northern organizations and carriers to explore potential solutions. We needed this study to gain information about the telecommunication needs of northern organizations. We wanted to discuss and confirm key concepts and strategies that might contribute to

improved telecommunication services. The study examined three main ideas:

- If northern organizations pooled their resources, they could receive better services at lower costs.
- If the public sector were to work with business, then both sectors could benefit.
- If costs were reduced, the use of telecommunications for videoconferences, data transfer and other applications would increase.

We then moved into the opening session, and there was a lot of exchange of information as we worked through that first day. What I would like to do, Mr. Chairman, is go to the small group discussion results and deal with a couple of the issues that rolled out of there. This was on the heels of the DMR presentation. At that point in time we divided all the delegates into 10 groups to discuss the presentations and findings. Two advisory committee members – that is, Diana Knight and Rick Neidig, the senior director of Technology and Educational Services, Alberta Vocational Centre, Lesser Slave Lake – gave a very brief summary of the discussion results on the morning of the conference's second day. It's important to note the questions themselves:

1. Why is your organization exploring the use of telecommunication technologies?
2. Are there any other opportunities?
3. The consultant described some of the obstacles in the way of opportunities. Do these issues reflect the range of issues that you have encountered or might encounter in using telecommunication technologies? What others need to be considered?
4. How do you rank the issues?

Looking at the delegate comments that came out, again on a consolidated basis. In terms of the first comments, for number 1, which were the "reasons organizations are exploring telecommunication technologies," the first item was to "improve access to information/services for clients, staff, remote communities, business."

Secondly, they identified the reduction to contain or in some way reduce administrative costs. They saw that through such things as reducing meeting costs, the co-ordination of service delivery, and also by serving a wider area.

The fourth item they came up with was with regard to the distance delivery of services, and they gave very specific examples in the area of health and in the area of education. Then, lastly, business opportunities that might be related to telecommunications. Those were really in two areas: one was the sharing of infrastructure, and the other was to do some consulting between the groups involved. In addition to discussing why they were exploring telecommunications technologies, many of the participants listed reasons for attending the conference.

MS CARLSON: Mr. Chairman, can he just table the document?

THE CHAIRMAN: I believe he probably could, but our side wants to hear the answer. What's the members' response?

MR. PHAM: I have to thank the chairman for a very thorough answer. I got a lot more information than I had ever anticipated, and that stressed the importance of the Northern Alberta Development Council. I had never imagined the enormous amount of work that you have to do. I would appreciate it if you could provide information to me in private or table the information or whatever, because I have other questions I would like to ask if it is okay with you, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Was the hon. member finished with that answer already?

MR. JACQUES: No. He was asking for clarification through the chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. PHAM: Thank you. Then before I ask the member more questions, I think that I'd better switch to the other person so that he has some time to rest.

THE CHAIRMAN: If the member would like to just continue with his questions.

MR. PHAM: Yes. My next question is to Mr. Bourdeau. I look at the RITE system that you have here on page 161 of the government estimates. For next year you are planning to spend \$1.7 million on the RITE system, and it is a huge drop from the \$2.1 million that you spent in the year 1994-95. I also heard a rumour that the RITE system is going to be privatized, and you confirmed today that it is going to be privatized. Can you tell us where we are at in this process now? How long will we have to wait before the RITE system is completely privatized?

MR. BOURDEAU: Mr. Chairman, I think there is a bit of a misconception out there about the privatization of the RITE system. It's the technology that's provided by public works for the RITE system that is going to be privatized, at least they're investigating whether that's a feasible option. What we've done is basically consolidated the RITE system, the RITE centres if I could put it that way, going down from 34 to six. Those six centres will remain. In the technology that's provided, basically the lines, there is a group of individuals over at public works that manages those on a day-to-day basis, on a year-to-year basis, and that's the component that they're looking at privatizing.

The RITE centres will still exist. The technology that has been introduced over the last two years – the 310 number, the longer hours that have gone with the ability to use that technology – will continue. The RITE operators that'll remain in the six centres will still be the point of contact for Albertans coming in. So basically government employees will still be the point of contact for Albertans calling the government for information.

MR. PHAM: The subsequent question will tie back to the preamble that I had. It looks like we have achieved some few savings from last year compared to this year. If we move to partial privatization of the RITE system, are we going to spend more or less the same amount of money on the total telecommunications package that the RITE system is providing today, or are we going to spend less than that?

4:42

MR. BOURDEAU: The component that we're responsible for will be spending something in excess of a million dollars less in future years, and that whole savings will kick in in this coming fiscal year and in the estimates of '95-96. I expect that they won't privatize the component that is provided by public works unless they can get a saving on it. It doesn't seem to make a lot of sense unless they can save some money, but I'd be speaking a little bit out of turn because I'm not sure what their terms of reference are on the longer term in relationship to their privatization initiatives.

MR. PHAM: Okay. My next question is to the minister responsible for science and technology. The government is going to spend \$195 million in research across government departments.

How much of that money will be spent on telecommunications research?

MRS. MIROSH: So far the exact amount that we've committed to the TRILabs over the last two years is \$900,000. Let's see if there are any others. That's probably it, but Public Works, Supply and Services are examining the cost currently for putting in new technology, an information highway system within all government departments, within the Legislature, as well as externally to schools and hospitals. So we are examining the cost of doing that, and that is through public works. We are working with the chair, Denis Herard, to bring all of the departments together to evaluate that proposal. That proposal is going to be in the form of an RFP that will go out for tendering. Currently, the Department of Health is examining new technology for the health system with smart cards and internal health information systems.

So even though it's not specific to research, we are definitely examining with all the departments the kind of technology that we feel would be appropriate for a new information highway system. It's felt that our province is in fact behind on information highways, and within the next two years we want to put in a system that is effective all over the province so that people can talk to each other within the province, within the various departments, within the municipalities as well, and then even connect through the Internet and other networks to other provinces and systems right across the country. It's a major, major undertaking. It's a major cost to this province, and we're taking our time before we move too quickly because of the cost.

MR. PHAM: Because it is a major cost and because it is an important investment in the future of Alberta, are we going to do a detailed cost-benefit analysis of the whole proposal?

[The bell rang calling for a division in the Chamber]

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, sorry. It wasn't my fault we disrupted this, but the bottom line at this stage of the game is we're going to keep going for about four minutes right now. We'll have four minutes to get down for whatever we're voting on down there. That will put us very close to about 50 minutes left to go. I was going to attempt a unanimous consent because I believe our side is running out of questions, but understanding that we cannot get unanimous consent from the nongovernment side, we will come back and conclude 50 minutes at some future date. I'll send out a letter tomorrow as soon as I figure this out.

MRS. MIROSH: Are we coming back here?

THE CHAIRMAN: In about three minutes we'll be done in this room for today with about 50 minutes left, give or take a minute or two, at which point we will be back here, as I said before, in a reorganized meeting with 50 minutes left. Who comes back to that meeting will depend on the questions that the government side has at that time.

MRS. MIROSH: Okay.

THE CHAIRMAN: So about two minutes to go. We'll have one more quick question with a quick answer.

MRS. MIROSH: We were having a conversation here about information highway systems, which is very important not only to government members, but the opposition should be paying

attention to this as well because the information highway system is currently being examined in this province. It is a major, major expense, but if we want to keep up with the technology, it appears that we're going to have to make this investment.

You wanted to ask me one more question, Hung.

MR. PHAM: I wanted to ask you about the cost-benefit analysis of that because it would be a major investment. Before we even commit ourselves to spend that much money on it, maybe we should find out what kind of benefit it would bring about. How much money will we save? Will it be able to make government more efficient? All those questions I think will take you quite a bit of time to answer, and maybe we should come back to the next meeting.

MRS. MIROSH: Okay. Mr. Chairman, the member was just asking about the cost benefit for an information highway system, but it is a lengthy answer.

THE CHAIRMAN: It's 10 minutes to. We're through our three or four minutes now. I'd like a motion to adjourn this meeting to the call of the chair. We have approximately 50 minutes – we don't have an exact number – left to go in this committee, unless we can get unanimous consent. The indications are that no, we can't. So we have about 50 minutes. It's at the call of the chair. Could somebody move that? All in favour? Any opposed? Thank you.

[The committee adjourned at 4:49 p.m.]

