
CPA: The Canadian Scene

Fifteenth Canadian Parliamentary Seminar

On behalf of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly, Speaker **Denis Rocan** hosted a seminar on the role of the private member attended by approximately thirty legislators from every provincial and territorial assembly as well as from the House of Commons. Also in attendance were a number of observers including **Irv Anderson**,

recently elected to the Minnesota House of Representatives.

The keynote speaker was professor **Paul Thomas** who delivered a thought-provoking address on various aspects of the parliamentary profession. Among other things he discussed problems of representation, relations with the media, the policy formation process,

the role of parties and the organization of caucus.

Subsequent sessions came back to many of these issues. For example, opening speakers for the second session, **John Brockelbank** (Saskatchewan), **Marion Murphy** (Prince Edward Island) and **Melvin Penny** (Newfoundland) examined the competing roles of private members and the arguments for and against more free votes.

Al Mosher (Nova Scotia) and **Gerard Janssen** (British Columbia) were opening speakers for a session on the support services available for private members. **Ty Lund** (Alberta) outlined the process of Private Member's Business in Alberta and other members offered comments on the process in their own legislatures. The last session was a debate on the influence of the private member. **Noble Villeneuve** (Ontario), **Don Boudria** (House of Commons) and **Alan Nordling** offered different perspectives on the influence of private members.

In addition to the five business sessions the staff of the Assembly led by the Clerk, **Binx Remnant** organized an official opening, a tour of the Legislative Building, a reception with the Lieutenant-Governor and a banquet featuring entertainment provided by three local folk dance groups, all packed into about 30 hours covering Saturday and Sunday.

Next year the seminar will be held in Yukon.



Girve Fretz, MP (Left) presented His Excellency Ramon Hnatyshyn with a certificate of Honorary Life Membership in the Canadian Region of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

(Andy Shott, PC Services)