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# Legislative Reports

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When Members gathered in Yellowknife on February 9 to reconvene the Fifth Session, Government Leader, **Nellie Cournoyea** provided them with an overview of her government's accomplishments in the first two years of its mandate and outlined many of the initiatives to be introduced in the remaining 20 months of the 12th Assembly.

A week into the Session, MLAs adopted a motion to change the term, "Government Leader" to "Premier." Members felt there was no reason for a distinction in title from other provincial leaders and the title of "Premier" recognizes the provincial-like powers and responsibilities now carried out by the Northwest Territories government.

The focus of the Session was the review of the 1994-95 Operations and Maintenance budget, but it also included the adoption of several significant motions and the passage of 17 pieces of legislation.

In his address to the Assembly introducing his \$1.2 billion budget, the Minister of Finance, **John Pollard**, conveyed the message that governments can no longer finance

new spending initiatives out of revenue growth. The balanced budget was achieved through the restructuring of spending and without any increase in personal income taxes. Nearly 35% of the total budget will be spent in the areas of Education and Health. Mr. Pollard set the stage for future collective bargaining negotiations with public servants with a strong message that they are not immune to cost-saving measures.

In an extensive report on the spending estimates, the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Finance, **Jim Antoine**, said the government has not developed an overall strategy to deal with major fiscal issues. Mr. Antoine criticized the budget for a lack of creativity and leadership. His committee was concerned that the government may not be able to accomplish all that it has set out in its ambitious schedule of initiatives and remain within the limits of available resources.

## Legislation

Eighteen bills were passed during the 7-week session. Among them:

- *An Act to Amend the Worker's Compensation Act* which extends Worker's Compensation coverage for more hunters and trappers;
- *An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* so that indemnities paid to Members for the fiscal year 1994-95 will not be adjusted to accord with the changes to the Consumer Price Index;
- *An Act to Amend the Safety Act* significantly increases the maximum

finest for employers and employees found guilty of an offence;

- *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act* increases the corporate income tax from 12 per cent to 14 per cent of taxable income;
- *An Act to Amend the Tobacco Tax Act* increases the rate of tax on tobacco to offset revenue losses from a decrease in federal tobacco taxes and strengthens the Act's enforcement and penalty provisions.

## Speaker's Ruling

On March 2, Speaker **Jeannie Marie-Jewell**, took the unusual action of suspending a Member from the House. **Sam Gargan** (Deh Cho) circulated a letter to all Members after he wanted the Speaker to recognize the presence in the Gallery of officials from Revenue Canada. The Speaker indicated that it has been a long-standing practice of the Chair to recognize only elected officials and former Members. She said it is a Member's prerogative to recognize any individual through the use of a Member's Statement. Speaker Marie-Jewell felt the letter circulated by Mr. Gargan was offensive towards the Chair and she asked that he apologize. When he refused, the Speaker ordered that Mr. Gargan be suspended for the remainder of that day.

The Speaker also ruled against a point of privilege raised by the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, **Richard Nerysoo** (Mackenzie Delta). **Charles Dent** (Yellowknife Frame Lake) had risen in the House to outline concerns about Mr. Nerysoo's absence while his department's budget was being

reviewed. Mr. Dent reflected a concern that Members had not been given sufficient notice of the Minister's absence and felt this reflected a "cavalier attitude" on the part of the Minister. The basis of Mr. Nerysoo's point of privilege was that statements made by Mr. Dent and subsequently reported in the media were a challenge to his personal honour, his character and his integrity. Speaker Marie-Jewell said the statements made by Mr. Dent were not serious or offensive so as to attract the broad protection of parliamentary privilege. She also pointed out that, contrary to the rules of the Assembly, Mr. Nerysoo did not raise his point of privilege at the first available opportunity.

#### Division Committee

With division of the Territories pending in 1999 and the creation of Nunavut, the Legislative Assembly has created a Special Joint Committee on Division co-chaired by **John Todd** (Keewatin Central) and **Jim Antoine** (Nahendeh) with an equal representation of MLAs from the east and the west and from Cabinet. A primary function of the Special Committee will be to ensure a regular flow of information on division issues between and among the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council. It will also assume an important role in recommending how the Legislature and Executive Council should address division issues. The Special Committee will work in conjunction with other participants in the division process, namely the Nunavut Implementation Commission and the Constitutional Development Steering Committee.

#### Sixth Session

Commissioner **Daniel Norris** prorogued the Fifth Session on April 5 and opened the Sixth Session the

next day. The government introduced a flurry of new bills and discussion papers during the two-day sitting.

Premier Cournoyea tabled a document designed to stimulate public discussion and debate about the privatization of the NWT Power Corporation. A Legislative Action Paper proposing to establish an Office of the Ombudsman and a Legislative Action Paper proposing new heritage legislation in the NWT were introduced and referred to the Standing Committee on Legislation for its review over the summer. That Committee will also be studying nearly a dozen new pieces of legislation that were introduced including Access to Information and Privacy Act which would establish an Access and Privacy Commissioner and provides the public with the right to access information held by government subject to specific and limited exceptions. The Sixth Session will reconvene on October 5, 1994.

**Paul Jones**

Co-ordinator, Public Information



### Alberta

**T**he Second Session of the Twenty-Third legislature opened on February 10, 1994, five days earlier than the required opening date for the Spring Session.

During the election campaign both the Liberals and Progressive Conservatives pledged to introduce freedom of information legislation.

After an extensive consultation process the all-party panel unanimously endorsed the report on public consultation. Subsequently, the Government introduced Bill 18, *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* on March 31, 1994.

While the First Session of this Legislature provided several entries in the record books, the Second Session thus far has not been without its own share of surprises.

Before the required 25 sitting days for the consideration of estimates had expired, Liberal opposition member for Lac La Biche-St. Paul, **Paul Langevin**, declared his intention to sit as an independent member in the Assembly.

The move came as a surprise to both sides of the House but when Mr. Langevin rose to ask his first question as an Independent member on April 13, the Assembly erupted in spontaneous desk thumping.

Mr. Langevin calmly replied, "I didn't realize I had such a large caucus."

Since 1905, there have been eight members who have sat as Independents and a total of twenty-two members who have switched their political designation.

**Moses K. Jung**

Executive Assistant to  
the Speaker



### Manitoba

**A**fter an eight month recess, the Legislative Assembly began a new session, the Fifth Session of the

Thirty-Fifth Legislature on April 7, 1994. With the Conservative Government in the fourth year of its mandate and with the numbers in the Legislature very close (PCs-29, NDP-21 and Liberals-7), there has been considerable interest in how each of the parties would manage their House strategy and on how many occasions the Speaker would be required to cast a deciding vote.

The Speech from the Throne, the first delivered by Lieutenant-Governor **Yvon Dumont**, outlined the Filmon Government's seventh legislative plan. The Government's agenda for the Fifth Session included a freeze on all major taxes, planned initiatives for small business expansions, new initiatives to deal with young offenders, welfare-to-work pilot projects, elementary and secondary education reform, continued health care reform towards more community-based services and a new Sustainable Development Act. The Official Opposition (NDP) and the Second Opposition (Liberals) introduced an amendment and sub-amendment, respectively, to the motion for an Address-in-Reply; the amendment stating non-confidence in the Government and the sub-amendment stating its criticism of the Government's performance on particular initiatives.

The votes on the sub-amendment (on the fifth day of debate) and the amendment (on the seventh day of debate) were both tied and required Speaker Rocan to cast his vote. With no precise precedents in either Manitoba or Canada, the Speaker cast his vote against each amendment, citing an 1859 precedent of Speaker Denison of the United Kingdom. On the main motion itself, the vote was again tied and the Speaker cast his vote in favour of the motion, citing an 1897 ruling of Speaker Juta of South Africa.

With the Throne Speech debate concluded, the Government moved immediately to the next matter of business and on April 20, 1994 brought down its budget. Possibly the Government's last budget before the next provincial general election, the budget included cuts to most government departments with the exception of some areas such as community colleges which received an increase in their operating grants; no major tax increases; initiatives to help the construction industry and small businesses and contributions to the federal infrastructure program.

Manitoba's rules provide for eight days of debate on the motion to approve the budgetary policy of the government. An amendment and sub-amendment were each moved to the main motion by the Official Opposition and the Second Opposition, respectively; again, the amendment stating non-confidence in the Government and the sub-amendment stating its criticism of the Government's performance. On the eighth day of debate, each of the motions were put resulting in three recorded votes with each requiring Speaker Rocan's casting vote. The result was the defeat of the sub-amendment and amendment and the passing of the main motion.

On April 20, the Minister of Finance also tabled the main estimates. The detailed examination of the estimates in Committee of Supply will begin in the first week of May. Manitoba's rules allow for up to 240 hours for the estimates review process.

The final report of the Indemnities and Allowances Commission, established by legislation in July 1993, was presented to Speaker Rocan on March 15, 1994 and was tabled by him in the House on April 11, 1994. The five person Commission had been established to review

all aspects of compensation for Manitoba MLAs, including salary, allowances and pension benefits. The conclusions of the report are binding and will come into effect after the next general provincial election.

Among the several conclusions of the Report, the Commission set the basic salary for an MLA at \$56,500 (3rd lowest among other provincial jurisdictions); abolished the tax-free allowance; abolished the car allowance; set a deduction of \$200 per day from an MLA's salary for each sitting day absent without reasonable cause; set the total annual salary for the premier at \$96,500 (second lowest in the country); set the total annual salary for a minister with portfolio and salary of the leader of the official opposition at \$81,500 and the leader of a recognized opposition party at \$76,500; and required all Members to prepare an annual report of expenditures claimed under the Temporary Residence Allowance, Commuting Allowance, Travel Allowance, and Constituency Allowance.

**Patricia Chaychuk-Fitzpatrick** was on attachment to the Table Research Branch of the House of Commons for one year and has returned to her position as Clerk of Committees in Manitoba. **Judy White**, who was on a one year term appointment during Patricia's absence, has been appointed Clerk of Committees to replace **Bonnie Greschuk** who resigned. **JoAnn McKerlie-Korol**, the former Journals Assistant has been appointed Journals Clerk to replace **Patti Irving** who resigned.

**Judy White**  
Clerk of Committees

## SENATE



The action in the Senate has been concentrated in Committees in the first months of the 35th Parliament as legislation starts to flow from the Commons. While there have been 23 sittings in the Chamber, there have been over 80 committee meetings in the past three months, most of these in the month of April. All signs are that the Senate, committees in particular, will continue to pick up speed in the months of May and June.

### Legislation

As of late April, the Senate has given Royal Assent to six Government bills, including the Acts to amend the Post-Secondary Education and Health Contributions Act, the *Customs Tariff Act*, back-to-work legislation for west coast ports, and two appropriation acts. Other Government bills that have now reached the Senate include: C-8, an Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Coastal Fisheries Protection Act, which will provide for the use of force to prevent suspects from fleeing to avoiding arrest or escaping inmates, as well as the use of force to disable foreign fishing vessels fleeing arrest; and C-18, the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Suspension Act*.

The *Electoral Boundaries Suspension Act* proposes to dissolve provincial and territorial commissions studying electoral boundaries and suspend readjustments for two years. While the Government considers that the criteria used to set boundaries may have to be rethought, Opposition Senators contend that it is the result of discontent among MPs who do not want to see their ridings impartially changed. Conservative Senators said they may propose amendments to shorten the suspension period so that some boundaries are in place for the next federal election. The bill was sent to the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee, chaired by Senator **Gérald Beaudoin**.

The Senate has also initiated four bills since the start of the session: two private bills, one private Senator's public bill to amend the *War-related Benefits Act*, and a Government bill for the avoidance of double taxation and fiscal evasion between Canada and several other nations.

### Committees

As Senate committees generally reflect membership in the Chamber and the Conservatives hold a thirteen seat majority, seven of the Senate's twelve standing committees are now chaired by Conservatives, who also have a majority on each committee. The Liberals, however, are chairing more of what are commonly considered the prominent and powerful committees. Committees are busy with several orders of reference this spring.

In March, **Gordon Thiessen** made his first parliamentary appearance in his new role as Governor of the Bank of Canada before the Senate's Banking, Trade and Commerce Committee, chaired by Senator **Michael Kirby**. Mr. Thiessen addressed the general state of the economy and its impact on the fi-

nancial services industry. The meetings were aired nationally on the Parliamentary Channel, marking the first gavel-to-gavel coverage of a Senate committee's proceedings ever to be televised from Ottawa.

The Committee on Aboriginal Peoples, chaired by Senator **Raynell Andreychuk**, has begun its study on the treatment of aboriginal veterans and has a report deadline of September 15, 1994. The Special Committee on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide, chaired by Senator **Joan Neiman**, began its hearings in mid-April and has a reporting date of December 15, 1994. Senator Neiman states there is an enormous amount of information on euthanasia and assisted suicide "which could justify, if so warranted, recommendations to the government for changes in existing legislation."

Two special joint committees have also been appointed on Canada's Defence Policy and to review Canada's Foreign Policy, and are co-chaired on the Senate side by Senators **Pierre De Bané** and **Allan MacEachen** respectively.

### Other Matters

Another development of interest in the First Session of the 35th Parliament was the appointment of a new Clerk of the Senate and Clerk of the Parliaments. Upon the resignation of **Gordon L. Barnhart**, whose dedicated service over five years was recognized with his being designated an Honourary Officer of the Senate, **Paul C. Bélisle** was appointed as the Senate's eleventh Clerk since Confederation on March 15, 1994.

**Jill Anne Pickard**  
Executive Assistant to the Clerk  
Senate of Canada



## British Columbia

The British Columbia Legislative Assembly began the Third Session of its 35th Parliament on March 14 with the Speech from the Throne, read by Lieutenant Governor **David Lam**. The Speech stressed the government's four priorities of long-term job creation and economic growth, skills training for the next century, revitalizing the forest sector, and sound fiscal management. Major legislative initiatives expected during the session include a *Forest Practices Code*, which is intended to be a comprehensive system of legislation and standards that will regulate the use of the province's forest, range and recreation lands.

The government is also expected to introduce legislation that will enable voters to recall elected politicians and to launch legislative initiatives through a referendum. Prior to the start of the legislative session, the Select Standing Committee on Parliamentary Reform released its report on the two issues, making forty-two recommendations to the Legislative Assembly. Regarding recall, the Committee recommended that Members be subject to recall on any grounds at any time after eighteen months following the Member's election; that the sponsors of the recall campaign be required to declare publicly their

interests in the recall; that for a recall petition to succeed (ie. trigger a by-election) a majority of eligible voters sign valid petitions; and that a Member face no more than one by-election per term. Regarding initiative, the Committee recommended that a successful initiative trigger the introduction in the legislature of an accompanying bill; that the Chief Electoral Officer be required by statute to verify that the subject matter of the initiative falls within provincial power and does not contravene the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*; that there be no restrictions on the subject matter of initiatives; and that for a referendum question to succeed, it be approved by a double majority: 50% plus 1 of all eligible voters in the province, as well as approval by a majority of voters in two-thirds of the electoral districts.

Finance Minister **Elizabeth Cull** presented her first budget to the legislature. It projected a deficit for 1994/95 of \$898 million, down from \$1.28 billion, and projected elimination of the deficit in fiscal 1996/97. Government expenditures are expected to rise to \$19.6 billion, a 3.5% increase. The budget also featured a freeze on personal, corporate and sales taxes, part of the Premier **Mike Harcourt's** pledge of a three-year tax freeze in the province. Opposition critics, in response, pointed to increases in fees and licenses as undermining this goal. Other budget highlights include an increase in eligibility for the home owner's grant; no change in tobacco taxes; the elimination of the \$600 million BC Endowment Fund, to be applied to pay down the debt; and continued emphasis on BC 21, a public investment and job creation plan.

### House Business

In addition to the usual process of legislation and debate, this session of the BC legislature has seen more

than its share of political changes. Before the session began, former Liberals **Gordon Wilson** and **Judi Tyabji** announced the founding of a new party, the Progressive Democratic Alliance. On Opening Day, British Columbia's two newest MLAs were introduced to the House: Opposition Leader **Gordon Campbell**, representing Vancouver-Quilchena, and fellow Liberal **Mike de Jong**, representing Matsqui. Both won by-elections in February of this year, Mr. de Jong defeating Social Credit leader **Grace McCarthy**.

Soon after the session began, the Social Credit caucus was reduced from six members to three, as former interim leader **Jack Weisgerber** and fellow MLAs **Len Fox** and **Richard Neufeld** left the party to become the first Members representing the British Columbia Reform Party. This leaves party standings in the House at NDP 51, Liberal 15, Social Credit 3, Reform 3, Progressive Democratic Alliance 2, Independent 1. Only the NDP and Liberals possess the minimum of four seats necessary for official party status, the other Members being classified as independents. Agreements were reached with the government and opposition regarding representation of the independents on committees and in question period.

A prolonged debate was held in the chamber regarding a motion, standing in the name of the Premier, that would amend the Standing Orders to provide for the election of the Speaker by secret ballot. The motion and related political events were interpreted by many as an effort to remove the current Speaker, **Joan Sawicki**. After a week's debate, the motion passed without the support of the Official Opposition, and was immediately followed by the resignation of the incumbent. The following day saw the election of Deputy Speaker and long-time



NDP Member **Emery Barnes**, who defeated the only other candidate, Social Credit MLA **Cliff Serwa**. The Official Opposition Liberals boycotted the election in protest. Following the election, New Democrat **Dale Lovick** was appointed Deputy Speaker.

### Procedural Matters

Reform MLA **Jack Weisgerber** raised the treatment of the former Speaker in a motion of privilege, in which he alleged that the Government had interfered with the Chair, breaching the collective privileges of all Members. Speaker **Emery Barnes**, in ruling that the allegations did not constitute a *prima facie* case of breach of privilege, noted that the complaint was based on media reports; that "lack of denial of alleged facts [by the former Speaker and Government Members] does not constitute admission" of their veracity; and that a dispute as to facts cannot form the basis for a motion of privilege.

In addition to amending the Standing Orders regarding election of the Speaker, a sessional order was passed for the third consecutive year authorizing the Committee of Supply to debate the government's estimates in both the chamber and a committee room. Though technically a Committee of the Whole, Section A (as it is commonly called) provides for 15 government Members, 6 Liberals, and 3 other Members to debate those Ministries' estimates referred to it, with ample provision for substitution of Members. This year, for the first time, Section A is also authorized to examine bills referred to it during the course of the legislative session.

This change brought a motion of privilege from **Gordon Wilson**, who argued that the restricted membership of Committee A denies Members "the right to enter into de-

bate and to vote". Speaker Barnes, in dismissing the motion, ruled that acceptance of the principle of a parliamentary committee system, in which membership is allocated in approximate proportion to party standings in the House, "is to accept and recognize that inevitably, only a fraction of all the Members of the House will become members of any particular committee." He further noted the flexible provisions of the Section A sessional order relating to substitution of Members, as well as the requirement that bill referrals to Section A require unanimous consent of the House. He concluded that the Member was "anticipating an inequity that has not occurred". The Speaker went on to note the interesting differences between jurisdictions in Canada relating to the debate of government estimates: in some, strict time limits exist, after which those votes yet pending are deemed to have passed, while in some provinces only certain ministries are selected by the opposition for detailed scrutiny. In British Columbia, however, there is neither a time restriction nor an exclusion of any ministry in the debate on estimates.

### Committee Activity

Aside from the release of the Parliamentary Reform committee's report, the Special Committee to Select an Auditor General concluded its interviews and released its report on February 9, 1994. The Committee unanimously recommended the reappointment of incumbent Auditor **George Morfitt** for another six-year term. The Committee reached its decision on the basis of fifty-four applications received from individual across Canada, followed by two rounds of interviews of short-listed candidates. Mr. Morfitt, 57, becomes the

second Auditor in British Columbia to be reappointed to a second term.

### Other Events

On March 21, in what some describe as the largest single demonstration ever in the capital, a group of approximately 20,000 forest workers staged a rally on the lawns of the legislature. They were protesting recommendations contained in a report on Vancouver Island land use by the Commission on Resources and the Environment. The report called for an increase in protected wilderness from 12% to 13.5% of the Island's land base, with an additional 8% to be designated "regionally significant lands", on which a strictly regulated mix of activity could take place. Industry and workers have claimed that significant job losses will occur, and do not want the government to enact the report's recommendations.

A Local Area Network (LAN) has been installed in the offices of the legislative assembly. Anchored by a single computer server, the LAN allows users in disparate offices to access information in the other offices, for example the index compiled by Hansard. It will speed the processing of legislative accounts, connects users throughout the buildings to library circulation files, and allows users to communicate through electronic mail. The LAN serves the offices of the Speaker, clerks, Hansard, the library, Sergeant-at-Arms, Legislative Comptroller and party caucuses.

**Neil Reimer**  
Assistant Committee Clerk  
British Columbia Legislative  
Assembly



## New Brunswick

**T**he Third Session of the 52nd Legislative Assembly adjourned April 20. It took the House 29 days, [one-third spent in evening sittings], to approve a \$3.38 billion budget, pass 66 of 68 Bills introduced, and debate 19 motions. New Brunswick's House welcomed a new member, observed a change in the composition of the opposition, and received two lengthy select committee reports.

### Speech from the Throne

The February 15th Throne Speech predicted a balanced budget, no additional taxes, and the enhancement of social programs. It dealt with job creation and the economy, social policy and the quality of life, and fiscal environment and government institutions. The government promised to enforce family support orders aggressively, to accelerate the Family Support Order Program through identification of all situations where parental support is lacking, to initiate an integrated justice information system, and to implement recommendations of the Select Committee on Land Use and the Rural Environment.

Official Opposition Leader **Danny Cameron** criticized the Throne Speech and referred to the government's previous implication that it would bring in a balanced budget this year while the Throne Speech referred to a three-year plan to balance the budget on the Ordi-

nary Account by 1995-96, which Mr. Cameron called "doublespeak."

Continuing, he called the speech "nothing more than continued rhetoric on the entire subject of job creation," and suggested "If this government took corrective action to downscale bureaucracy and truly exercise restraint, there would be millions and millions of dollars available for job creation." He suggested downscaling MLAs' perks, government mandarins' unlimited expense accounts, promotion of official bilingualism and the funding of cultural programs for one faction of New Brunswick society, which he maintained "continues to drive us further apart."

On the subject of culture: "Our party and many New Brunswick citizens believe that unilingual English-speaking residents are being treated as second-class citizens by this government. Civil service promotions within this province are frequently based on bilingual policy and bilingual capacity rather than merit. Millions are being spent, far exceeding the original intent of equal opportunity and the implementation of official languages legislation. Huge sums continue to be directed to promoting one culture. Activists are promoting separate community considerations which have, like culture, no justification under the guise of official bilingualism."

He noted the omission of specific information relating to layoffs and separation packages, mothballing of plants, the TransCanada Highway, avoidance of further rail abandonments, scrapping outright grants, loan guarantees and subsidies, better disclosure in public utilities, no change in the delivery of health care, no direct assistance to the tourist industry and called on the Minister of Education **Paul Duffie** to deal with student behavioural problems in a manner that will pro-

tect educators. Reacting favourably to the Department of Income Assistance's study on welfare initiatives, he called on both federal and provincial governments to protect those who are unable to help themselves.

### Change in Standings

On February 16, Progressive Conservative Leader **Dennis Cochrane** introduced new member **Percy Mockler** (Madawaska South) elected in a November 29, 1993 by-election to the seat held by Liberal **Pierrette Ringuette Maltais** who ran successfully in the federal election. Mr. Mockler represented Madawaska South from 1982 to 1987.

During a two week adjournment in March, the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations met. In addition, during the adjournment, two members of the official opposition declared their intention to sit as independent members: **Brent Taylor**, (Southwest Miramichi) and **Beverly Brine** (Albert). This brings to four the number of opposition groups in the House.

### Reports of Committees

On April 7, Chairman **Eric Allaby** tabled the *Final Report of the Select Committee on Land Use and the Rural Environment*, the result of extensive public consultation and an examination of the *Government Response to the Final Report of the Commission on Land Use and the Rural Environment*.

On April 8, Chairman and Minister of State responsible for the Electronic Information Highway **Georges Corriveau** tabled the *Final Report of the Select Committee on New Brunswick's Highway Policy*, the result of deliberations on the *White Paper Highways for the Next Century*, which sets out the objectives of a new highway system and describes the policies to achieve them, includ-

ing highway financing, standards, location, truck weights, signage and rest areas.

### Committee on Procedure

On March 1, Government House Leader **Raymond Frenette** presented the *First Report of the Standing Committee on Procedure*, outlining a wide range of procedural issues of concern: legislative process, budget process, sitting hours, recorded divisions, and the disposition of private legislation. The Committee will review and evaluate these areas and report to the House.

On April 15, Mr. Frenette who is also Chairman of the NB Power Corporation, announced his intention to resign from Cabinet but to remain as Corporation Chairman. He tabled the *New Brunswick Power Corporation Business Plan 1994 - 1999* for referral to the Crown Corporations Committee. The plan will be updated annually and its purpose is to ensure that an open accountability process continues to exist with the public, through the provincial government and the Legislative Assembly. The document states:

The government has recently announced a number of changes intended to reflect a more private style of operation, including the announcement that the next Chairperson will be non-elected, the first non-elected Chairperson in NB Power's history. Changes to the regulatory process have also been announced, including a requirement for the PUB to review any direct capital expenditures related to additional generating capacity, and a move to a "price-cap" regulation model. Future annual average rate changes amounting to less than 3% of the rate of inflation, whichever is higher, will not be subject to regulatory approval.

### Budget Process

On February 25, Finance Minister **Allan Maher** delivered his seventh

budget in as many years. Highlights include no new taxation, preservation of key services, reduction in the cost of operating government, prosecution of tax evaders, and modest tax cuts proposed to stimulate job creation. In addition, the government intends to:

- continue to look at privatization opportunities
- eliminate unproductive work practices through negotiation with individual unions
- make service delivery more efficient by making better use of technology
- freeze salaries of ministers, MLAs, management and nonbargaining employees in 1994
- no wage increase budgeted for unionized employees in 1994
- beginning in 1995, pay increases for management and nonbargaining employees will be linked to job performance
- close government offices between Christmas and New Year's in 1994 (essential services excepted)
- employees can use vacation credits during the Christmas closure or take a leave-without-pay option
- reduce the cost of sick leave
- size of the public service will continue to shrink primarily through attrition

Official Opposition Critic **Gordon Willden** announced as he opened the debate that his Confederation of Regions Party endorsed the budget's general thrust but he warned that the Official Opposition would watch the government's performance carefully for any deviation from the stated plans.

He was critical of the fact that this government had played games with trust funds. He took issue with the Finance Minister's claim that there would be no new or increased taxes, saying "he neglects to mention the increase put in place by a previous budget and scheduled for the period to which this budget applies. This is good old government leger-

demain, sleight of hand." He criticized the fact that NB Power allows major paper companies the benefit of extended terms on electric energy accounts, asking the Minister to tell the House if the same consideration would be offered to other and/or smaller industries, retail or service businesses, residential customers, or single parents on welfare.

Mr. Willden commended the government's consideration of privatization "wherever it makes good financial sense," performance as justification for wage increases, proper reporting of unfunded pension liabilities, a plan to remedy the shortfall, the reduction in *Political Process Financing Act* funding, and the government's intention to prevent tax losses from recurring when directors of failed businesses reappear in new companies.

### Legislation

Amendments proposed in Bills 4, 5 and 7 eliminate the Health Services Advisory Council, *Ambulance Services Act* Review Board and the *Family Services Act* Review Board. Bill 6 amends the *Family Services Act* and introduces the concept of a reasonable man perspective, i.e., that a professional be required to report child abuse to the Minister of Health and Community Services where he or she reasonably ought to have suspected it, but to give the minister the authority to require any professional body authorized under the laws of the province to regulate the professional activities of the person, no matter what action or nonaction has been initiated by the Department.

Bill 44, *An Act Respecting the Establishment of New Electoral Districts*, introduced by Municipalities, Culture and Housing Minister **Marcelle Mersereau**, fulfills the recommendations of the December 1993 *Select Committee on Representation and Elec-*



*toral Boundaries Report*. The Bill will establish 55 new electoral districts (reducing the number of members by 3) and is the result of extensive public consultation which took into consideration linguistic composition, geography, community history, community interests, population and growth patterns.

Advanced Education and Labour Minister **Vaughn Blaney** introduced Bill 59, *Labour and Employment Board Act*, stating that the Bill creates an integrated Labour Board which will assume the functions of at least four existing Boards, the Industrial Relations Board, the Public Service Labour Relations Board, and Employment Standards Tribunal and the Pensions Tribunal and provides for future expansion to additional employment-related areas. The objective of the legislation is to increase efficiency, resulting in savings to the user in time and costs.

Mr. Blaney introduced amendments to the *Public Service Labour Relations Act* (Bill 41) and the *Industrial Relations Act* (Bill 47), explaining that the bills amend the collective bargaining process — one applying to the private sector and the other to the public sector. The legislation will enable an employer in certain circumstances to have an offer made to a bargaining agent accepted or rejected by a secret ballot vote of the employees in the bargaining unit. The employer may request such a vote only once in each round of collective bargaining and only after all conciliation processes are exhausted and the parties are in a strike position. The vote must be on the employer's most recent offer and must include all matters in dispute between the two parties. The proposed legislation is a departure from the existing process in which a decision as to whether a particular offer should be voted on and how the vote should be taken lies with the bargaining agent. Leg-

islation providing for a mandatory secret ballot vote in similar circumstances is in place in other parts of Canada: British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, and in the federal jurisdiction.

Following lengthy debate in Committee of the Whole, Bill 47 was passed while Bill 41, *An Act to Amend the Public Service Labour Relations Act* remains on the *Order and Notice Paper* before Committee of the Whole.

Other significant government legislation, Bill 61, amends the *Political Process Financing Act* to reduce the annual allowance paid to registered political parties. The annual allowance for each registered political party for 1994 is 11.6% less than the annual allowance for 1993. For 1995, the annual allowance will be 10% less than the 1994 allowance as published under the provisions of the Act.

The House adjourned April 20 to a date and time to be set by the Speaker upon the request of the government. On April 25, 1994 Premier **Frank McKenna** announced he would ask the Legislative Assembly to consider **Gérald Clavette** to preside over its deliberations as Speaker. He replaces New Brunswick's first woman Speaker, **Shirley Dysart**.

**Loredana Catalli Sonier**  
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly



**T**he second session resumed on March 8 and concluded three

days later. Two new Parti Québécois Members, **Serge Ménard** for Laval-des-Rapides and **Marcel Landry** for Bonaventure took their seats, as did a new Liberal Member for Shefford, **Bernard Brodeur**.

The Assembly approved a motion appointing **Michel Tremblay**, the Liberal Member for Rimouski, as Deputy Speaker, replacing the Member for Frontenac, **Roger Lefebvre**, who had been appointed Minister of Justice in Premier **Daniel Johnson's** cabinet.

The second session ended with the announcement by the Liberal Member for Iberville, **Yvon Lafrance**, that he would from then on be sitting as an independent, and with the resignation of the Member for Mille-Iles and Deputy House Leader, **Jean-Pierre Bélisle**.

On March 17 the third session of the 34th legislature opened with the inaugural speech by Premier Johnson, in which he listed his government's priorities and the means it intended to use to achieve the objectives it had set. Job creation and support for the family were among the government's major concerns. Its strategy is five-fold: acceleration of the engines that drive the economy, restructuring of the public service, support for emerging sectors, regional development, and more government action directed toward the work force. The Premier also proposed a number of environment-related measures.

On March 24 the Minister of Finance, **André Bourbeau**, tabled the government estimates for the 1994-95 fiscal year. The total projected expenditure is \$42,054,000.00, an increase of 2.9% over last year. Spending in the income security, health and education sectors is going up by about 1% and debt servicing by 3.6%. However, most ministries will be seeing their funding decline for a second consecutive year. The number of civil service

positions authorized in the coming fiscal year will be 61,552 as against 63,949 for 1993-94, a net reduction of 3.7%.

The Speaker, **Jean-Pierre Saintonge**, has had a number of important procedural rulings to hand down since the resumption of sittings. The first was a case of alleged contempt of the Assembly: the Member for Lévis, **Jean Garon**, had accused his colleagues for Bellechasse and Montmagny-L'Islet of having told their respective constituents how much money the government was allocating to Ministry of Transport programming in 1994-95, at a time when these expenditures had not yet been announced and supply had not yet been voted.

The allegation against the Member for Bellechasse was rejected by the Speaker, since a newspaper story that did not reproduce a Member's exact words could not be considered evidence for such a serious accusation. In the case of the Member for Montmagny-L'Islet, the Speaker ruled that the action had not been such as to obstruct the Assembly's deliberations. Although the press release issued by the Member's office might have created some confusion by its vagueness, that was not enough for the Speaker to find that it constituted a *prima facie* case of contempt of the Assembly.

A breach of parliamentary privilege was alleged by the Member for Arthabaska with regard to the study of financial commitments in committee. The Member claimed that five financial commitments of over \$25,000 to Quebec's Commission des courses [race track commission] had been concealed from the committee members.

The Speaker ruled that the notice given by the Member for Arthabaska did not contain adequate evidence to find that there was a *prima facie* case of breach of privilege. The Member had not

proved that the President of the Commission des courses had presented a document that was forged, falsified or altered in an attempt to deceive the Assembly. In addition, the Quebec Treasury Board's administrative procedure for drawing up and transmitting lists of financial commitments does not come under the Assembly's authority.

Active, as always, in the area of interparliamentary relations, the Speaker made an official visit to Rumania in April. The initial invitation came from the Rumanian National Assembly and was addressed to Mr Saintonge in his capacity as President of the Assemblée internationale des parlementaires de langue française [international assembly of French-speaking parliamentarians]. The Speaker then took part in the annual meeting of the Joint Quebec-Belgium Committee, which this year, exceptionally, was held in Bulgaria. The unusual venue was chosen to mark the official inauguration of the Bulgarian National Assembly's French-Language Documents Centre, an initiative of the Joint Quebec-Belgium Committee. During the annual meeting the members of the Joint Committee held working sessions at which they chiefly discussed the teaching of French to immigrants and the conditions in which parliamentarians carry out their mandate.

**Nancy Ford and Jean Bédard**  
National Assembly Secretariat

### Committee Work

Between February 1 and April 30, 1994, the committees of the National Assembly held 191 sittings on various matters referred to them. The main mandate was consideration of the estimates for the province's ministries and agencies, which occupied most of the committees' time be-

tween April 12 and April 26. As it is every year, this period is set aside for consideration of the figures tabled by the Minister of Finance. The committees devoted 49 sittings to this.

Although the Assembly did not sit from December 21, 1993, to March 10, 1994, the committees were busy, sitting 24 times over that period. Among other matters considered then were seven of the ten private bills that went to committee. There were also sittings devoted to consideration of the government's financial commitments.

As part of their general mandate to monitor government activities, three committees held hearings into the orientation, activities and management of public bodies. The Economy and Labour Committee held two days of hearings on the Occupational Health and Safety Board, the Budget and Administration Committee examined the Human Resources Office for three days, and the Institutions Committee held one sitting to hear from the Youth Rights Protection Board. The committees heard not only from these organizations' senior management but also from groups affected by their activities and services.

The Economy and Labour Committee also summoned Hydro-Québec to talk about follow-up on the 1993-1995 development plan, tabled by the provincial power corporation last year.

The *Act respecting personnel reductions in government agencies and the accountability of Deputy Ministers and managers of public agencies*, tabled by a private Member and passed in June 1993, makes certain public bodies accountable to legislative committees and requires the latter to monitor the public service systematically.

Pursuant to this Act the Education Committee held two sittings at which it heard from most Quebec

universities about the impact of the new budget rules on their staffing levels. One provision of the *Act* enabled the Budget and Administration Commission to summon the Deputy Revenue Minister before it to report on his management.

The Cabinet shuffle in January affected the committees. Four of them had to elect new Vice Chairs, the incumbents having either resigned or been appointed Parliamentary Secretaries by the Prime Minister.

Five sittings were held to examine financial commitments. The Social Affairs Committee held two hearings, one on manpower training and one on income security, and the Budget and Administration Committee examined the government's budgetary policy. Only five bills were referred to committee for detailed consideration. However, over the next two months (May and June) the committees will be concentrating almost exclusively on the consideration of bills.

**Doris Arsenault**  
Co-ordinator  
Committees Secretariat



## Ontario

**T**he Third Session of the Thirty-fifth Parliament of Ontario resumed sitting on Monday, March 21, 1994. One of the early items of business was to introduce new Progressive Conservative member, **Chris Hodgson** to the House. In a by-election held on March 17, 1994,

Mr. Hodgson was elected as the member for Victoria-Haliburton, which had been vacated by the Rev. **Dennis Drainville**, in September 1993. With regard to other personnel changes, **Zanana Akande**, NDP member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick, since 1990 and long-standing member **Don Cousens**, PC member for Markham since 1981, have indicated their intention to resign.

In light of recent concern about the availability of guns and public safety, private member's bills to restrict the control of the sale of ammunition were presented to the House. The sale of ammunition would be restricted to persons holding a valid Ontario Outdoors card with the appropriate hunting licence or valid firearms acquisition certificate. Bill 149 was presented by Liberal member **Tim Murphy**, but it was supplanted by Bill 151, introduced by **Bob Chiarelli**, which amended the financial penalty incurred upon contravention of the act. Bill 151 was referred to the Standing Committee of the Administration of Justice for further consideration on April 21.

On March 22, 1994, **Ed Philip**, Minister of Municipal Affairs, introduced Bill 143 *An Act to Amend Certain Acts related to The Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton and to amend the Education Act in respect of French-Language School Boards* to the House. The Act would reform local government in the region by proposing that regional council be directly elected and that mayors of local municipalities not be on regional council. In addition, a regional police planning committee and a regional police services board be established and the operation of Ottawa-Carleton's French-language school board would be addressed.

The Standing Committee on Resources Development, chaired by

**Bob Huget**, held two days of hearings in Ottawa on the bill on April 15th and 16th, 1994. An exception to the rule that committees do not travel when the House is sitting had to be made because the bill dealt exclusively with the Ottawa region. The bill, was reported back to the House and was given Royal Assent on May 2, 1994.

The establishment of an avian emblem is now a step closer. **Sharon Murdock**, introduced a private member's bill, Bill 147, *An Act to designate an Avian Emblem for Ontario*, on April 6, 1994 and it is now before Committee of the Whole House. The avian emblem proposed for Ontario is the common loon.

The Minister of Finance, **Floyd Laughren**, tabled the Provincial Budget on May 5, 1994, which promised to hold this year's deficit to \$8.5 billion.

A number of procedural matters and concerns were raised during the early weeks of the session. The referral of questions during question period from one minister to another had caused some consternation amongst opposition members. The Speaker reminded the members of Standing Order 33(f) which specifies that ministers can direct questions to other ministers who are responsible for the subject matter to which the question relates. The Speaker added that this had been accepted practice in the House for many years and was further affirmed by reiterating Speaker Edighoffer's 1987 ruling which stated that "the right to redirect belongs to the minister and not to the questioner".

Clarification of the procedures to follow with regard to a deferral of a vote in the House had been requested. It was generally felt that racing to the Chair to get precedence for such a request undermined the dignity of the House. Practice had dictated that the Speaker would ac-

cept the first letter requesting the deferral to be received as the prevailing one. The first point raised was that the Speaker should not adopt the first letter received, but should adopt some other method of determining acceptability, thereby avoiding the race to the Speaker's Chair. The Speaker determined that clarification of the procedure be undertaken through consultation with all parties, and therefore, pursuant to Standing Order 106(i), the question was referred to the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly. The Speaker did rule that the only deferral letter acceptable for consideration would be one signed by the Chief Whip of a recognized party. The deferral letter submitted on the previous day signed by the Acting Government Whip during the previous day's sitting was ruled out of order.

A further related point was raised with respect to the meaning of the term "specified time". Standing Order 28(g) states that "the Speaker shall then defer the taking of the vote to a specified time...". The Speaker ruled that "specified time" may refer to either a time prescribed by the clock or a time in the proceedings of the House such as "immediately following routine proceedings".

During the winter recess, the Standing Committee on the Administration of Justice, chaired by **Rosario Marchese**, considered two private member's bills. The first, Bill 62, *An Act to amend the Environment Protection Act in respect of the Niagara Escarpment*, introduced by **Noel Duignan**, sought to amend the *Environment Protection Act* to prohibit establishment of any further waste management systems and waste disposal sites in the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area. The Committee held three days of public hearings receiving evidence from environmental groups, municipalities and

waste management companies. The bill was reported to the House with amendments and now awaits consideration by Committee of the Whole.

The Committee then considered Progressive Conservative **Bob Runniman's** private member's bill, Bill 20, *An Act to protect the Persons, Property and Rights of Tenants and Landlords*. Bill 20 sought to provide a mechanism for the speedy eviction of tenants who have been convicted of certain narcotics offenses committed in connection with the rented premises. Public hearings were held for two days and during clause by clause review, the bill was defeated. The Committee reported to the House that the bill be not reported. After debate, the Committee report was adopted.

The Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, chaired by **Paul Johnson**, concluded its hearings on the Underground Economy in Ontario and its pre-budget consultations and preliminary responses to the "Fair Tax Commission" report. The Committee has tabled its reports on these issues.

The Standing Committee on General Government, chaired by **Mike Brown**, had a full agenda over the winter recess. Bill 120, *An Act to amend certain statutes concerning residential property*, introduced by **Evelyn Gigantes**, Minister of Housing, in November 1993, legalizes basement apartments in the province. The bill was of particular interest to groups concerned with housing and to owners of homes with illegal basement apartments. The Committee held three weeks of public hearings and travelled to Windsor and Ottawa for input. Clause-by-clause consideration of the bill began in early March and continued after the Legislature reconvened. Pursuant to an Order of the House of April 19, 1994, the bill was reported to Legis-

lature as amended and was subsequently referred to the Committee of the Whole House.

The Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly, chaired by **Ron Hansen**, considered a private member's bill, Bill 57, *An Act to amend the Election Act and the Legislative Assembly Act*, introduced by Liberal member **Gregory Sorbara**. This bill would fix the day for by-elections to the first Thursday seventy days after the date on which a vacancy occurred unless another day falling no later than 100 days after the occurrence of the vacancy is set by Order-in-Council within 14 days of that date. The bill would also allow the Speaker to take the appropriate steps to permit the constituency office to remain open to serve the public until the seat is filled. The bill, reported with amendments by the Committee, now awaits third reading.

In January 1994, the Committee began its comprehensive review of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1989*. The Committee is reviewing its draft report.

In March and April 1994 the Committee conducted interviews with respect to the hiring of a new Officer of the Assembly, to be known as the Environmental Commissioner. This position will provide the Legislative Assembly of Ontario with objective oversight and measurement of the implementation of the *Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993*. This position will report to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. **Eva Ligeti** was unanimously selected to fulfil this role by the Committee and following this selection, a Special report was tabled in the House.

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts, chaired by **Joseph Cordiano**, completed its reviews of the issues of the Ontario Health Registration System (health cards) and Non-Profit Housing, and tabled re-

ports in the Legislature on these subjects.

The referral of the Provincial Auditor's 1993 Annual Report to the Committee, provided opportunities for further examination of some Government programs. Initial hearings into special education programs, curriculum development, youth offender services and institutional services were undertaken. A site tour of the Toronto Jail was conducted by the Committee as part of its review of the latter. The Committee's reports are forthcoming.

The Auditor's Report had urged significant changes in the manner in which the provinces reports its budgets, spending plans and accounts. The Committee, therefore, met with an official from the Ministry of Finance and produced a commitment to work toward revisions and refinements to the province's accounting methods to comply with the principles recommended by the Provincial Auditor.

Access to tobacco products was considered by the Standing Committee on Social Development. Bill 119, *An Act to prevent the Provision of Tobacco to Young Persons and to Regulate its Sale and Use by Others*, is aimed at restricting the availability of tobacco products to persons over the age of 19, and preventing the sale of tobacco products in pharmacies. The Committee, chaired by **Charles Beer**, held hearings across the province during the month of February. The bill is currently before Committee of the Whole House. Under Standing Order 125, the Committee began an examination of dialysis treatment services in Ontario. Hearings were held in April and the Committee is currently preparing its report.

**Viktor Kaczowski**  
Administrative Assistant  
Committees Branch



**M**embers of Parliament had a number of different tasks confronting them during the period from February to early May 1994. First there were bills to be debated. Second, the House had to pass the budget brought down by the Minister of Finance on February 23. And third, the government introduced a strategy for putting a stop to tobacco smuggling. These were the items that drew intense media scrutiny, but there were other significant events as well.

#### Parliamentary Reform

The winds of institutional change continued to blow through the House of Commons. By adopting the Sixth Report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs the Members made a major change in the text of the prayer said before the opening of each day's sitting. The prayer dates back to 1877, and it has been studied and reported on many times since without any notable changes being made. By revising the text and providing for a moment of silence during which all Members may think and meditate privately, the prayer is now supposed to be more representative of the Canadian reality. Although the prayer is always said *in camera*, the Speaker read the new version publicly at the start of the sitting of February 21, the day it was used for the first time.

The desire for institutional change also took the form of amend-

ments in three areas to the Standing Orders.

Two new options have been added to the legislative process. First, it is now possible for a bill to be considered in committee before second reading, i.e. before adoption of the principle of the bill. In practical terms this change could broaden the range of amendments that can be moved in committee or at report stage, since presumably they will no longer have to fit within the limits defined by the principle of the bill. Time will tell how this new option works in practice.

Second, the House now has the possibility of authorizing a committee to draft and table a bill. This procedure is designed to add a new facet to the work done by backbenchers, who will be able to contribute to the formulation of legislative measures from the ground up.

The House used this procedure for the first time on April 19, when the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs was made responsible for drafting and tabling a bill on the way in which electoral boundaries are to be readjusted. This was in response to the passage of Bill C-18, *An Act to suspend the operation of the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*, which suspends the Act in question for two years. The Committee must table its report no later than December 16, 1994.

Third, changes were made in the procedures relating to financial matters. The Standing Committee on Finance will be able to hold consultations and make recommendations on the policies to be included in the federal budget. Also, to the consideration of departmental expenditures that the committees do every year has been added the opportunity for the committees to make recommendations to the government about spending priorities for upcoming fiscal years.



## Committee Proceedings

The House referred a number of complex subjects to committees for consideration. The Standing Committee on Human Resources Development was ordered to carry out wide-ranging consultations, prepare analyses and formulate recommendations on the modernizing and restructuring of Canada's social security system. One special joint committee was set up to review Canada's defence policy and another its foreign policy. The first and second of these three committees are to table their final reports in September while the third has until October 31.

## Question of Privilege

Having been the subject of anonymous telephone threats, and feeling that the newspapers had made accusations against him and cast doubt on his qualifications, MP **Jag Baduria** rose on a question of privilege to claim that the calls and accusations had breached his privileges as a parliamentarian. In handing down a ruling on March 24, the Speaker said he could not find that there was a *prima facie* question of privilege since the Member had not demonstrated that intimidation had occurred or that his ability to function as an MP had been impeded. The Speaker did however say,

Threats of blackmail or intimidation of a Member of Parliament should never be taken lightly. When they occur, the very essence of free speech is undermined. Without the guarantee of freedom of speech, no Member of Parliament can do his duty as is expected.

## Presentation of Petitions

Since the start of this session, a number of Members have been making comments when they present petitions. After a point of order was

raised in this regard, the Chair reminded Members of the rules governing presentation of petitions. Here is an excerpt from his ruling:

The right of the public to petition Parliament is very important, because it constitutes the only means by which individual Canadians can directly place grievances before this body and make their concerns known ... [M]embers are not bound to present petitions and cannot be compelled to do so ... [C]ommenting in any way on the merits of a petition could be considered a form of debate on the petition ... If the rules permitted debate on petitions, or if the subject of the petition were to come before the House for debate in some other manner, the Member's views on the subject matter would be relevant and essential. As things stand, however, the role of the Member, while essential, is limited. Therefore the Chair would ask Members to refrain from commenting on petitions they present, other than to simply note the prayer of petition, the number of signatories and their place of residence.

## Chairman, Chairperson, Chair?

Historically women have been under-represented in our parliamentary institutions, and the use of a certain vocabulary reflects this fact. The word "chairman", for example, is hardly appropriate when a woman is presiding. In an attempt to find a way of removing sexual stereotypes from all forms of communication at the House, and in response to a question of privilege raised by **Marlene Catterall**, the Speaker made the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs responsible for looking into the problem and making recommendations.

## Private Members' Business

One private Member's motion and one bill have been passed. The motion, made by **Jean Payne**, proposed

the creation of a distinctive decoration for Canadian veterans who had participated in the Dieppe Raid during the Second World War. The bill, introduced by **Nelson Riis**, made hockey and lacrosse Canada's national sports.

## Constitutional Resolution

On February 15, 1994, the House passed the last of a series of legislative measures required for construction of a bridge between Prince Edward Island and the mainland. One of the conditions that PEI set for joining Confederation was that the central government would ensure a permanent ferry link between the Island and the mainland. Once the bridge is constructed, the ferry service will be abandoned. A resolution was made amending the Constitution to make it reflect the coming changes.

## Bills

More than 20 government bills and 41 private Members' bills received first reading. The following bills have received royal assent:

- C-3, *An Act to amend the Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements and Federal Post-Secondary Education and Health Contributions Act*
- C-5, *An Act to amend the Customs Tariff*
- C-10, *An Act to provide for the maintenance of west coast ports operations*
- C-14, *An Act to provide borrowing authority for the fiscal year beginning on April 1, 1994*
- C-19, *An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the public service of Canada during the fiscal year ending March 31, 1994*
- C-20, *An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the public service of Canada during the fiscal year ending March 31, 1995*

**André Gagnon**

Procedural Clerk  
Table Research Branch