

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

June 6, 1989

**Mr. Chairman:** — The agenda item before us is consideration of the third report. Copies of the report were circulated. I wonder, though, before we deal with the report itself, I've asked the Clerk to prepare a motion. You will recall that there was a specific motion of the committee that we deal with the auditor's department. As a way of dealing with that, I've asked the Clerk to prepare a motion to the following effect:

Notwithstanding any previous decision of the committee respecting its agenda, witnesses to be heard in relation to the review of the Provincial Auditor's report for 1986-87, the committee agrees that hearings be now concluded.

So, notwithstanding any other motions that we might have made, this is it. Does anyone want to move that? Basically . . .

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Mr. Chairman, would there be an element of redundancy here, since I thought that on Tuesday last . . .

**Mr. Chairman:** — No, there's element of loose ends that I guess the Clerk, more than anyone else, is concerned about, in that we did have a motion on the books that we specifically . . . that we hear the auditor's department. And he feels that either the motion should be rescinded or, more appropriately, superseded. And that's why we have this motion. And basically what it's saying is that there's no further hearings with respect to '86-87; the year is concluded.

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I did think that my motion last Tuesday was all-inclusive, that it would have included this issue as well. But if it makes the Clerk feel more comfortable in his role as having properly carried out his mandate, I would have no problem moving that.

**Mr. Chairman:** — So we've moved that . . . (inaudible) . . . to Mr. Neudorf.

**Mr. Hopfner:** — Is this motion a common motion that's normally passed or . . . I have seen notwithstanding any previous decision of a committee.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Well no, it's not, but . . .

**Mr. Hopfner:** — Well what's the common motion?

**Mr. Chairman:** — I don't think there is any precedent, Mr. Hopfner, in affairs such as this, but there is an outstanding motion of the committee that we hear the department of the auditor now.

**Mr. Hopfner:** — Well what was the motion that, then, Mr. Chairman, that . . . Could you bring back that motion Mr. Neudorf was alluding to?

**A Member:** — No.

**Mr. Hopfner:** — I don't know what the wording of that was any longer.

**A Member:** — I don't know.

**Mr. Hopfner:** — Was that still . . . (inaudible) . . .

**A Member:** — I think it was Mr. Muller, and I think it was made in January.

**Mr. Neudorf:** — That one referred to was at the end of the departments of being called, that we would then have the discussion on the Provincial Auditor's report at the conclusion of the departments. And what this motion would now be saying is that, in addition to all the departments being considered completed, so would the auditor's report also be considered completed for '86-87.

But I think any issues that are outstanding in '86-87, I feel comfortable that we can deal with them in the following year, indirectly, so I have no trouble with this motion.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Do you want to move that then? There is a copy of it there.

**Mr. Neudorf:** — As soon as it gets all the way down here.

**Mr. Chairman:** — The motion by Mr. Neudorf is:

That notwithstanding any previous decision of the committee respecting its agenda, witnesses to be heard in relation to the review of the Provincial Auditor's report for 1986-87, the committee agree that hearings be now concluded.

Any discussion on the motion? Ready for the question?

Agreed

**Mr. Chairman:** — Okay, now we're back to the third report as circulated. Is there any discussion on the report? Shall we move through it clause by clause or . . .

**Mr. Martens:** — Mr. Chairman, I would think that it would probably be better done later on after we've had time to edit it a bit more. I haven't had the time to really go through it. I've talked with the Clerk a little bit about it, and I've talked with the members on this side. I wonder if we could just postpone dealing with that. I don't think that there's any rush with it. We can file the report in the Assembly when it's concluded.

The items that need to be addressed . . . I think there were a few more things that needed to be said in the report, and I think that those things could be included. And we on this side have started working on that, and we'd be prepared to have our vice-chairman visit with you about it and then agree to what we can accomplish and then bring it into this committee.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Sure. Anyone else have any comments?

**Mr. Wolfe:** — Mr. Chairman, it seemed like the report that was prepared seemed to vary quite a bit from reports that had been prepared in the past. I'm not sure why that is or anything, but that's why I probably need some time to review it just a little bit.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Any further comments? We have a suggestion by Mr. Martens that we delay consideration of the third report, I guess probably at least until the next meeting, the suggestion being that the vice-chairman and myself hold discussions on the report and bring something back to the committee. Is there a tentative agreement on that? Is there agreement on that point?

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Chairman, I just have a question. On these reports that are submitted, has there been a minority report ever issued?

**Mr. Chairman:** — No, in the parliamentary system there are no minority reports to the Legislative Assembly. You know, the report . . . the committee making the report may decide to include an appendix of some sorts, but there is no such thing as a minority report.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Well, okay, let me just ask you then, if an individual doesn't agree with the report, or feels that there are other things that were of more importance than what has been included in this report, how does that individual then make his or her views known to the Legislative Assembly? Do you do that as an appendix, or do you do that when the report is presented in the House and then verbally make your views known? How is that done?

**Mr. Chairman:** — When the report is being considered in the committee, any member has a right to put their views on that report on the record as part of the verbatim transcript, and also to move amendments to the report and to have those entertained. Finally, when the report is presented for concurrence to the Legislative Assembly, a member will have a right to make comments on that report in the Legislative Assembly and again to have their comments on the record.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Yes, but my concern is that if it's not included in the report, I mean, when we are discussing the public accounts report in the Legislative Assembly, may one only discuss what is in the report, or is one allowed to discuss what has happened in the committee and discuss that in the Legislative Assembly?

I'm not quite sure how the rules in the Assembly work any more, and I say that, you know, very sincerely. I don't know how the rules work. I see they've changed dramatically before '86. And I'm not being critical; I just say that they're changed. I want to know what my . . .

**Mr. Chairman:** — Without having consulted the Speaker, without prejudging what the Speaker might have to say, it seems to me that if there's debate on the motion to concur in the report, that if a member of the Legislative Assembly were to stand up and say that, in addition to the items in the report, these are items which were discussed by the committee which I feel should have been included in the report, that that's fair subject for debate. I'd be surprised if it weren't.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Okay, that's fair enough.

**Mr. Chairman:** — But if, you know, a member were to start drawing in things that the committee had never discussed and said, well that should be in the report, and haul in everything but the kitchen sink, the Speaker may

want to make some comments.

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Mr. Chairman . . . (inaudible) . . . because we're making assumptions here that there will be members who are not going to be satisfied.

**Mr. Chairman:** — It's hypothetical.

**Mr. Neudorf:** — It's something that . . . (inaudible) . . . and we've never had this problem before. I'm sure there will be members who won't be satisfied.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — No, I'm sure . . .

**Mr. Martens:** — I wonder if my suggestion at the beginning isn't going to probably eliminate some of this need for concern. And I would suggest that we amiably approach this over the next . . . the longer we leave it and deal with it, the more consensus we'll get on the problems. And if we do it today, we won't get anywhere. If we leave it for within . . . give ourselves a two-week period to deal with it, it'll be . . .

**Mr. Chairman:** — Is there a general agreement then with Mr. Martens' suggestion that Mr. Hopfner and I have a go at this, then report back to you, say within a couple of weeks. Is there agreement on that point?

**Mr. Martens:** — I would also like to add that the NDP get together and discuss what they want to have in it so that we can mutually assist each other in finding a line here that is agreeable.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Good point. It's generally agreed then that Mr. Hopfner and I will continue discussion on the report, the third report, and then come back to the committee in a couple of weeks' time, hopefully with some wording that'll be acceptable to all sides.

That was the only thing on the agenda for today.

**Mr. Lyons:** — Mr. Chairman, I would like to move a procedural motion, much of which is found on page 327 of the *Hansard* for Thursday, June 1, and that is that:

The sittings of the Public Accounts Committee for the consideration of the auditor's report for the year ending March 31, 1988 . . . be held in the Legislative Chamber, and that the Clerk of this committee make the arrangements necessary with Mr. Speaker, so that such shall be done.

It's the same motion, with the exception that "for the consideration of the auditor's special report" is deleted.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Before we get into the debate, looking at the record, that motion, as you state, was put forward last time, but then was reworded to make it clear that we're not giving instructions but that we're simply recommending to the House.

**Mr. Lyons:** — We didn't get into that because we're not making any recommendations to the House; we're just asking Mr. Speaker's office to make arrangements for the sittings of the Public Accounts Committee.

**Mr. Chairman:** — I would rule the question, as it's worded, out of order. This committee is in a position to make recommendations to the Legislative Assembly. We are a creature of the Legislative Assembly, and ruling out of order, I would simply indicate to the member that if he feels strongly on this matter and if the motion were worded to the effect that this committee recommend a certain course of action to the Legislative Assembly, that generally speaking such motions would be in order.

**Mr. Lyons:** — Okay, thank you. I will include that in the motion.

**Mr. Wolfe:** — I'd like to make a motion. I'd like to move:

That the sittings of the committee of public accounts . . .

**Mr. Lyons:** — Excuse me, on a point of order, I have a motion on the floor.

**Mr. Wolfe:** — Well it's just regarding smoking in here, if you don't mind. I don't imagine it will take very long to deal with it, just while you're writing your motion.

**Mr. Lyons:** — This is probably even more contentious than mine. Why don't you let mine go first.

**Mr. Chairman:** — There is no motion on the floor right now because you suggested a motion; I ruled it out of order. Now if you want to move a motion, you can do that, but right now Mr. Wolfe has the chair and it's his prerogative to move any motion that he sees fit.

**Mr. Lyons:** — I respect your ruling, Mr. Chairman, and we can go ahead with Mr. Wolfe's smoking motion.

**Mr. Wolfe:** — I'd just like to move:

That the sittings of the Public Accounts Committee be held in a non-smoking environment henceforth.

**Mr. Chairman:** — The motion has been made by Mr. Wolfe that the meetings of the committee be held in a no-smoking environment. I would rule, given the mandate of the committee, that it's a matter that the committee can decide for itself without having to refer back to the Legislative Assembly. I therefore would rule the motion in order. Is there any discussion on the motion?

**A Member:** — Question.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Question has been called. All those in favour of the motion? Opposed? The motion is carried, but not unanimously — carried on division.

**Mr. Lyons:** — Mr. Chairman, maybe I can move my motion now. I would like to move the following motion:

That the Public Accounts Committee recommend to the Legislative Assembly that the sittings of the Public Accounts Committee for the consideration of the auditor's report for the year ending March 31, 1988, be held in the Legislative Chamber, and

that the Clerk of this committee make the arrangements necessary with Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Chairman:** — I have a motion by Mr. Lyons, and as soon as he gets it up here I take a look at it, and if it's in order I'll give him the floor.

Just before you . . . The part about, "that the Clerk of this committee make the arrangements necessary with Mr. Speaker," to me is redundant . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . You want to drop that.

Then I would rule that the motion before us is in order, and the motion by Mr. Lyons is:

That the Public Accounts Committee recommend to the Legislative Assembly that the sittings of the Public Accounts Committee for the consideration of the auditor's report for the year ending March 31, 1988, be held in the Legislative Chamber.

**Mr. Lyons:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The motivation for this motion is the motivation that I moved last time with a motion that was ruled out of order. But now that it is in order, I think the motivation still stands.

Given the seriousness of the allegations contained in the auditor's report, and given the seriousness of the events which surrounded the auditor's report and the way in which those events subsequently unfolded, I think it's right and proper that this report be considered before the widest public scrutiny.

The Provincial Auditor alleges that he is unable to perform his work because of certain activities of the government, and given that the response to that has put into question the ability of the auditor to carry on his work in an independent manner, this hearing of the Public Accounts Committee, I suggest, takes on the form of a question, first and foremost, of the allegations contained in the auditor's report and an examination of those particular facts.

Secondly, it has been a contention of the Premier of the province, and of the Minister of Justice, that the Public Accounts Committee is the proper forum in which the questions raised in the auditor's report, and the subsequent subsidiary set of questions which flowed from that report be dealt with in here as the proper forum. And if such be the case, then I think that it is only right and proper that this committee again hold its hearings in full public scrutiny.

The public has the right to know whether or not what the auditor says is correct in what he alleges, and the public has the right to know whether or not the Minister of Justice and the government is right in what they allege. And that public right to know is better served by holding the reports . . . by the consideration of the report in the Legislative Chamber where there is the physical capacity so people can actually attend the sittings of the Public Accounts Committee and the numbers that are warranted.

And secondly, the people in the province who are served by television, those eight communities that are served by

television can indeed see for themselves the questions raised and the questions answered through the activities of the committee.

It's, quite frankly, a motion to open up the Public Accounts Committee to the people of the province of Saskatchewan who are the ones who pay for the questions that are raised by the Provincial Auditor. That's basically the motivation.

I think that it's time, as a matter of policy, but using this as the precedent, that the legislature become more open and the proceedings of the legislature become more available for public scrutiny, and I cannot think of a better or more appropriate reason for that to occur. I think it's a step in the right direction for developing accessibility to the legislature by the people of this province.

And more importantly, and quite frankly, since the Minister of Justice put the Provincial Auditor on trial, or at least convicted him, I think that the least that this Public Accounts Committee and the Legislative Assembly can do is provide an open forum where the Provincial Auditor has the right to defend his statements and his actions before the people of this province. That's all I have to say right now.

**Mr. Martens:** — I will begin by making the observation that I consider the auditor's report an important item in the legislative system that we've got here. I don't necessarily bring it to the same level as what I perceive the responsibility of the Legislative Assembly to be.

We've had examples of that brought to our attention even in our discussion this morning that this committee is a committee of the Legislative Assembly. It has the freedom to recommend. It has no option on providing direction for the Assembly except upon recommendations that it will receive from this committee. It has its own mandate. It has a dynamic that is unique.

Each time that I walk into this building, I have a sense of awe in relation to its relationship to democracy, and that awe is enhanced by the fact that the location of Assembly has certain qualities that give it a special significance to the province of Saskatchewan.

I do not believe that setting committees into the Legislative Assembly is the answer to the focus of attention provided . . . or that we ought to provide for the committee. I have no problem in saying that this kind of forum here is the kind of forum that I believe it should be in. I don't have any problem with saying that it could be a bigger and a better room and having people in; I don't have a problem with that at all.

But to put it into the Legislative Assembly which has a uniqueness that is characterized by a lot of history, characterized by a lot of parliamentary tradition, I don't think that we should put the workings of the committees into that kind of a format. If we did the Public Accounts Committee, we'd probably do the Crown Corporations Committee. Would we do the Non-controversial Bills committee, would we do the Elections and Privileges Committee, all of those, estimates on various . . . of the committees, would we want to be putting all of those into

the Legislative Assembly?

I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that a recommendation saying that we need a better facility to hold the meetings that we've got is not altogether a bad one. I somehow feel that the credibility of the committee could be enhanced by having a better surroundings, but I do not believe that that needs to be related to the movement of this committee into the Assembly

I generally think that the committee can perform those same kinds of functions as expressed within the framework of a separate room, and I therefore would not vote in favour of doing it through the Legislative Assembly.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Thank you, Mr. Martens.

**Mr. Hopfner:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I guess probably in wrestling with this motion, I would indicate that on the top and all, given all thought and consideration and the fact that this motion had been tried to be raised in some other different format a week or so, I'll give it some considerable thought.

And basically I want to make this point very clear: I think the member that has brought this motion forward to the committee for consideration is definitely on a track of trying to bring the political element into this committee. I basically see this now, through this motion, wanting to take this committee back into . . . onto the floor of the Assembly and bring the politics on a very, very stringent base, just in the way he spoke on the motion itself, in a brutal attack on the Minister of Justice and the Premier of this province. His filibustering tactics and radical impression of the system that he's been displaying in the last while is basically, is basically a tactic that the public is becoming quickly fed up with.

I think that if a member has some questions to pose, then he poses them in this committee. I think that if the public is interested in this radical movement of the member from Rosemont and his peers, then I would think that they would be here listening. But I think, Mr. Chairman, that the public are fed up with radicals such as the member from Rosemont and others that have been displaying the filibustering tactics in this legislative building.

I think probably that once we get into the auditor's report for '88 that the questions posed, and the answers to those questions, will clarify a lot of things. And they do not have to be put in any type of a political forum. I think basically the answers can come in a more sensible and in a more relaxed way if people know that this political element isn't that apparent.

Witnesses are allowed in this committee, answers are allowed to be given to this committee, and people are allowed to feel comfortable without being politically crucified, or someone trying to become a political martyr of some sort.

And I think probably when you look at the Assembly and the tradition of the Assembly, in the Public Accounts Committee through the tradition, except for the fact of radicals coming into this committee and trying to change

it, but traditionally this committee has performed quite well with the auditor's report, and has gotten the answers quite well with the auditor's report, and has reported very well on those various reports back to the Assembly with satisfaction.

We've just gone through the same types of elements with the '86-87 report that, back in February I believe it was, when we tried to meet for a particular week, the political element came into this room. And where did we get? Nowhere. For one week we got nowhere because of the political element in this room, in this committee.

We come back when the legislature is in session, and all of a sudden there's a hurry-up on members of the opposition to get through the '86-87 report. We've accommodated that. Now we've heard comments today from the member from Saskatoon where he was not satisfied with the '86-87 report — the answers. It's in verbatim. He said it. And if he was not satisfied, why did he vote to the motion for moving off the '86-87 report? It's just those kinds of radical statements that frustrate the people that have to work in this committee. They can't make their mind up.

Well I say this very strongly. I say we have a tradition, we have a tradition in this committee to keep the politics out of it, and I say we try in our utmost — all members — to keep that political element out of this committee, and let's get the answers and with the auditor's report, dealing with the auditor's report. And let's get on with the workings and set up an agenda and deal with the '88 report if that's the wish of members that they were so expressing when we were ending up and co-operating with the dealing with the '86-87 report. This is why we moved off the '86-87 report. We moved off the '86-87 report so members opposite said they wanted to deal with the '87-88 report. And that's exactly why we accommodated them.

Now they're not happy about the accommodation. Now they're not happy about the accommodation. Well I never told you to. Now that's the answer — I never told you to.

Well, you know, like, this is the kind of radical type of members that the opposition can put in this committee to try and stymie it and bring it to a halt, as they've brought the Assembly to a halt, filibustering, on strike. That's the kind of stuff that's going on around this building. And I tell you, Mr. Chairman, if you allow this to happen, like they play with the rules on the floor of the Assembly, then this committee will come to a halt. And then which committee are the members opposite going to attack — Crown Corporations Committee, probably. Wouldn't surprise me in the least.

But I'll tell you, it's not going to work. People are frustrated with you, and you get out in your ridings and you find out. I tell you, they will have a different view as to what they are trying to do here and as to what the people are saying out there. And I'm going to have maybe more to say on this, Mr. Chairman, but I'm going to allow other people to speak as well. Thank you.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Thank you, Mr. Hopfner.

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not quite sure how much to say at this point. I don't want to create any inflammatory kind of a situation, but I do have some concerns. Mr. Martens has addressed, I think very adequately, some of mine, and Mr. Hopfner has also pointed out some of the points that I will probably be making in a more stronger fashion later, if I deem it necessary.

But I do think that one of the things that I am having a little bit of trouble with is this whole media situation. When a committee of the legislature or, for that matter, the legislature is being conducted with one thing in mind, and that is, the bigger the media grab we can have the more we will have accomplished, I don't think that that should be the motivating factor behind what this committee does. And that is the express purpose of the motion, as Mr. Lyons has indicated and admitted to.

I go back, Mr. Chairman, to the time when the auditor tabled ... or just prior, let's say, prior to the tabling of the '86-87 auditor's report. And I distinctly recall the predictions by members opposite of the horrendous shape that the government was in at that time. There were predictions of the mismanagement, the waste, and indeed corruption of misappropriations and so on that the auditor had uncovered. And I think that undoubtedly there were some things that had happened in '86-87 that, in retrospect, I think this committee has found, that shouldn't have happened.

But I also am quite convinced that as we went through the auditor's report and the public accounts item by item, as many times as not, the auditor did inform the committee that yes, that problem has been taken care of; yes, that situation has been rectified; and no, we've still got problems with this on an ongoing basis.

So I think as the story unfolded, these dire predictions that had been made by the opposition, and rightly so, I suppose, in the role that they're playing in this parliamentary institution, were being time after time proven to have been largely unfounded — not totally unfounded, but largely unfounded. And I don't think that the media bang was there as had been intended.

But I had a concern, and that is why I was one of the members from this side who said, hey, hold it now. There's \$2.9 billion that this committee has not even made an attempt to scrutinize. Let's not do this so quickly, because you were the guys who said there's been so much evil and so much wrong that has been put into '86-87 that I felt, either prove your point or vindicate us, one of the two.

And just because a period of time has gone by that it has become untimely, I don't think makes it any more right if there has been misappropriation and if there has been fraud or anything else that is illegal or has been wrongfully done. I think if that has been done, and that can be proven in '89 that something in '87 was not done correctly, it still makes it just as wrong as it would be a month or two months after the fact.

But I don't know. I'm almost tempted to say, what are you

guys trying to hide? I'm serious, Mr. Rolfes. What are you guys trying to hide? There must be an awful lot of good in that auditor's report and *Public Accounts* that you don't want to come out to public scrutiny.

I think we can turn the tables on you on this one simply because you're so anxious to move off of it. Why were you so anxious to move off of '86-87? And maybe we should have spent more time scrutinizing it a little more carefully and gotten the auditor on a consistent basis to say, yes, satisfied, satisfied, satisfied the thing has been changed. I suspect that that could perhaps be one of the reasons why the sudden move to get off of '86-87.

The other reason, I suspect, and I don't want to necessarily put motives in front of you, but is it because this is a bigger media grab, that there's a juicier plum dangling in front of you with the tabling of the auditor's report for '87-88.

And that, again, we're back here with the same idea of accusations of misappropriation and all these other things that I suspect, as we go through this auditor's report and the *Public Accounts*, many of these instances are going to be vindicated once more. So I suspect that it's the anticipation of what this report and what this special report holds in store that is a motivating factor for you.

But, Mr. Chairman, so far I have been talking in generalities, not specifically to the motion about moving the hearings into the Legislative Assembly for a media grab. And everyone knew, in the province of Saskatchewan, has a slightest interest in public accounts, that '86-87 was concluded, that this morning was the beginning of the '87-88.

Now Mr. Lyons has a concern that there are people going to be flocking into this committee, that this room will be just filled to the ceiling and the people will be hanging from the rafters. I suggest to all committee members that they have a look around this room. How many spectators do we have this morning at the beginning of the '87-88 accounts? I don't see anyone.

And I took note about the media, and I noticed that the media ... the first reporter walked in six minutes late after we had already ... They missed some of my tremendous preliminary introductory remarks, and I suggest to the reporter that they go to the verbatims to find out some of those tremendous remarks that I was making at the beginning, you know — and it's unfortunate that they missed that.

The second reporter walked in 16 minutes late. Then, 18 minutes after the fact, the third reporter walked in, but he found it so stimulating in here as we're starting to decide about '86 ... '87-88, that at 24 minutes after the time that this committee started its negotiations and discussions, he walked out. So we're left here with ... This is the type of media grab I'm talking about.

And for us now to move this into the public forum and the TV lights and all these kinds of things, I have more faith, I suppose, in our print media that they will cover these proceedings very, very adequately, as they have in the past. And so that just to be able to move into the spotlight

of the camera, I don't think is going to necessarily serve a useful purpose for the citizens in this province.

It's kind of interesting, Mr. Chairman ... And like I said before, I'm not going to hopefully be too ... have been too inflammatory with what I have been saying. I'm at least doing it in a moderate tone of voice, I believe.

But I want to conclude just by drawing to the attention of everyone that it was this government — and I stand to-be corrected on the date — but I believe it was this government in 1982 that, first of all, took this committee out of in camera hearings and opened it to the public and opened it to the media. I think that's a significant feature to keep in mind. We are not, I don't think, necessarily a hiding government that wants to keep things in camera. It is open to the public; it is open to the media.

And, Mr. Lyons, I would suggest to you that if the need be and I've been proven wrong, that somehow if spectators do come in, whether on their own or whether through encouragement by certain factors involved, that I would be quite willing to move this arena into, let's say, room 218, for example, one of the bigger rooms in this facility, but only after the need has manifested itself. So those are my initial comments, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Thank you, Mr. Neudorf.

**Mr. Anguish:** — Well I appreciate Mr. Neudorf's history lesson. I would say that it is a good move that this committee be open to the public. I think one thing that we need to look at that you didn't mention is by agreement of the committee. And I find since 1982 there is very little that happens that can be done by agreement, because there's nothing the government will agree with if it's rational and wanting to open this committee even more to the public.

The issue of Mr. Hopfner there, talking about how this committee should be non-political, and you just gave one of the most political statements I've ever a vice-chairman of the committee make. You run at my colleagues on this side for being — you use the words "radical" and "filibustering" and "being political". Our members want to open up the system more so that there is some sense of democracy in it.

You're protecting your Premier, in particular Mr. Andrew. Well the things that we want this moved into the legislature for are things that have been created by Mr. Andrew over a number of instances. I can think of going back to the legal counsel, Merrilee Rasmussen, when he laid a verbal attack on her. Later he apologized, and later she, I suppose, found the working conditions unsuitable at that time because she had been labelled political, and so she's no longer the legal counsel for the Legislative Assembly.

I remember the Ombudsman when Mr. Andrew attacked the Ombudsman, and when the Ombudsman's term was over, Mr. Tickell goes to the Human Rights Commission, and what happens? Same day as he goes to the Human Rights Commission the budget of the Human Rights Commission ... or pardon me, the John Howard Society, same day he goes to the John Howard Society you slash

the budget of the John Howard Society in half.

And the Securities Commission — the Securities Commission makes a ruling that you don't like; your cabinet goes in to put through an order in council to override the Security Commission so that your SaskEnergy road show doesn't have to hold to the rules that everyone else has to hold to.

And then your Mr. Andrew attacks the auditor in terms of a report that's likely the most damaging report to any government in the history of the auditor's report in the province of Saskatchewan. And what do you do? You attack, and you're like a bunch of eunuchs that surround your leader. You don't look at a historical perspective with the tradition of the legislature, or even this committee, as far as that goes. You don't like the rules, you try and change the rules. You talk in hypocrites. You look over here . . . You're talking as hypocrites. You look over here and say it's not a political committee, and then you make political statements. I don't think you have any desire to see the work of the committee proceed.

The auditor's report that we're moving away from today, you can't find any way to make an agreement even though it's over two years old and the information is no longer timely, and the only purpose we can have for the information is to make future budget considerations, and you've passed a couple of budgets since that report covers the year under review, so it's almost a useless type of a document.

In fact, I think, you know, you look at the rules of the legislature. The rule to open up this committee — and I stand to be corrected — but I believe it was by agreement of the committee that yes, okay, it should be opened up. That was a move that all members agreed on. You want to change the rules on something in the House, and no longer do you want to work with the committee. You just want to ram it through so you can try and grandstand to the public and get some attention because you accuse the opposition of hijacking the legislature.

I maintain to you, the legislature is doing their job — the opposition's doing their job, I should say. And what do you do? You arbitrarily change the rules. I mean, the only difference between you and the Chinese government right now is that you don't have guns and you don't have an army. And if you did have control of an army. I'd be afraid to think of the consequences if your activities in the legislature and this committee are any kind of an example. Tradition means nothing to you. If rules go against you, you arbitrarily want to change the rules. If an officer of the legislature makes a comment you don't like, you want to shoot the messenger, even though it's an accurate portrayal of what's happening with your government.

And certainly Mr. Neudorf wasn't inflammatory in his comments. He's inflammatory just by opening his mouth in this committee, and we can no longer conduct any meaningful work with this committee.

I think one of the main reasons for moving it into the legislature is so that, twofold: one, that it's on the television so people can see what actually goes on. Let

people make the judgement instead of using your rhetoric, instead of you trying to blame things that still happen in the government on governments that were there before 1982. No rational person in their right mind watching that on television would believe what you have to say, because you're a bunch of bandits, and I think that people watching on television would recognize that.

**Mr. Chairman:** — I would ask the member to withdraw . . .

**Mr. Anguish:** — No, I won't withdraw it.

**Mr. Chairman:** — . . . his choice of words. It's one thing to call people radicals, but I think bandits is perhaps not appropriate parliamentary language, and we're bound by the same rules as the Legislative Assembly in that regard.

**A Member:** — What did he just say?

**Mr. Chairman:** — I'm not sure what the member said.

**Mr. Anguish:** — Bandit is not allowed in this committee. Okay, I withdraw that comment, bandit.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Thank you.

**A Member:** — Crook's more appropriate.

**Mr. Anguish:** — Well, you're crooks and liars. You are.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Well, Mr. Anguish, I would ask you to withdraw those words as well. The Speaker himself has ruled those words are not parliamentary, and I would ask you to withdraw those words.

**A Member:** — It's a joke.

**Mr. Anguish:** — It is a joke; you've made it a joke.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Mr. Anguish . . .

**Mr. Anguish:** — Yes, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairman:** — . . . could you withdraw those words as well, please.

**Mr. Anguish:** — I withdraw those words.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Thank you.

**Mr. Anguish:** — . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . You've made this committee unworkable; you've made the legislative process unworkable. Never before . . . the new member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg with his little smirk on his face. Your cows would have more respect for the Legislative Assembly and the process than you do yourself as an individual member.

I mean, the group of you collectively have done more to destroy the tradition of the legislative process in this committee than anything that could have happened in the province of Saskatchewan.

**Mr. Chairman:** — I wonder if . . . you're not finished. I'm sorry, go ahead.

**Mr. Anguish:** — Well the vice-chairman says he can't believe it. He does nothing to make this committee work, sitting there as vice-chairman and a senior member of this committee. And the best he can do is refer to our members as radicals and all the parliamentary rhetoric that he can gather up.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Mr. Anguish, I wonder if I just might draw your attention to the motion, that is the motion by Mr. Lyons.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I was going to make a point of order before, but you gave a lot of leeway to people. Most of the people who have been speaking have not even been on the motion. I just want to draw that to your attention. And that applies to both sides. They haven't even been on the motion, and I think it's about time we addressed the motion and get on with this business.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Thank you, Mr. Rolfes. The point's well taken.

**Mr. Anguish:** — I'd be happy just to listen to members. I'm done saying what I have to say. There's no sense in dealing with any motions that we put on this side anyway, because there isn't even consideration.

The first words out of the mouth of the vice-chairman after the member from Rosemont moved a motion was political rhetoric and attack on the member who moved the motion. It's typical of their *modus operandi*. That's the way they operate all the time. If you don't like the message, or you don't like the words, you attack the individual. And that's the way you've operated since I've been in this legislature, and I don't see any indication as to why you'd change.

**Mr. Chairman:** — I suggest we take a five-minute break at this point. Thank you.

The committee recessed for five minutes.

**Mr. Chairman:** — just before we get back to the speaking order, I just want to pick up on a comment by Mr. Rolfes, and that is to point out that we are addressing a motion, and that although considerable latitude has been allowed by the chair in that discussion — latitude accorded to both sides — I think that we'd be best served if we were to complete discussion on the motion to restrict ourselves to discussing the motion and to keep comments of a personal nature and extraneous comments out of the discussion. And having said that, Mr. Wolfe . . .

**Mr. Wolfe:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd just like to say that I really have a problem agreeing with the motion. I believe that it adds nothing to the function of the committee, and it may actually take away from the functions of the committee.

The committee is already open to the public. The press are here. People are free to speak. But many people, many people, especially public servants, are intimidated by such things as the public and cameras. We are dealing with public servants, and I believe we have responsibility

to them and to this committee to allow them to speak freely here.

And I'd just like to remind all members of how simple it is to do things if we really stick to the facts and the matters at hand and ask them to remember how simple it was to pass the motion that we make this a non-smoking committee. If there had been cameras present, I really wonder if it would have been that simple. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Thank you, Mr. Wolfe. Mr. Hopfner, and then Mr. Rolfes.

**Mr. Hopfner:** — I'll pass for now.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Chairman, I support the general principle of the motion. I'm not overly concerned as to whether or not it would be in the Legislative Assembly, but that's the only facility I think that we have at the present time that is equipped to handle the TV and the rest of the media.

Yes, I think that the . . . The reason I support this is because the 1988 auditor's report is an exceptional report. It is not a report that is, if you compare it to all the other reports — mine go back for 27 years . . . oh pardon me, about 17 years, I guess, 18 years — and when you look at those reports . . . you see, it's comments like that that start the discussions, eh?

I'm trying to keep some calmness in this committee and I would . . . Mr. Chairman, I really honestly believe that this auditor's report is so important, and what has happened in the Legislative Assembly, in the words of the Premier, where the Premier said that there will be full latitude to the committee — full latitude to the committee — and I believe I couldn't find the exact words of the Premier, but if the committee so wishes . . . in the view of all the media, I think were the words of the Premier, and if that is the case, then I assume that what he meant was that . . . no, in view of the media, the TV, the written media, and so on.

But I'm not overly concerned about that. I guess I'm more concerned about the limitations that have been put on this committee, and those members who were around before, the member from . . . Mr. Muirhead, I forgot your constituency . . .

**A Member:** — Arm River.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — . . . Arm River, I think will agree with me that the committee's mandate has changed dramatically, and I'm not saying it's bad or it's good, or whatever, but in my opinion it doesn't give us very much latitude in discussing the Provincial Auditor's report, and I think in the Assembly it would take on a wider scope and we could carry out exactly what the Premier has said. We can do all aspects of the auditor's report, including the accusations made by the Minister of Justice — would be the purview of this committee.

Therefore, I think it takes on — this report and the circumstances surrounding it takes on a different aspect than any other auditor's report has, and it must receive much wider scope, and that's why the motion does not refer to any future *Public Accounts*. It says that the



1987-88 Public Accounts Committee sit in the legislature so that we can study all aspects of the auditor's report, the Minister of Justice's accusations against the auditor, a servant of the Legislative Assembly, and that they can be done in full view of the public.

I want to just make a statement on the suggestion made by the member of Rosthern, and just draw to his attention that if we used his yardstick, where he said well look, there's hardly anybody here in this room . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . no, the member from Rosthern. Let's use the yardstick that he uses that there aren't any people here who are listening to this committee. Well if you take the yardstick, if you use that as a yardstick, how many people watch the proceedings in the legislature as a per cent of the population in Saskatchewan? If that were the case, then we would shut off all media in the legislature, and we'd say, well, why have it?

But the principle is that those individuals who have the right, those people who want to know what is going on, should have the opportunity to watch it, listen to it, and get the full report. And that's why I would support this, moving it into the Assembly for this year, and if circumstances again change next year, that there is another exceptional report, or the year after or the year after that, then the committee can make that decision.

But if the Premier meant what he said, and I assume he did, that let's move it over to the public accounts, let them scrutinize and analyse what has been said by the Provincial Auditor, by the Minister of Justice, then I think it should be done in full view of the public, and therefore it should be moved to the Legislative Assembly. And those are the arguments that I would have in supporting the motion put forward, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Martin:** — I just wanted to make a short comment that I believe that the presence of cameras and the public . . . (inaudible) . . . in this discussion would in no way enhance what has been called the . . . to cover all aspects of the 1987-88 report. Matter of fact, I think it would tend to distort it, in addition to which there are only eight communities in this province that get the cable that comes from the legislative buildings. And so therefore we're denying an awful lot of people in this province the opportunity to watch this show, as it would of course become.

So I mean, there's no way in the world I can support this.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Thank you. Any further discussion on the motion?

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman, just a few short comments. Members opposite are so bound and determined to move this into the Assembly, and I personally believe the only reason they want to move it into the Assembly is for asking more media attention. Now they're not interested in asking the department questions. They're after public . . . They're trying to get the public all riled up out there. It's quite evident to see. We sit here for 50 days; we've only passed one estimate. We've got no place, and it's because it's been nothing but a filibuster from . . . in this room.

If we move into the Assembly, Mr. Chairman, it'd be no different. The same form would happen as here. The media would have to pick it up and get it out in print for the people to hear. And if the media are interested in the members opposite or this side, if they're interested, they'll be in here.

And as one of my members said here this morning, my colleague said this morning, Mr. Chairman, if this room fills up with media and interested people, I would agree to move to 218 or some place else to try it. I would agree with that. But I'd like to see this room get so full to listen to the members holler and yell at us and call us . . . comparing it to Chinese armies and all these kind of things. I'd like to see them come in here, and if they're interested in that, Mr. Chairman, well they'll be here. If they're not interested, they won't be here.

Because what have we got this problem for? The Provincial Auditor came down with his report. Naturally the government didn't like some of the things he said. The members opposite loved it. They wouldn't even think of moving this into the Assembly if Mr. Lutz, the Provincial Auditor, hadn't condemned some of the things the government had done — they wouldn't even think of it.

So what they're trying to do is get it out to the public. There's their chance to get it out to the public right here. Every time I've sat here for two years when they're asking the department questions and it's just dull questions, the media usually leave. They know how to get the media's attention. They start calling names and getting radical and in come the media to see what's going on.

Now if they want to do that, they can do it right here, because it's not too hard to see that we don't know whether Mr. Lutz . . . I as a member don't know whether Mr. Lutz is right about his accusations or not. I as a government member feel maybe some of his accusations are not right. Naturally the members opposite believe they're all right, so we just got a difference of opinion here.

We can do our questioning, Mr. Chairman, we can question one another back and forth and ask Mr. Lutz all the questions we want, but I'm absolutely opposed to bringing this into . . . We can't gain what we've got to do in the legislature now with the filibuster going on there for 50 days now. Why bring some more filibustering over there? I'm completely against the motion, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Lyons:** — Thank you. Mr. Chairman. First of all, I want to deal with some of the reasoned objections that were raised, and I think there was Mr. Martens, if I were to qualify as what constitute reasoned objections to it would be under his statements. Mr. Martens asked is the Legislative Chamber the proper place for legislative committees? I believe that was his question. I would answer that it is, because we presently have two committees meeting in the Legislative Assembly, that it's not a precedent in terms of having committees meet in the legislature. We have the Committee of Finance and we have the Committee of the Whole, both of which meet in the Legislative Assembly and the deliberations which are judged in the Assembly.

Mr. Rolfes referred to, I think, the nub of the question, and that is it's not so much the question of having it in the Legislative Chamber as having it accessible to the people of the province by way of television coverage. And I make no bones about that; that's precisely what the intent of the motion is, is to have people, not as Mr. Neudorf would misrepresent my words, but not as he would say, but in fact as the words I use, which is public scrutiny. And public scrutiny is best done, not mediated through the media but through direct observation of the observable facts, which is the testimony that would be given by the auditor and the officials that we would call before the committee to deal with the allegations made by the auditor. And the people themselves can decide who is telling the truth and who is not telling the truth.

I also may say that in terms of misrepresenting the facts, Mr. Neudorf once again has shown that propensity. He mentioned the fact that we, somehow, wanted something to hide by not dealing with the '86-87 public accounts. Mr. Neudorf conveniently forgets that it was us who in this original motion to attempt to move to the '87-88 Public Accounts by its timeliness, it was we who moved that the '86-87 and '87-88 be dealt with concurrently.

And if my memory serves me correctly, it was Mr. Neudorf himself who raised the preliminary objections to that method of proceeding. So that in order to accuse us as trying to hide something for the '86-87 public accounts is patently not true, and it's contrary to what we on this side of the table had put forward. I guess to quote Mr. Neudorf: what are you trying to hide, sir?

Now in regards to Mr. Wolfe's statements of the public servants coming under scrutiny, yes, I can appreciate, Mr. Wolfe, that comment that there are people who may feel uncomfortable in doing that. But under the realization that we are dealing with, first of all, an extraordinary document in the 1987-88 public *Report of the Provincial Auditor*, is extraordinary in that we have consistently pressed for those people who are named specifically by the Provincial Auditor, those departments who denied the Provincial Auditor the facts, or as he alleges that he was denied access to the facts, and as we have said in the Legislative Assembly, and we have named the specific titles of the individuals who have occupied the positions — and I don't have to run through those people here — but it's precisely those public servants who we feel should be under public scrutiny.

If in fact the auditor says that they have denied him the access to information which prohibits him or stops him from carrying out his job, of course those are the people that we want to bring under our scrutiny, but also the public scrutiny. They have the right to defend their actions as well, just the same way that Mr. Lutz has the right to defend his actions, and the truth will out, because that's basically what we're advocating.

And yes, Mr. Martin, it does only serve eight communities, and that's why we urged in the legislature that in fact that the television coverage be spread on a province-wide basis, and I hope that you would support that motion when we intend to move it.

Forty-seven per cent of the population of the province get

cable TV — roughly 455,000 people presently receive, in the eight communities of Regina, Saskatoon, The Battlefords, Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Weyburn, Swift Current, and Estevan — roughly 455,000 people, so about 47 per cent.

We want to extend that out. The same way that the distance education through fibre optics technology can extend distance education, we would support the government moving in that direction to allow everybody the ability to have access to the Legislative Assembly.

And in regards, Mr. Martin, this is not a new suggestion. It's not a suggestion which has arisen as a result, necessarily, of the events surrounding the auditor's report.

In April of 1987, that is over two years ago, we made a suggestion in a document tabled. *Agenda for Legislative Reform*, that would deal with this question, including the broadcast of the affairs of the Public Accounts Committee and the broadcast of the affairs of the Crown Corporations Committee. We think that, given the extent of public dollars involved in those two committees and dealt with by those two committees, that it would be important for the people of this province to be able to have that direct access to the information that's been provided to their representatives.

Now I want to deal, Mr. Chairman, with Mr. Hopfner's statement, and I want to deal with it in a way that puts it in the context, not of Mr. Hopfner's personal idiosyncrasies but in fact what's become the tactic of the government opposite, and that is that given their desperation, politically, they've now sunk to the level of engaging in what I can only determine to be McCarthyite red-baiting.

That's basically what they're trying to do, the same way that their predecessors tried to label our predecessors in the CCF as church-burners and communists and this, that, and the other thing, so too now have the epithet of radical seem to spring from the lips of all the members opposite. And it's obvious that what it is is becoming a political . . .

**Mr. Chairman:** — Mr. Lyons . . .

**Mr. Lyons:** — I have the right to deal with that, Mr. Chairman. As I said, it is McCarthyite . . .

**Mr. Chairman:** — Mr. Lyons, I would encourage you to restrict your comments to the motion and deal with that. I just make the observation that if one member strays off the topic, it invariably is an invitation for another member to stray of the topic, and we'll get nowhere very slowly.

**Mr. Lyons:** — Well all I was going to do, Mr. Chairman, in that regard, is label it for what it was, is McCarthyite. And quite frankly, I take great pride in wearing the badge of radical, because I am one — the same way that Tommy Douglas was a radical, or J. S. Woodsworth was a radical. Those people were radicals because they wanted to change the system, and they were given the same epithet of radical by the same type of people as Mr. Hopfner represents.

So in that lineage, just like the Chinese students that . . .

**Mr. Chairman:** — Point of order.

**Mr. Neudorf:** — I fail to see exactly where the correlation between calling Mr. Tommy Douglas a radical has anything to do with the motion that we're debating at this time, and I do suggest that the member be brought back to the terms of reference of the motion.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Point well taken. Mr. Lyons, stick to the motion, it you would.

**Mr. Lyons:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the intent of the motion is clear, and the question before the committee is clear. Do the members on the government side of this committee want the people of the province the right to judge for themselves whether or not the Minister of Justice's comments are factual or whether in fact they are not factual? Or to put it another way, are the allegations that Mr. Lutz is putting forward factual or are they not factual?

That's the question that's before the committee. We here on this side of the committee argue that the people of the province have the right to make that determination, and we want to provide as much access to that right as possible. The accessibility question is the question before us, and if in fact those members don't have a sudden change of heart, I guess I would merely ask them what are they afraid of and what do they have to hide?

**Mr. Hopfner:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, there has been some reasons given by members of the opposition here regarding the reasons as to why we should move this to the floor of the Assembly, and basically one of the more apparent reasons, I guess, if you will, has been stated by many members, and it was basically bringing to the committee's attention that the report of the Provincial Auditor for '87-88 was an extraordinary document, and by this is basically because of the tabling of the Provincial Auditor's more recent report on the floor of the legislature.

I guess probably if you would go back in *Hansard* throughout the years, every time the Provincial Auditor had brought in his report, every one of those were extraordinary documents, if you will, because basically it has been a repetition of the members opposite on the floor of the legislature indicating basically this. And I don't think their verbatim, other than the fact of getting more and more political as time goes on, that the language becomes stronger and stronger and stronger.

I have to concur with the member from Arm River when he said that as a member of the committee, that if there are some things that are questionable in the report and haven't been dealt with, we'll find that out within the committee — also indicated that probably there are many things that will have been corrected, as there has been always in the previous years.

And I think probably when I first spoke, this is why I was basically speaking in a point of frustration — frustrated with the fact that we cannot get on with the agenda and not worrying about debating the fact of whether someone should be grandstanding in front of a TV camera. I don't

think this committee is meant for grandstanding. I think this committee is meant for basically studying a document that is laid before us so that we can scrutinize the spending of the government.

I think probably, if anything, we'll find that members of the government side have had to carry this committee in '86-87, asking the questions of the departments that the Provincial Auditor had brought to the attention of this committee. And I don't think that should go unsaid because basically we have a responsibility as a government back-bench to also scrutinize government spending and that of the executive level of a particular party that we just happen to belong to.

And basically I for one had not put my name on a ballot or ran in a constituency and under a party banner just for the fact of saying, well that particular executive can go ahead and rule under its thumb just anything and make decisions on just anything that they would like to at random without being scrutinized by myself or my other colleagues. And I think they appreciate that — I think the executive of the government appreciate that.

I think probably . . . when we have gotten further into the discussion of this motion, basically the members opposite are not . . . or don't consider themselves satisfied with the written media's reporting of the special Public Accounts Committee. And I think probably the media that are here and present today, this morning, should become aware of this concern from members of the opposition and should maybe take that personally and attend these meetings more often so that the members opposite are satisfied that they're getting the coverage that they feel they so need.

I think probably in desperation of members opposite, they're trying to use all tactics, as I'd indicated earlier, to stymie all functions of this legislature. And I'm sure that when the member from Rosemont was trying to consider himself a likeness to that of Tommy Douglas and others . . .

**Mr. Chairman:** — Mr. Hopfner, Mr. Hopfner.

**Mr. Hopfner:** — . . . well, I think he's far-fetched.

**Mr. Chairman:** — I ruled the comments of the member from Rosemont out of order.

**Mr. Hopfner:** — I didn't hear that. I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman, I accept your ruling.

**Mr. Chairman:** — I would ask you to restrict your remarks to the motion that's before us, to keep personalities out of the discussion, to stick to the matter at hand. That's a sure way that the committee will be able to deal with the matter expeditiously.

**Mr. Hopfner:** — Well anyway, I'll accept your ruling. But when I hear the particular concern about allowing the people . . . the only argument for having this committee go in front of cameras is so we can allow people out there in some imaginative sort of way this member from Rosemont thinks that all people are going to watch the proceedings, and all people are going to basically decide who's telling the truth and who is not telling the truth.

Well I think that's kind of a nonsense way of having to be concerned whether now the committee itself is going to have to every time before making the final decision as whether we should concur in the reports of the public accounts, now we go to the people and ask them: are you satisfied everybody was telling the truth? Everybody wasn't telling the truth? And how are we going to get a consensus?

Parliamentary system in this country is born of a consensus, and yes, the people will decide — the people will decide. They have that right every four to five years; they have a right to make that decision as to whether the opposition or government was right or wrong. And I basically think that if the members allow the tradition of our parliamentary system to take place and allow democracy to play its role in the way our country has been built, then I do believe we would be able to manage quite well.

And so I think, Mr. Chairman, that with all things set aside, I feel that it is not necessary until such a demand, you know, for larger facilities as we see people wanting to come in and sit and listen to the proceedings, then I think we carry on in this room, and as it maybe will indicate at one particular time or another we have to move to larger quarters, well fine. I can agree with that.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Thank you, Mr. Hopfner.

**Mr. Wolfe:** — Just a short comment. I think we have to remember why we're here and what the role of Public Accounts Committee is. It's a committee that's set up to basically hold the government accountable — accountable for the spending of taxpayers' money and the stewardship over public access. That's why we're here. I don't agree with the member from Rosemont in that it's accessibility. It's basically accountability, and we have to remember that.

I think it's our responsibility to the people that we represent that we ensure that accountability is our major issue and our major concern here, and we have to try to encourage that we have the environment to provide for that accountability. If cameras do intimidate people, especially public servants, then I think we shouldn't even consider bringing cameras into such a forum.

If accountability can be encouraged by providing the environment where people are and feel that they're free to speak, then I think that we have to keep that in mind. I feel that cameras really do intimidate a lot of people. I think that they may prohibit or limit our access to the facts and accountability. That's all I have to say. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Thank you, Mr. Wolfe. Ready for the question. You had your hand up? I'm sorry, Mr. Rolfes.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Chairman, yes, I want to make a few comments on this. Let me . . . I want to reiterate that this is no ordinary report that has come in. And I think I ask the members opposite to look at previous auditor's reports. This is an extraordinary report.

And I agree with the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. It is for that very fact that we should scrutinize government expenditures and hold the government accountable. The ultimate judges, the ultimate judges of that accountability will be the public out there.

Therefore, because this is an extraordinary report, because the Provincial Auditor has made so many allegations of interference and government breaking the law, that we should take every opportunity we can to put it before the public. And the best way that we have is the camera, the TV, so that the government can . . . so that people can observe and hold this government accountable.

Members opposite are saying that, well all the opposition wants to do is to get media attention. Of course we do. That is our job. Our job is to make the public aware. And how does the public do it? Through the media. We do it through the media. And that's how we do it. Now that's how we do it. And it's the media's obligation to report the facts as they are presented.

And, you know . . . So that's what we want to do. And yes, they are sitting there. But that's only the written media. We also want the visual media to have an opportunity to do the same thing. And that is why we move that this be moved to the Assembly, to the Legislative Assembly.

What I'm simply saying is that there's another way of letting the public know, not just through the written media, but also through the electronic media, to let the people know the expenditures as they have been made by the government, and let the people decide.

Mr. Chairman, I think all governments have become too secretive, not just this government, but all governments. And the auditor, I think, makes that very clear. As we go to privatization, as we go to privatization and more of the assets are turned over to the private sector, but with heavy government involvement, there is less and less information for MLAs to scrutinize.

Therefore it's important that we take this opportunity — maybe a once in a lifetime opportunity that we'll have — to let the people know exactly what is happening. And I think that the Provincial Auditor has just given us the tip of the iceberg of things that are going on — of mismanagement, of corruption, of patronage, of favouritism.

And I say to the members opposite that, yes, if it means that we are going to take a long, long time on scrutinizing some of the allegations that are made by the Provincial Auditor, we will do that, and that's our job. And that's your job too, as members of this committee. That is your obligation. You may call it a filibuster if you want. That's fine. I'm not concerned about that.

And I want to make one further comment. If the member from Arm River is concerned about filibustering in the legislature . . . And he says, well if we move it in there, we're going to filibuster. There's no filibustering going on in this committee. There's no filibuster going on in this committee. Not at all.

And if the members opposite want to have movement in the legislature, all they need to do is bring the estimates forward. Bring the estimates forward.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Point of order. Mr. Rolfes, we're discussing a motion here.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Yes, Mr. Chairman, I do want to indicate to you that the member for Arm River was talking of filibustering. You allowed him to do it. I was commenting on it. But I will respect your decision. I will respect your decision and go back to the motion.

I ask the members opposite to look at the motion in all objectivity that they can. The motion simply wants to take advantage of a situation so that we can let as many people know as possible what the Provincial Auditor has said about the expenditures of the government.

And if we can have another 50,000 people observe this committee at its work and holding the government accountable, I think we should take that opportunity. And that's why I support the motion that has been put forward, that the Public Accounts be held in the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Thank you.

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Is no one interested in what I have to say? All right. I'll ask a question and then I'll leave it at that and I'll forego my pearls of wisdom that I was going to direct across the way.

Is this the same group of members and the same party in control in '78 and '82 when we were trying as an opposition then to open up public accounts to the media? Is this the same opposition that it took until 1982 before this government opened up this committee for public scrutiny? I rest my case.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Question. All those in favour of the motion. All those opposed to the motion.

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**Mr. Chairman:** — Order, please. Order, order.

**Mr. Martens:** — I have two things that I want to bring to your attention, one on process, as it relates to next week. I think that we ought to ask the chairman and vice-chairman to sit down and call a department forward that would meet with their joint approval, and that we then begin to discuss the agenda for future consideration. That's the first thing.

The second thing I want to deal with is a matter that has raised some concern, in my opinion, in relation to my reading of the report, and it has to do with a matter that deals with the Public Account's capability to access the information that will be required to deal with the report in its total context.

And with that, I'm going to move a motion that I have written out here. I move:

That in each instance where a private sector auditor has been given the responsibility to provide an audit for the Legislative Assembly under the auditor's Act, that this auditor be required to attend as a witness for the Public Accounts Committee.

And I'm going to give you a couple of things that I've taken a look at through a document that was tabled here for public accounts in '88-89. It's item no. 8; it's the role of the Public Accounts Committee and parliamentary control over spending. And they make some observations about Public Accounts Committee's mandates.

And Mr. Wolfe made the observation earlier that the Public Accounts Committee's accountability capacity is there to give the public the view that the accountability is accurate, and the reporting is accurate, and that the money spent was spent in proper authorization and appropriation.

The function of the committee is there to investigate the reliability of the information provided, and the Public Accounts Committee is there to collect and bring in the information. It is there to call in the witnesses.

The matters presented in the auditor's statement — and I notice that this year is the first year that the private auditors had their comments in relation to the audits as a part of the auditor's report. And I think that in fairness to all of the people who are auditing the books of the government, that the auditors of record be asked to participate in the discussion that we have as a part of this committee. The reason that I believe that it is important to do that is that we need to ensure that the financial matters that are being dealt with by those auditors are in fact being dealt with in an upright fashion, and there is, I believe, a way that we can do that, and that is to bring them in as a part of this committee to deal with the questions that are raised by members of this committee, to deal with it in an overall fashion. And in that . . . the role of the Public Accounts Committee in parliamentary control over spending, on page 26, it says that:

The Public Accounts Committee shall have permanent referral, as they become available, of the *Public Accounts*.

And it says:

. . . all auditors' reports on the public accounts, financial statements, and all auditors' reports of all Crown corporations and other agencies receiving funding from the government or tax collection agencies.

And I believe that where those auditors are doing an audit on behalf of the government they need to be asked to attend this committee.

And my last point is this: that in each of the letters written to the . . . or by the auditors in the records as I've seen it in the back of the auditor's report, each one of them are addressed to the Legislative Assembly. Some of them have a notation re showing them to the Provincial Auditor and that they be brought to his attention, and therefore I

believe that that's the kind of focus I believe we need to place as a part of this committee's mandate. And I will listen as the debate continues.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Chairman, I haven't had a chance to have a detailed look at the motion, but on first glance I have no particular difficulties with that, except that I found some difficulties with the report submitted by the private auditors to the Legislative Assembly. They're not working for the Legislative Assembly, number one. We are not their client. Their client is the Executive Council. They hired them; they asked them to do the audit; they obviously put in the terms of reference as to what they wanted from the auditors.

And my observation is that our servant is the Provincial Auditor. He is the one that we hire through the Legislative Assembly. If the Provincial Auditor was not satisfied with any of the reports that were submitted, then he should have done an additional audit; he should have asked for additional information.

But he makes it very clear that that was not possible because he does not have the finances to do it, number one. Number two, he does not have the staff to do it; therefore, in many instances he was not able to do an additional audit or further investigation because the government, the Executive Council, who basically sets his budget, confirmed by the Legislative Assembly, that he was not able to do a further investigation or further audit of those Crowns — I think mostly were Crowns.

So I have a little bit of difficulties with it, but I would like to have a further look at the motion. And I hope we don't deal with it today, finalize it today. I think it may not be a bad suggestion, but I'd like to, I think, move an amendment to that, and that is — and I hope the committee would agree with that, that we call forward also other witnesses; for example, people from Crown Management Board, people from WESTBRIDGE, also many others who, in the auditor's report, refused to co-operate and directly interfered with the work of the Provincial Auditor, and call those people before this committee to find out exactly why they did not co-operate with the Provincial Auditor who is a servant of the Legislative Assembly.

And I hope the members opposite note the difference, that those private auditors are not working for you and me; they are working for the Executive Council, and their mandate can be considerably different than the mandate that we would give to the Provincial Auditor in scrutinizing the expenditures of the provincial government.

And therefore I have some difficulties with it, although I like the idea of being able to call some of those people before this committee. But I would like to have that extended also to many of the others that have been mentioned by the Provincial Auditor, who have directly interfered and who have not co-operated with his mandate.

And therefore I hope the members opposite would accept that, maybe as an amendment that I will probably bring forward next day after having a more thorough look at the

motion that was brought forward from the member from Morse.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Thank you, Mr. Rolfes.

**Mr. Wolfe:** — Just a brief comment that I support the motion because I believe that it fully addresses the increased accountability to the public and the people that we represent.

I take difference with the comments made by Mr. Rolfes — his comments about who these private auditors are accountable to — and I think if we explore that just a little bit more, especially when we deal with the Crowns, I think we'll probably find that the member opposite is and could very well be wrong on that point.

As I understand it, private auditors are contracted and paid by the Crowns. And as I understand it, and I stand to be corrected if I'm wrong, as I understand it, the Provincial Auditor can and may be paid by those very same Crowns if he wishes to pursue the accountability process in reviewing their records. And that's all I have to say. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairman:** — It's just about 10:30.

**Mr. Neudorf:** — I want to draw it to the attention, particularly the member of Saskatoon South, if you take a look at The Provincial Auditor Act under duties and powers, 12(1), it states:

At the end of each fiscal year, the provincial auditor and every appointed auditor shall prepare a report on the results of all examinations that they have conducted of departments of the Government of Saskatchewan, Crown agencies and Crown-controlled corporations during that year giving details of any reservation of opinion made in an audit report, and shall identify any instances they consider to be of significance and of a nature that should be brought to the attention of the Legislative Assembly . . .

It's fairly hard, the responsibility, to . . . I didn't say the . . . (inaudible) . . . Assembly, I said because . . .

**Mr. Chairman:** — It's 10:30. The discussion on the motion will continue at the next meeting on Thursday morning. I'm sorry, the chairman's got to go; I have another engagement.

**Mr. Wolfe:** — Could I ask the Provincial Auditor to make a comment about who pays who at the beginning of the next meeting?

**Mr. Chairman:** — Sure can. The meeting stands adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 10:30 a.m.