
Legislative Reports



Manitoba

Although it was a quiet autumn at the legislature, there was considerable anticipation and speculation about the date of the upcoming general election. Both the Fall and Spring were given equal credibility. However, speculation about a Fall election ended on October 31 when the Premier announced that the House would begin its 6th Session of the 35th Legislature on December 1, 1994.

Clerks-at-the-Table Conference

In August, the Clerk's Office was busy hosting the annual Professional Development Seminar of the Association of Clerks-at-the-Table in Canada. The Seminar was attended by clerks from all the Canadian jurisdictions as well as clerks, as observer delegates, from the United Kingdom, Alabama, Arizona and Indiana. The Seminar consisted of two full days of business sessions on procedural and administrative matters related to parliamentary institutions. Professor Paul

Thomas was the guest speaker and spoke on parliamentary reform.

Restoration and Celebration

The major activity that is occurring at the legislative building is the refurbishing and restoration of the outside of the building. The foundations of the four large entry staircases have all been reconstructed and reinforced for the first time since their construction 75 years ago. The dirt and mildew that has built up over the years is being cleaned off the Tyndall stone surface and the brass statues found all around the building. The front columns of the building and the roof atop them are also receiving reconstructive work. The total cost is expected to be \$11 million. The complete work is expected to take another four years with a break next year for the activities and events celebrating Manitoba's 125th Anniversary.

A 21-member committee, struck by the Premier, made up of Manitobans from all across the province, is planning the activities and celebrations to take place throughout 1995. Two of the key dates will be May 12th, the date that *The Manitoba Act* received Royal Assent and July 15th, the date that the Act was proclaimed, 125 years ago.

Resignations

Another Member of the Legislature has resigned her seat since the last session, creating a total of two vacancies out of the fifty-seven seats. Sharon Carstairs resigned as the member for River Heights upon her

appointment to the Senate in September.

Judy White
Clerk of Committees
Manitoba Legislative Assembly



British Columbia

With the House in a period of adjournment, the following are some of the activities currently in progress.

Committees

The Special Committee to Appoint a Child, Youth and Family Advocate has received over 200 applications from across the country for the new officer of the legislature. Chaired by Jim Beattie, the Committee will review applications and conduct interviews during November and December.

The powers and responsibilities of the Child, Youth and Family Advocate are contained in a governing statute. The Advocate is authorized to investigate complaints about the provision of designated child and family services provided by government, and can initiate an investigation in the absence of a specific

complaint. He or she can conduct administrative reviews and mediation, and make recommendations about legislation and policies respecting services for children, youth and families. The Advocate also may make agreements with ministries and community groups regarding the provision of advocacy services to children, youth and families.

Following its interviews, the Committee is mandated to unanimously recommend to the House a person for the six-year term of office which can be renewed.

Retirement

Social Credit MLA **Harry DeJong** announced his resignation from provincial politics, effective November 1, 1994. A former mayor of Matsqui, he has represented the constituency of Abbotsford since 1986, and from 1990-91 was Minister of Agriculture in the Vander Zalm government.

Legislative Comptroller **Ian Fraser** retires on November 18, 1994. Having served in that capacity for nearly six years, Mr. Fraser has been an integral part of the legislative precincts: aiding in the preparation of Assembly budgets, reviewing the expenses of members and staff, and providing administrative and financial advice to caucuses and Assembly offices. Prior to 1989, Mr. Fraser was the Comptroller for the Ministry of the Provincial Secretary and held various other positions in financial administration in government. During that period, he also administered the various financial programs of the Legislative Assembly.

Party Leadership

The Social Credit Party held a leadership election by mail-in ballot on November 4. Two candidates vied for the post, with real estate ap-

praiser **Larry Gillanders** emerging victorious. Interim Social Credit leader and long-time MLA **Cliff Serwa** declined to run for the post. He is the only Social Credit member currently sitting in the House.

The Reform Party of British Columbia (as distinct from the federal Reform Party) is also in the midst of a leadership campaign. Four people have announced their candidacy so far, one of them MLA **Jack Weisgerber**, a former Social Credit MLA and cabinet minister. He is facing a challenge from Reform Party president **Ron Gamble** and two other private citizens. A mail-in vote for party members will be held in December.

Other Events

Through the Assembly's Local Area Network (LAN), members and staff now have access to Internet, using the program MOSAIC. This program allows users to access databases, information utilities and computer bulletin boards from around the world.

Craig James and Neil Reimer
Committees Branch



Ontario

Although the House rose on June 23 and did not return until October 31, most of the Standing Committees were busy holding public hearings on government bills or

continuing work previously started. One committee investigated the conduct of a cabinet minister. All of the committees that dealt with legislation were unable to complete clause-by-clause review during their allotted time and plan to continue when the House returns.

Committees

In August, the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly conducted an investigation into allegations of breach of the Premier's *Conflict of Interest Guidelines* made against the Minister of Housing, **Evelyn Gigantes**. The allegations were in connection with her attendance at a meeting with the Board of a non-profit housing project in Ottawa on Friday, June 17, 1994. Chaired by NDP member **Ron Hansen**, the Committee heard testimony from twelve witnesses who appeared during the five-day hearings.

The Committee decided that it would allow independent Legal Counsel, **Eleanore Cronk**, to draft the Report and subsequently agreed that it would adopt the draft as the majority report of the Committee. The Committee had planned to table the Report late in the week of August 15, however, a local newspaper published a story about the contents of the still confidential Report. The Committee tabled the Report later that day.

The Report concluded that while the Minister did not breach most of the Premier's *Guidelines*, aspects of her participation at the June meeting constituted a breach of the Fundamental Principles set out in sections four and five of the *Guidelines*. It went on to say that this participation had the potential to lessen public confidence and trust in the integrity of the government and in the administration of justice.

The day after the Committee tabled its Report, Premier **Bob Rae** announced that he had accepted Ms. Gigantes's resignation from Cabinet.

Also in August, the Standing Committee on General Government, chaired by Liberal member **Mike Brown**, considered Bill 171, *An Act to revise the Crown Timber Act* introduced by the Minister of Natural Resources, **Howard Hampton**. The bill replaces the *Crown Timber Act* and seeks to provide for the sustainability of Crown forests. The Committee had a full agenda holding public hearings throughout Northern Ontario in Sault Ste. Marie, Espanola, North Bay, Kapuskasing, Thunder Bay, Fort Frances and also in Toronto.

During the second week of September, the Committee met in Toronto for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill. Further review will continue in the Fall.

Over a period of three months — August, September and October — the Standing Committee on Social Development, chaired by Liberal member **Charles Beer**, held extensive public hearings on Bill 173, *An Act respecting Long-Term Care*. Over 230 oral presentations were made to the Committee in seven cities of the Province.

Bill 173 was introduced by Health Minister, **Ruth Grier**, on June 6, 1994; providing for the approval and regulation of agencies for the delivery of a wide range of community services to people in their homes and in other community settings as an alternative to institutional care. The bill also provides for the designation of multi-service agencies for a specified geographic area and gives these agencies the responsibility for ensuring the equitable provision of specified community services to those who need them. Bill 173 sets out a Bill of Rights to persons receiving community

services and deems each service provider to have contracted to respect and promote those rights. The bill also amends various statutes dealing with long-term care including the *Ministry of Health Act* to provide for the establishment and functions of district health councils.

The Committee commenced clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 173 in the last week of October; and will continue in the Fall.

The Standing Committee on Resources Development held public hearings on Bill 165, *An Act to amend the Workers' Compensation Act and the Occupational Health and Safety Act* during August and September. The purpose of the bill is to make changes with respect to vocational rehabilitation services and programs under the act; to make changes to the structure and duties of the board of directors of the Workers' Compensation Board; and to change references to "industrial disease" to "occupational disease" among other things. Chaired by NDP member **Mike Cooper**, the hearings were held in Toronto, London, Sault Ste. Marie and Ottawa. The Committee started clause-by-clause consideration of the bill, however did not complete it and will also continue in the Fall.

In September, the Standing Committee on Government Agencies chaired by PC member **Margaret Marland**, deposited with the Clerk of the Assembly the Report on Agencies, Boards and Commissions (No. 20). The report contained the Committee's findings and recommendations with respect to the operation of the Workers' Compensation Board, the Ontario Food Terminal Board, and the Ontario Human Rights Commission. The Progressive Conservative members on the Committee issued a dissenting opinion to the report on the Workers' Compensation Board.

The Committee continued its scrutiny of intended appointees to Ontario Government agencies, boards and commissions. Two weeks were spent reviewing the operation of the Ontario Council of Regents for Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology, and the St. Lawrence Parks Commission.

During the month of September, the Standing Committee on Administration of Justice dealt with Bill 163, *The Planning and Municipal Statute Law Amendment Act* referred by the House in late June 1994. The Minister of Municipal Affairs, **Ed Philip** said that the bill set out the Government's initiatives for reform. The Government's intent is to streamline the planning and development system, to give municipalities greater authority and accountability, and to provide better environmental protection in land use matters. Bill 163 is a result of the planning reform work started by the Commission on Planning and Development Reform in Ontario, known as the Sewell Commission and the work of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Consultation Committee.

Chaired by NDP member **Rosario Marchese**, the Committee spent three weeks conducting public hearings in Toronto and locations throughout Ontario. The Committee travelled to ten cities — Niagara Falls, London, Chatham, Midhurst, Oshawa, Peterborough, Napanee, Thunder Bay, Sudbury and Ottawa — in as many days. Interest in the legislation came from many groups including municipalities — both planners and elected officials, developers, environmentalists, private citizens and various ratepayer associations. Over 200 groups/individuals provided input on the proposed legislation during the public hearings.

When clause-by-clause review of the proposed legislation began, sev-

eral hundred amendments had been tabled by all three parties. The committee did not complete its review during the four days allotted in the recess and continued when its regular committee meeting days commenced on October 31.

Although the Standing Committee on Estimates does not normally meet during a recess, it was authorized by a motion in the House to meet to consider the Estimates of the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines. The Committee is chaired by PC member **Cam Jackson**, and its terms of reference is to examine the annual spending estimates and programs of the various ministries.

Just prior to the review of the Estimates of the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, the Minister, **Shelley Martel**, was found by the Information and Privacy Commissioner to have violated Ontario's privacy rules after disclosing personal information about a taxpayer. The final report of the Privacy Commissioner was released the day before the Minister was to appear before the Estimates Committee, thus the Estimates Committee became the first available forum to question the Minister about the privacy violation. Ms. Martel later resigned her position as Minister of Northern Development.

Chaired by Liberal member **Joe Cordiano**, the Standing Committee on Public Accounts continued its work arising out of the 1993 Annual Report of the Provincial Auditor. Among the issues into which the Committee held hearings were Young Offender Services, Institutional Services, Curriculum Development and Special Education. The Committee prepared Reports to the House on each of these issues, containing its observations, opinions and recommendations, and will be

tabling them when the Legislature resumes.

When the House resumed on October 31, Speaker **David Warner** informed the House of the following vacancies in the membership of the House by reason of resignations over the recess: **Zanana Akande**, NDP; **Donald Cousens**, PC; **Murray Elston**, Liberal and **Will Ferguson**, NDP.

The House is expected to sit until December 8, according to the parliamentary calendar. In the new year, the Premier is expected to announce an election date as the Government is currently in its fifth year in power.

Donna Bryce
Committee Clerk



Since the House resumed sitting in mid September, legislative activity has centred on consideration of measures aimed at restructuring several departments. The committees will be called upon to play a key role in important upcoming debates.

Committees

The work of parliamentary committees will be critical in terms of defining major orientations with respect to social programs, foreign policy and national defence.

The Standing Committee on Human Resources Development is holding consultations on a major

working paper on the future of social programs. Several reform proposals will be examined and the work of the committee will have a significant effect on the formulation of future reform proposals.

The Special Joint Committee on Canada's Defence Policy submitted its report to the House at the end of October and the Special Joint Committee on Reviewing Canadian Foreign Policy will table its report in mid November. These reports will serve as a basis for setting out government policy directions in these two areas. In short, these parliamentary committees will help to formulate the policies that will shape Canada in the years ahead.

The Standing Committee on Finance has begun its consideration of budget policy proposals in preparation for the next budget. In accordance with the Standing Orders of the House, the Committee is slated to present its findings in December.

The House adopted the twenty-eighth report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs which established priority usage of committee rooms.

Procedural Questions

For the first time since the beginning of the Thirty-Fifth Parliament, Speaker **Gilbert Parent** named a Member on September 30, 1994 when **Gaston Leroux** refused to withdraw some unparliamentary comments that he had made.

With the adoption of the twenty-fourth report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, the House replaced the daily publication of the *Votes and Proceedings* by the weekly publication of *Journals*.

Private Members' Business

With respect to private members' business, no specific measures were adopted, although several interest-

ing proposals were made. **Sarkis Assadourian** sponsored Bill C-229, *An Act to amend the Elections Canada Act*. Passage of this bill would have meant that any party wishing to be recognized as a national party under the law would have to nominate candidates in at least seven provinces that have, in the aggregate, at least fifty per cent of the population of Canada. Moreover, the party would have to field candidates in at least half of the electoral districts in each of these seven provinces. Since the bill was not a selected item, it was dropped from the *Order Paper*.

Randy White (Fraser Valley West) sponsored Bill C-245, *An Act to amend the Financial Administration Act and the Auditor General Act (review of budget speech)*. The purpose of this bill was to ask the Auditor General to order a review of the budget speech and to report on the reasonableness of the estimated revenues used in the preparation of the budget speech. This bill was also dropped from the *Order Paper*.

Lastly, **Louis Plamondon** tabled a motion respecting the funding of political parties. In his motion, he called upon the government to limit the right to contribute to a federal political parties to individuals and to limit the amount of their contributions to \$5,000. A recorded division was held, and as is customary for private members' business, it was a free, roll call vote. A considerable number of Members voted and the motion was defeated.

Death of a Member

Gaston Pélouquin, a Bloc Québécois MP, died accidentally on September 1 last. This vacancy brings the number of seats held by Bloc Québécois Members to 53, one more than the Reform Party.

Board of Internal Economy

Don Boudria, who was appointed Chief Government Whip, will now sit on the Board of Internal Economy. Further to his appointment as Secretary of State (Agriculture and Agri-Food, Fisheries and Oceans), **Fernand Robichaud** will no longer sit on the Board.

André Gagnon
Procedural Clerk
Table Research Branch

SENATE



As had been anticipated when the Senate adjourned for the summer last July, one of the first items of business upon the resumption of its sittings was the message from the House of Commons on Bill C-22, the Pearson Airport Bill. The message stated that the House did not agree to the amendments adopted by the Senate. Originally, this bill had sought to cancel the contract that had been signed between the previous Government and a consortium of private developers and to exempt the Government from any liability for lost profits. When the bill was considered by the Senate before the summer adjournment, several amendments were adopted that substantially altered the bill's contents. Basically, the amendments cancelled the contract only from the date of the bill's introduction in the House of Commons last April and restored the right of the

contractors to sue for monetary damages through the courts.

The Government in the Senate proposed a motion on October 4 that accepted the position of the House of Commons and stated that the Senate did not insist on its amendments. Following the remarks on the motion made the next day by the Government Leader, Senator **Joyce Fairbairn**, the Opposition Leader, Senator **John Lynch-Staunton** proposed an amendment to have question of the motion and the message of the House of Commons referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs. The amendment was adopted and the question is now before the committee.

Other legislation considered by the Senate included Bill C-25 that amends the *Canada Petroleum Resources Act* in order to extend the boundaries of the Norman Wells oil field. The bill was not controversial and it was introduced and read a second time following a brief debate on October 4. It was reported back October 25 without amendment from the Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources by the Deputy Chairman, Senator **Colin Kenny**, and received third reading and passage the same day.

Another non-controversial item of legislation, Bill-42, an Act to amend the Criminal Code and other Acts, was quickly referred to a committee after a short second reading debate. In moving the second reading motion, Senator **P. Derek Lewis** explained that the purpose of the bill was to update certain features of the criminal code as it related to the justice system. Speaking on behalf of the opposition, Senator **Jean-Noël Desmarais**, indicated support for most of the changes and proposed several others that he hoped would be included in future legislation.

The courts were also the object of another parliamentary proceeding, in this case a question of privilege. On October 5, Senator **Anne Cools** raised a question of privilege alleging that she had been prevented from fulfilling her obligation to attend a sitting of the Senate last June because she had been compelled to be present in a court proceeding in which she had appeared as a self-represented litigant. The Senator accused the court of breaching the privileges of the Senate through its insistence that she appear before the court on a day when the Senate was sitting. The Senator also charged the court with violating the privileges of the Senate through its practice of serving her by fax within the precincts of Parliament. After reflecting on the matter, the Speaker ruled on November 15, 1994, that the Senator had raised an important issue, but it could not be accorded priority of debate because it had not been raised at the earliest opportunity. The Speaker also noted that the Senator was pursuing the matter in the Court of Appeal and that the Senate might consider the advisability of intervening on behalf of the interests of the Senate.

Committees

Committees remained active during the summer and into the autumn and several reports have been presented to the Senate during this period. Of these, the most notable were the reports of the two Special Joint Committees, one on Defence Policy and another on Foreign Policy. Among the key recommendations of the first report tabled on October 28, 1994, was that Canada should maintain a multipurpose, combat-capable armed force and that Canada should affirm its commitment to its military role in the U.N. The Committee also recommended that there should be a

reduction in personnel at headquarters. In addition, the Committee supported a reduction in the number of fighter aircraft maintained by the armed forces, but an increase in the procurement of armoured personnel carriers and search and rescue helicopters. Such an increase should be used to aid Canada's role in peacekeeping.

The Special Joint Committee Reviewing Canada's Foreign Policy which was co-chaired by Senator Allan MacEachen and Jean-Robert Gauthier, MP tabled its report on November 15, 1994. Among the main recommendations in the report are:

- the promotion of a rules-based multilateral trading system and the targeting of trade development efforts to smaller businesses and to new market opportunities;
- the promotion of Canadian culture and learning as a fundamental dimension of foreign policy;
- to expand the definition of security and to support more specialization of the armed forces to better support peacekeeping operations;
- a reformed foreign aid program designed to target assistance more effectively to meet human development priorities;
- a strategy for managing the complex relationship with the United States, including better use of multilateral mechanisms; and
- a strengthening of foreign policy linkages with sustainable development and human rights.

The Bloc québécois and the Reform Party issued dissenting opinions on the Report.

On October 27, 1994, the Subcommittee on Veterans' Affairs tabled its Report entitled *Keeping Faith — Into the Future*. On November 22, 1994, the Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce presented its Report of the reform of

financial institutions following the collapse of Confederation Life.

In its wide-ranging pursuit of information on the subject of assisted suicide, the Special Committee on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide heard testimony from a number of Dutch experts through a video-teleconference, the first to be conducted in the Senate.

New Senators

When the Senate resumed sitting October 4, it welcomed three new senators - two from Quebec and one from Manitoba. The first to take the oath after the proclamation of his appointment had been read out was Senator **Jean-Louis Roux**, from Montreal, a noted actor of stage and television. He was followed by Senator **Lise Bacon**, the former Deputy Premier of the province in the last administration of **Robert Bourassa**. The third Senator welcomed that day was **Sharon Carstairs**, the former provincial leader of the Liberal Party in Manitoba.

This ceremony was repeated again at the end of the month, October 26, when another new senator was introduced. This was Senator **Landon Pearson**, an advocate of children's rights, who replaces Senator **Royce Frith**, recently appointed High Commissioner to Great Britain.

Two additional Senators were named on November 23, 1994. They were **Jean-Robert Gauthier** long-time Member of Parliament and **John Bryden**. Mr. Gauthier served as the Member of Parliament for Ottawa-Vanier since 1972. He was Chief Whip in Opposition from 1984 to 1990, and Opposition House Leader from 1990 to 1991. He has served in numerous positions as Committee Chair, Opposition Critic and Parliamentary Secretary.

Mr. Bryden is a former Deputy Minister of Justice in the provincial

government of New Brunswick. From 1970 to 1980 he was Senior Partner in the Fredericton law firm of Bryden and Arsenau. From 1980 to 1987 he was President, C.E.O., and later Chairman of Paperboard Industries of Toronto. From 1988 to 1989 he was Commissioner of Economic Development in New Brunswick, and from 1989 to 1991 he was Chairman of the New Brunswick Liquor Corporation. Since 1992, Mr. Bryden has been President of his own management consulting firm, J.L. Geddes Enterprises Limited, in Bayfield, New Brunswick.

Resignations

Two days after welcoming Senator Pearson, the Senate bade adieu to Senator **Robert Muir** who retired November 10 upon his seventy-fifth birthday after thirty-seven years of membership in the Senate. On September 18, PEI Senator **Heath Macquarrie** retired after a long career in Parliament. He was followed on November 26 by Newfoundland Senator **Jack Marshall**, a long-time parliamentarian and defender of Canadian Veterans.

Charles Robert and
Serge Pelletier
Committees Branch



Quebec

The thirty-fourth Legislature adjourned on July 24, 1994 when

Lieutenant Governor **Martial Asselin** prorogued the National Assembly and ordered general elections to be held on September 12, 1994.

The final results of the election were as follows: 77 Parti québécois MNAs elected; 47 Liberal MNAs elected and 1 Parti action démocratique MNA elected. Overall, 81.7 per cent of eligible Quebecers cast ballots, with the popular vote split as follows: 44.7 per cent for the Parti québécois; 44.36 per cent for the Quebec Liberal Party; and 6.45 per cent for the Parti action démocratique du Québec.

In an unprecedented turn of events, voters returned to the polls in the riding of Saint-Jean when a judicial recount ordered after the initial election showed that the Parti québécois and Quebec Liberal Party candidates had garnered the exact same number of votes. A second election was held on October 24, 1994 and the Parti québécois candidate emerged victorious with a 532-vote plurality. It should also be noted that an election petition was filed in the riding of Bertrand.

On September 26, newly elected Premier **Jacques Parizeau** unveiled his 19-member Cabinet. At the same time, he introduced his government's 14 regional delegates who also serve as parliamentary assistant to the Premier.

Among the most recent inter-parliamentary activities in which Quebec parliamentarians participated, mention should be made of the attendance by a four-member delegation and by the Secretary General of the Assembly at the 40th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference held in Banff in October.

In addition, in early November, the National Assembly took part in the Regional CPA seminar in Ottawa, the theme of which was "Parliamentary Government in an Age of Restraint". The Quebec sec-

tion was in charge of the panel session on Internal Economy Committees: A Comparative Perspective.

On October 12, 1994, **Gérald Godin**, a parliamentarian respected both for his involvement in politics and for his work as a poet, passed away following a lengthy illness. Mr. Godin was elected in 1976 as a Parti québécois MNA and had only recently retired from active politics prior to last September's election. During his career in government, he served as Minister of Cultural Communities and Immigration and as Minister responsible for the Application of the French Language Bill.

Jean Bédard and Nancy Ford
National Assembly Secretariat
Quebec National Assembly



Northwest Territories

Members took a break from their summer recess to return to Yellowknife for the visit of Her Majesty **Queen Elizabeth** and His Royal Highness **Prince Philip** on August 21, 1994. Speaker, **Jeannie Marie-Jewell**, hosted a one-hour ceremony at the Legislative Assembly building, which included a nationally-televised speech and dedication of the Chamber by the Queen.

When the Sixth Session resumed on October 5, members received some bad news about the government's financial situation. Cuts in

federal funding for social housing and a costly forest fire season meant the government had gone from a predicted balanced budget to a deficit of \$35 million. Despite that, Finance Minister, **John Pollard**, announced that the level of spending for capital projects in 1995-96 would be maintained at about \$195 million, about 25% of which will be spent to meet the housing needs of NWT residents.

In response to the release of the capital budget, the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Finance, **Jim Antoine**, urged the government to focus more of its attention on social development issues rather than economic development matters.

Legislation

Nineteen bills were passed during the five-week session. Among them.

- *Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act*: sets out a single procedure to obtain recognition of an aboriginal custom adoption;
- *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*: provides the public with the right to access informa-

tion held by government and controls the manner in which the government may collect and use personal information and establishes the office of an Access and Privacy Commissioner;

- *Guardianship and Trusteeship Act*: provides for the court appointment of the guardian to make decisions on behalf of an adult who is incapable of independently managing his or her personal care or health care and for the court appointment of the trustee for an adult who is incapable of independently managing his or her financial affairs;
- *Mine Health and Safety Act*: emphasizes the duties and responsibilities of persons engaged in mining, including owners, corporate directors, mine managers, supervisors and workers to ensure occupational health and safety.

In an unusual move *The Public Utilities Act* was voted down by members in Committee of the Whole. The bill would have given the Public Utilities Board the power to recover a portion of its actual operating costs from each utility.

Members also debated an Electoral District Boundaries Commis-

sion report which recommended realigning the boundaries of several constituencies to conform with the boundary to divide the Northwest Territories. The changes will become effective in time for the next territorial general election, expected to occur in October, 1995.

The five-year term of Commissioner, **Daniel Norris**, ended during the Sixth Session. Norris was the first northern-born, aboriginal Commissioner of the Northwest Territories.

Acting Commissioner, **Helen Maksagak**, prorogued the Sixth Session on November 10 and welcomed the members to the opening of the Seventh Session on November 14. Within three sitting days, the government had introduced 14 bills. They will be reviewed by a Standing Committee before the Seventh Session reconvenes on February 15, 1995.

Paul Jones

Coordinator, Public Information