

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
May 24, 1990

MINUTE NO. 12
May 24, 1990 at 8:30 a.m.

1. PRESENT: Mr. Van Mulligen in the Chair and the following Members: Anguish, Baker, Britton, Hopfner, Muller, Lyons, and Swan

Officials

Provincial Auditor's Office

Fred Wendel, Acting, Deputy Provincial Auditor
Brian Atkinson, Acting Assistant Provincial Auditor

Comptroller's Office

G. Kraus, Comptroller
T. Paton, Director, Financial Management Branch

2. The following document was tabled:

PAC 9/90 — Report by the Provincial Auditor to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts Regarding Westbridge Computer Corporation

3. The Committee proceeded to the consideration of the document entitled "Guidelines for Public Accounts Committees in Canada".

It was agreed that comments by Members on the "Guidelines" document be forwarded to the Chairman.

4. The Committee proceeded to the consideration of the Report of the Provincial Auditor for the year ended March 31, 1989 and the future business related thereto.

And debate arising thereon.

5. It was moved by Mr. Anguish:

Whereas Westbridge Computer Corporation, is a Crown-controlled corporation, with 80% of the shares held by the Government of Saskatchewan as at April 1, 1989, and,

Whereas Westbridge Computer Corporation was referenced in the 1987-88 Auditor's Report and the 1988-89 Auditor's Report;

Be it resolved that Westbridge Computer Corporation be called before the Public Accounts Committee.

And debate arising thereon.

Mr. Van Mulligen leaves the Chair.

Mr. Hopfner assumes the Chair.

Mr. Van Mulligen assumes the Chair.

The question being put on the motion, it was negatived on the following recorded division:

Nays

Yeas

Britton
Hopfner
Sauder
Muller

Anguish

Nays: 4; Yeas: 1

6. After further debate on the question of inviting the Westbridge Computer Corporation and a point of order having been raised, the Chairman ruled that while it is not parliamentary practice to revisit a question which had already been decided, a Committee should have more flexibility than the House with respect to the application of the rules in order to enable it to discuss relevant matters. The Chairman cited *Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules & Forms*, 6th Edition, citation 762, which is as follows:

Proceedings in the committees are more relaxed in nature than those in the House as the requirements which must be observed in the Chamber are not so strictly enforced when Members sit as committees.

7. Mr. Anguish proposed to move:

Be it resolved that the first order of business in review of the 1988-89 Auditor's Report, be Westbridge Computer Corporation so that they may answer questions arising from the 1987-88 Auditor's Report.

8. The Chairman ruled the motion out of order on the grounds that it did not have sufficient variance with the motion that was negatived earlier and did not constitute a new question. The Chairman cited *Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules & Forms*, 6th Edition, citation 593(1):

... the only means, therefore, by which a negative vote can be revoked is by proposing another question similar in its general purport to that which has been rejected but with sufficient variance to constitute a new question.

9. After further debate, it was moved by Mr. Anguish:

Be it resolved that the second order of business in review of the 1988-89 Auditor's Report, be Westbridge Computer Corporation, to answer questions why it has not completed its audit for 1988-89.

The Chairman ruled the motion in order on the grounds that there was sufficient variance with the originally negatived motion.

Accordingly, the question being put, it was negatived on the following recorded division:

Nays

Yeas

Britton
Hopfner
Muller

Anguish
Lyons

Nays: 3; Yeas: 2

10. The Committee resumed consideration of its future business in relation to its review of the Provincial Auditor's Report for the year 1988-89.
11. And debate arising on the question of inviting Westbridge Computer Corporation, the Chairman ruled that questions once resolved in the affirmative or negative, cannot be questioned again and that he had been sufficiently lenient in allowing ample debate on the question and cited *Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules & Forms*, 6th Edition, citation 558(1):

An old rule of Parliament reads: "That a question being once made and carried in the affirmative or negative, cannot be questioned again but must stand as the judgement of the House."

12. It was moved by Mr. Anguish:

That the Committee refer the impasse concerning the agenda to the Legislative Assembly.

And debate arising thereon.

13. At 10:30 o'clock a.m., the Committee adjourned until Tuesday, May 29, 1990 at 8:30 a.m.

Agenda:

The Committee will resume consideration of the following items: Provincial Auditor's Report for the year 1988-89 and future business of the Committee.