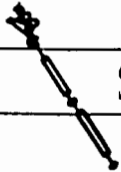




# Reports on Legislative Activities



## Senate

Many of the Senate Committees resumed studies begun in the previous session of Parliament. On November 4, the Foreign Affairs Committee, headed by **George van Roggen**, was granted permission to continue its study of Canada's participation in the international financial system and institutions. On November 6, the Social Affairs, Science and Technology Committee, chaired by **Arthur Tremblay**, was authorized to resume the study undertaken in 1985-86 on the Consultation Paper on Child and Elderly Benefits.

The Fisheries Committee, chaired by **Jack Marshall**, continued its study of the fish marketing industry and held public hearings in the Yukon and in British Columbia in mid-November. In early February the Committee travelled to Juneau, Alaska to gather information on the Pacific coast operations. The Sub-Committee on Training and Employment, of the Social Affairs Committee, headed by **Philippe Gigantès**, undertook a fact-find trip to various cities in Europe in January.

On February 5, in an unusual move, Opposition Leader **Allan MacEachen** proposed that the controversial agreement on fisheries and boundaries between Canada-France be referred to a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of hearing Ministers and officials and other interested parties, including provincial premiers. The motion was opposed by Government Leader **Lowell Murray**, who felt that the Committee of the Whole was not equipped to conduct the kind of study proposed and suggested that it would have been more appropriate to refer the Canada-France Agreement to one of the standing committees.

The motion was adopted on February 10, on division. It was agreed that a number of witnesses be called, including the Minister of Fisheries and the Minister of External Affairs, the two officials involved in negotiating the

agreement, the Canadian Ambassador to France and the Premiers and Opposition Leaders of all the Gulf provinces. On February 17, the Committee of the Whole heard Fisheries Minister **Tom Siddon** and his officials. The other witnesses will be heard in the forthcoming weeks.

Gary O'Brien



## Alberta

Although the Alberta Legislature has not been in session since September 18, 1986, there has been a considerable amount of activity in the House. Renovations to the Chamber, authorized and orchestrated by the Speaker, Dr. **David Carter**, began in November and are scheduled for completion by mid-February. The upgrading project was undertaken with three major objectives in mind: efficiency, safety and aesthetics. The main increase in efficiency will be realized from the improved acoustics, the updated sound system, and changes in the Hansard Office, which will allow for the publication of next day *Hansard*. Safety and security concerns were addressed by improving fire exit access from the public galleries, and revising the seating plan for both galleries. These changes allowed the capacity to be increased by 56 seats and six wheelchair spaces. Aesthetic considerations were also incorporated into the project, which is expected to cost about \$825,000. In addition to the Chamber renovations, the rotunda has been repainted for the first time in 31 years. Dr. Carter notes that while the renovations are necessary, they "occur at an opportune time. The 3rd of September, 1987, marks the 75th Anniversary of the Legislative Building and the restoration of the Chamber will coincide with this anniversary date."

Outside the House, the bulk of activity related to the government's

deficit reduction strategy. On January 30, 1987, **Dick Johnston**, Provincial Treasurer, released the fiscal policy statement for the Government of Alberta. While it recognized the government's continuing commitment to the agricultural sector, the energy sector, and the general public, it declared the government's intention to eliminate the 3 billion dollar deficit by the 1990/91 fiscal year. The proposed approach consists of four major elements.

First, the government has instituted a selective expenditure freeze. Announced on November 17, 1986, the directive will apply for the balance of the 1986/87 fiscal year, and requires departments to reduce spending for supplies, services, hosting and travel by 25%; freeze discretionary grants; and suspend capital construction projects that are not already committed.

Second, 1987/88 expenditures will be reduced. On January 9, 1987, the government announced that basic financial operating support for schools, universities, active treatment hospitals and municipalities will be 3% lower than last year. While it is certainly unusual to make such announcements prior to the tabling of the budget, Mr. Johnston explained that the announcement was made public "well ahead of the 1987 budget to allow affected groups the lead time required for orderly budget planning."

Third, government departments are proceeding with layoffs and re-deployment of personnel in the interests of downsizing the Alberta public service, thus reducing manpower costs.

Fourth, all new government programs will be postponed indefinitely, and all existing programs will be reviewed.

### Committee Activity

Three of the eight standing committees of the legislature met during the winter adjournment. While the activities of all three echoed the general spirit of the new fiscal policy statement, the deliberations of the Members' Services

Committees were particularly relevant in this regard.

The Special Standing Committee on Members' Services, chaired by Speaker Carter, made a number of decisions in the interests of deficit reduction. On January 12, 1987, **Al Hyland** sponsored a successful motion to reduce the number of legislative interns from 8 to 6, effective September 1, 1987. But perhaps the most controversial of the matters dealt with by the committee concerns the cuts to caucus budgets. After lively debate, which occurred over a number of sessions, a series of motions were considered and passed. In the 1987/88 fiscal year, each caucus budget will be reduced by 20%. In addition, the Office of the Leader of the Official Opposition, the Office of the Leader of the Liberal Opposition, and the Office of the Leader of the Representative Party will have their budgets cut. The committee also dealt with the budget of the Legislature Library, and passed a motion to reduce the wage element by 5%.

The Standing Committee on the *Alberta Heritage Trust Fund Act*, chaired by **John Oldring**, held the 1st meeting of the 10th session of the Standing Committee on October 22, 1986. In the months that followed the committee heard numerous presentations and considered 70 recommendations. Of the 15 which were carried (5 were withdrawn, 50 were defeated), **Fred Bradley's** motion to temporarily discontinue the transfer of non renewable resource revenue from the General Revenue Fund to the Alberta Heritage Saving Trust Fund would have the greatest implications for deficit reduction. The report of the committee will be presented to the legislature in the spring.

The Standing Committee on Legislative Offices, chaired by **Greg Stevens**, met once in October and again in January. Under consideration were the budgets for the Auditor General, the Chief Electoral Officer, and the Ombudsman. All three budgets had been prepared with government restraint in mind, and were passed with few or no revisions. The committee also dealt with the appointment of the Chief Electoral Officer. The motion made to reappoint **Patrick Ledgerwood** to this position passed unanimously.

**Kathleen Marta**



The period from November 1 to February 20 when the House adjourned for one week was a busy one and a particularly difficult one for the Progressive Conservative Government.

Beginning January 19 when the House returned from its Christmas recess, the opposition parties attacked the government over the dismissal of the Minister of State (Transport) **André Bissonnette** as a result of land dealings in his riding. Prime Minister **Brian Mulroney** said he had requested the resignation because of the possible appearance of wrong doing but accused the opposition of making prejudicial statements before the results of the RCMP inquiry were known.

The government was also attacked over a fishing agreement with France that would recognize fishing rights to vessels based in France and increase their limits while Canadian fishermen were facing restrictions on their quotas. In return the French agreed to open negotiations on their claim to jurisdiction over the waters and to submit the case to the International Court in the event of failure to resolve the dispute in an agreed upon period.

Newfoundland Liberal members **Brian Tobin** and **George Baker** took the lead in attacking fisheries Minister **Tom Siddon** and the Minister of Transport **John Crosbie**. A motion by the Leader of the NDP, **Ed Broadbent**, caused an emergency debate on the situation. The government insisted that the new treaty was an improvement over the previous situation whereby the French claimed unlimited fishing rights in perpetuity.

The Prime Minister also accepted the resignation of **Roch LaSalle**, Minister without Portfolio. Mr. LaSalle, longtime member for Joliette had been under fire for some time, first because some members of his staff did not disclose their criminal records and second because he attended a dinner in his riding at which many contractors paid \$5,000 for an opportunity to meet the Minister. Mr. LaSalle denied any knowledge of how the meeting had been organized, however, he offered his resignation in the interest of the ministry and on personal grounds since he had not been in good health in recent years.

Before taking a mid-winter break the House of Commons heard Finance

Minister **Michael Wilson's** budget on February 18. There were no major changes in income tax or other taxes. He projected a stronger dollar, reduced deficit, lower unemployment and lower inflation. The opposition had to base its criticism on what was not in the budget rather than what it included.

### Legislation

Perhaps the most controversial bill during the period under review was an amendment to the *Patent Act* (Bill C-22) to prohibit, for between seven and ten years the importation, production and sale in Canada of patented drugs by holders of statutory licenses. The opposition parties objected on grounds that the bill would lead to higher prices for generic drugs.

Another bill which received lengthy debate at second reading was legislation authorizing the sale of Crown-owned Canadair aircraft manufacturing company to Bombardier Inc. of Montreal. It received Royal Assent on December 19.

Several other bills were passed relatively quickly. These included an act to facilitate the takeover of the Bank of British Columbia by the Hong Kong Bank of Canada (Bill C-27) making it one of the largest foreign controlled banks in Canada. Legislation ordering some 3,500 striking longshoremen back to work (Bill C-24) also was passed very quickly. Amendments to the *Farm Improvement Loan Act* went through all stages in less than 24 hours and authorized the government to distribute nearly one billion dollars in farm aid. The maximum payout per farmer was \$25,000 which the opposition said was too little. A similar bill providing easier credit terms for fishermen was also passed (Bill C-31).

Amendments to the *Income Tax Act* (Bill C-23) implementing changes in the 1986 budget including changes to 1986 and 1987 RRSP contribution levels, a minimum tax and the elimination of several tax loopholes were passed. Changes to the *Unemployment Insurance Act* in Bill C-16 extended for a further year the existing 10-14 year week variable entrance for UIC and froze the 1987 premiums at 1986 levels.

The *Petroleum and Gas Revenue Tax Act* was repealed by Bill C-17. Amendments to the *Coastal Fisheries Protective Act* (Bill C-26) increased penalties on foreign vessels that violate the 20 mile limit for fishing.

### Committee Activity

Standing Committees were extremely busy throughout November and December and the pace resumed when the House returned in January.

Many of the committees continued work begun during the first session which ended in September. For example the first report of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development was a continuation of its earlier work on the "Fur Issue". The committee made thirty-six recommendations designed to bolster an industry which had been under attack by anti-fur hunting activists in Canada and Europe. The committee described the important role of this industry in Canadian history and its current importance to native people. It called on the government to issue a statement recognizing the importance of trapping and the fundamental right of aboriginal peoples to pursue this activity. Among its other recommendations was a proposal for government assistance in developing alternate methods of trapping and a request for the Department of External Affairs to help aboriginal representatives counter threats to the fur industry.

The Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs presented two reports to the House. One dealt with Bill C-23 the amendment to the *Income Tax Act* while the other related to the effect of two bank failures.

The Standing Committee on Energy Mines and Resources, chaired by **Barbara Sparrow**, responded to the fourteen recommendations contained in the "Minerals" chapter of *Natural Resources*, the report to the Task Force on Program Review.

While agreeing with many of the recommendations the Committee disagreed with the concept of a national mineral products strategy as portrayed by the Task Force. It thought this should be a private sector activity. The Committee proposed that a Ministry of Mines be created as a separate portfolio with its own distinct department.

In January the Standing Committee on Elections, Privileges and Procedure, chaired by **Albert Cooper**, presented its report on the registration of paid lobbyists. Having listened to many arguments for and against the registration of lobbyists the committee recommended that such a system would best meet the objectives of openness and disclosure. The committee had to answer a number of difficult questions including a definition of lobbying, deciding which lobbyists would be required to register, and the nature of the information to be disclosed.

It opted for a broad definition of lobbying as an attempt to influence government decisions of either a legislative or administrative nature. For

purposes of registration it would be limited to persons who engage in such activities for compensation. This would include non profit organizations and volunteer groups if they retain a paid lobbyist to represent their views. The committee also considered the degree of disclosure that should be required and recommended the lobbyists be required to disclose their names, firm name and a contact person, address and telephone number as well as the name of clients, place of business and the issue or matter upon which the lobbying activity is to take place. It also recommended that lobbyists be prohibited from receiving compensation from clients contingent in any matter upon the outcome of the lobbying activity.

The Standing Committee on Communications and Culture, presided by **Jim Edwards**, presented its report on Federal Policy Concerning Museums. The committee directed its attention to two areas: the status of the four major federal museums in the National Capital Region and federal assistance to non federal museums. Since 1968 the National Gallery of Canada, the Canadian Museum of Science and Technology and the National Museum of Natural Science have been under the corporate umbrella of the National Museums of Canada. The Committee recommended that each should be established as an autonomous institution with its own legislative mandate and board of trustees.

The committee also called upon the federal government to formulate a new museums policy in consultation with provincial governments and the museum community. It called for increased funding and a simplification of the grants programme.

In a wide ranging report on northern issues the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development (chaired by **André Harvey**) looked at the issues relating to the political development and economic development of both the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

The Government Operations Committee presented its report on Canada Post's 5 year plan. It looked particularly at the impact of the plan on rural Canadians and recommended against the replacement of rural mail service with community mail boxes. In a response to the report the government announced certain changes in the plan in keeping with recommendations of the Committee. The Committee agreed with the objective of eliminating the Post Office

deficit and supported the proposed postal rate increases.

Gary Levy



On February 12, the second session of the thirty-third parliament was prorogued. During the session, the House met for 103 days over 27 weeks. As has been the practice in Ontario for over a decade, the periods when the House is not sitting continue to be the busiest times for members and staff of the House with up to five committees meeting four to five days each week at Queen's Park or in various locations throughout the province.

### Legislation

Of the 121 government bills introduced in the session, 71 were passed and given Royal Assent. A record number of private member's bills and resolutions were considered primarily as a result of changes to the Standing Orders which precluded emergency debates from interrupting the time set aside each Thursday morning for such business. Of the 33 resolutions considered by the House, 31 carried. Eleven of the 13 private members' bills debated were given second reading and referred either to the Committee of the Whole House or a standing or select committee.

The House passed Bill 8, the *French Language Services Act*, which entitled the public to communicate with and receive available services from government agencies in French. The Act will be phased in during a three year period, and requires the current public general statutes to be translated into French by 1991. Thereafter, all public Bills of the Assembly shall be in both languages. Speaking during the third reading debate, the Minister responsible for Francophone Affairs, **Bernard Grandmaitre**, stated that the "Legislative Assembly of Ontario is on the brink of making a historic gesture, thanks to which the francophone population of Ontario can now start a process of evolution and transformation. The passing of Bill 8 will create a new ambience in our province because this act will be a real development tool which will allow us to pursue our fulfillment as francophones in Ontario".

The House gave approval in principle to three bills dealing with the economic regulation of trucking. The principal piece of legislation, Bill 150, the *Truck Transportation Act*, would replace the existing *Public Commercial Vehicles Act* and change the entry test from an examination of the need for additional service to an examination of the fitness of the applicant. For the first five years, the fitness test would be supplemented by a public interest test where there is concern about extensive market disruption. The Bills have been referred to the Standing Committee on Resources Development for public hearings.

The Attorney General **Ian Scott** introduced Bill 154, the *Pay Equity Act*, which provides for the redressing of systemic gender discrimination in compensation for work performed by employees in female job classes in the establishments of all employers in the broader public sector (which term includes municipalities, school boards, universities and hospitals) and those employers in private sector firms with ten or more employees. Following second reading, the Bill was referred to the Standing Committee on Administration of Justice for extensive public hearings and clause-by-clause consideration.

During the latter part of November and the first part of December, the Committee of the Whole House considered one of the most controversial pieces of legislation to come before the House in a number of years. Of particular attention to the members was an amendment to Bill 7, the *Equality Rights Statute Law Amendment Act*, which the Standing Committee on Administration of Justice had adopted during its hearings on the legislation. The amended Bill proposed to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Although supported by all three Party leaders, the provision was opposed by a number of members on all sides of the House and was the object of an intense lobbying campaign by its opponents and proponents. It passed the Committee by a vote of 64 to 45. Other important provisions in the legislation would ban adult-only apartment buildings and prohibit landlords from refusing to rent to 16 and 17 year olds. The Act also prohibits discrimination in athletic activities and organizations and makes it illegal to deny girls access to boys' sports teams simply because of their sex. The Bill was given Royal Assent in December.

On November 27, the House gave first reading to Bill 160, the *Members' Standards of Office Act*. The Bill provided that a conflict of interest would exist

when a member made a decision in relation to his or her public duty in the knowledge that there was an opportunity to further his or her private interest. The Bill set out a code of conduct for members of the Assembly and of the Executive Council which would prohibit the use of insider information, the use of influence of office, and the acceptance of extra benefits connected directly or indirectly with the performance of the member's duties of office. Each member would be required to disclose all assets, liabilities and income to a commissioner appointed as an officer of the Assembly under the legislation. These provisions would apply to the spouse and minor children of each member. The Bill made no provision for blind trusts as an alternative to disclosure. Rather, it provided for a management trust to manage a minister's business during office. The trustee was required to be at arm's length with the member and to be approved by the commissioner. Finally, the commissioner would act as an advisor and authority in respect of breaches of the Act. The Commissioner would ensure the adequacy of the required disclosures and give opinions respecting compliance with the Act. In cases where the Act was breached, the Commissioner would have the power to recommend sanctions, ranging from a reprimand, to restitution, to loss of the seat and prohibition against immediate re-election, against any member who contravened the Act. It would be for the House to adopt and enforce the commissioner's recommended sanction. The Bill lapsed at prorogation.

A Bill to amend the *Election Finances Act* was passed in February. Among other things, the Act clarified the term "campaign expenses" and provided that child care expenses and other expenses of a non-partisan nature would not be included as campaign expenses for the purpose of the Act. Members expressed the hope that the provision would encourage more women to run in provincial elections.

The House also passed Bill 165, the *Adoption Disclosure Statute Law Amendment Act*. The legislation would permit adult adopted persons and their birth relatives to obtain identifying information about each other, by mutual consent, through an adoption disclosure register. Non-identifying information, such as medical, social, religious and academic background data, will be released on request to all adult parties to an adoption. Counselling will be available when non-identifying information is disclosed and is mandatory before identifying information is released. The

Registrar of Adoption Information may disclose identifying or non-identifying information to any person if someone's health, safety or welfare requires it. Further, on the request of an adult adopted person, the Registrar will search for specific birth relatives. Information may be withheld if its disclosure might result in serious physical or emotional harm to any person. An appeal mechanism is established for persons who are refused information and provision is made for the disclosure of information relating to out of province adoptions.

After extensive public hearings in the Standing Committee on Resources Development, the legislature passed Bill 51, the *Residential Rent Regulation Act*. The Act provides for the extension of rent regulation to all private rental units in the province, and for the establishment of a flexible rent review guideline to be adjusted annually to reflect changes in the Residential Complex Cost Index. A province-wide rent registry was created to provide information on the rent charged and other relevant matters in respect of residential complexes containing more than six rental units. Complexes containing six or fewer rental units will be brought into the registry at a later date. The Act also provides for the establishment of a Residential Rental Standards Board to assure tenants properly maintained premises and provides for a costs-no-longer-borne mechanism to prevent the penalizing of tenants for retired capital and financing costs.

### Committees

For the most part, during the period of this report the standing committees dealt with legislation and Estimates which had been referred to them by the House.

The Standing Committee on Administration of Justice continued its clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 105, the *Public Service Pay Equity Act*. The Bill provides for the redressing of systemic gender discrimination in compensation for work performed by employees in predominantly female groups of jobs in the Ontario public service. Following the introduction and first reading of Bill 154, the *Pay Equity Act*, the Committee postponed further consideration of the Bill. For the balance of the Session, it considered the Estimates of the Ministries of Consumer and Commercial Relations, Municipal Affairs, the Solicitor General, Correctional Services, and the Ministry of the Attorney General. During the recess between the second and third sessions, the Committee will



receive public submissions on Bill 154 and commence clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

The Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs continued its consideration of corporation concentration in the financial industry, hearing evidence from **Don Blenkarn**, MP, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the House of Commons of Canada on Finance and Economic Affairs. On November 27, as a result of the announced plant closures and layoffs at Kimberly Clark (Terrace Bay), E.B. Eddy (Nairn Centre), Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. (Etobicoke), Great Lakes Forest Products (Thunder Bay) and Falconbridge (Sudbury), the Chairman of the Committee, **David R. Cooke** presented a special report recommending that the House appoint a Select Committee on Plant Closures and Shutdowns to examine such layoffs and closures, with particular emphasis on northern Ontario. The House leaders' response to the Committee's recommendations was negative and as a result the Committee declined to consider the Estimates of the Ministry of Revenue and of the Management Board of Cabinet which had been referred to it.

The Committee held two days of public hearings on Bill 25, *An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act*. This Bill was introduced on May 13 as a result of amendments proposed to the Act in the Treasurer's Budget. The Committee reported the Bill to the House without amendment. The Committee also considered the paper on Economic and Fiscal Review presented to the House on November 3 by the Treasurer, **Robert Nixon**, and permanently referred to the Committee. The Committee heard testimony from the Treasurer and officials of the Ministry of Treasury and Economics and was authorized by the House to continue its consideration of the pre-budget review during the Recess.

The Committee also considered the proposal of the Government of Canada to exclude the City of Toronto from the provisions of proposed legislation with respect to International Banking Centres. The Committee made a special report to the House calling the proposal "ill-advised and potentially highly damaging to the economy of Toronto and the Province" and proposing to undertake hearings to investigate the "potentially serious consequences of the Federal Government's proposal". In this regard, the Committee heard testimony from the Minister of Financial Institutions, **Monte Kwinter**, the Chairman of the Ontario Securities Commission, **Stanley Beck**, and

**George Radwanski**, Special Advisor to the Treasurer and Minister of Economics. On the last day of the session, the Committee presented a report to the House recommending that the Treasurer and the Minister of Financial Institutions enter immediately into discussions with the Minister of Finance of Canada to withdraw the proposal for the International Banking Centre legislation and, failing, the withdrawal, to secure the opportunity for all Canadian municipalities to benefit equally from an IBC designation.

During the Recess, the Committee will consider Bill 116, *An Act to revise the Loan and Trust Corporations Act*. The legislation provides, among other things, for new procedures for the incorporation of provincial loan and trust corporations, for new conflict of interest rules for directors and other restricted parties, for trust companies to own a percentage interest in a securities dealer, and for a compulsory review of the Act by the Legislature not later than 1997.

The Standing Committee on General Government spent a considerable amount of its time considering Bill 131, *An Act to amend the Assessment Act*. The Bill provided that credit unions, caisses populaires, stock exchanges, commodity exchanges and race tracks are liable for business tax, regardless of the fact they may not produce, or be intended to produce, profit, an exemption from taxation for rides in amusement parks, and the end to the triennial review of pipe line assessments. The Committee heard public submissions on three days before reporting the amended Bill to the House.

The Standing Committee on Government Agencies considered the operation of the Ontario Advisory Council on Multi-culturalism and Citizenship. The Chairman of the Committee, **Bud Gregory**, presented the report on Agencies, Boards and Commissions (No. 12) to the House on February 12. The report contained the Committee's recommendations with respect to the operation of the Ontario Advisory Council on Multi-culturalism and Citizenship, the Ontario Arts Council, the Ontario Development Corporations, the Ontario Land Corporation, and the Ontario Lottery Corporation. Pursuant to Standing Order 32(d), the Committee has requested that the Government provide a comprehensive response to the report. During the Recess, the Committee will review the operation of the Agricultural Council of Ontario, the Liquor Control Board of Ontario, the Ontario Northland Transportation

Commission, and the Pesticides Advisory Committee.

The Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly considered a wide range of matters during the period of this report. In November, the Committee presented its report on the premature disclosure of the draft report of the Select Committee in June. The Committee proposed that in such circumstances its role is to recommend what disciplinary action should be taken by the House. It stated that it was the responsibility of individual committees whose reports have been prematurely disclosed to ascertain all the facts in the matter. If the committee in question determined that there was sufficient information on which the Legislative Assembly Committee could make a judgement in the matter, the chairman of the committee would request that the House refer the matter to the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly. The Committee also noted that it was mindful of the advantages of *in camera* meetings, but pointed to its own experience which indicated that politically sensitive issues could be discussed in public without adverse consequences.

The Chairman of the Committee, **Michael Breugh**, also presented a report on the mandate of the Committee which placed on record the Committee's interpretation of its terms of reference as provided by Standing Order 90(h). The Speaker has responded to this report and the Committee will be considering the matter further. During November, the Committee completed its consideration of the Report on Ministerial Compliance with the Conflict of Interest Guidelines and Recommendations with Respect to those Guidelines (the Aird Report). Before it had a chance to report its recommendations to the House, the Attorney General presented conflict of interest legislation to the House. The Committee presented a report which condemned "the pre-emptive action of the Attorney General" and which called such action "insulting to the Legislature and its committees, . . . contrary to established parliamentary practice and undermining the Committee's effectiveness". The Committee presented its report on the Aird Report on December 10 and called for conflict of interest legislation rather than guidelines which would apply to all members of the legislature rather than just ministers of the Crown and parliamentary assistants. The Committee further recommended that a defined level of senior civil servants also be required to publicly disclose their pecuniary interests and liabilities.

It supported the recommendation that a Compliance Commissioner be appointed but proposed that the Commissioner be required to report the facts to the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly which would then make a determination in the matter. The four Progressive Conservative members of the Committee dissented from the recommendations of the Committee.

The Committee struck two sub-committees. The Sub-committee on Members' Services is to review the services and facilities for members of the legislature. In January, the Sub-committee visited Boston, Massachusetts, and Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, to meet with officials involved in restoration projects at the two state legislatures. As a result of this trip, the Committee presented a report to the House on February 10 which proposed that a special committee, chaired by the Speaker and the Chairman of the Legislative Assembly Committee and composed of one member from each of the parties, be appointed to "supervise and coordinate the restoration of the Parliament Building" and ensure that a balance is struck "between the preservation of the building as an historic structure and its function as a safe and useful edifice for legislative activities". The Committee further recommended that an historic structure report be commissioned immediately as a preliminary step to the preparation of a comprehensive restoration plan.

A Sub-committee on Security has been appointed to consider all matters relating to security in the parliamentary precincts and to make recommendations to the House, the Speaker and the Board of Internal Economy.

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts considered a number of matters contained in the Public Accounts of Ontario and the Report of the Provincial Auditor, including the Ontario Development Corporation and the Convert-to-Rent Program of the Ministry of Housing. In addition to

considering the Estimates of the Office of the Provincial Auditor, the Committee also heard testimony with respect to the retirement compensation package for the Clerk Emeritus of the Legislative Assembly from the Secretary of Cabinet, **Bob Carman**, the Minister of Colleges and Universities, **Greg Sorbara**, who is a member of the Board of Internal Economy, the Treasurer Robert Nixon, and an authority on wrongful dismissal actions. The Committee concluded its review of this latter matter when it was advised that a revised compensation package for the Clerk Emeritus had been approved by the Board of Internal Economy. This package did not include the annual stipend of \$31,500 and other payments and benefits which had been issues of contention.

On January 22, the day on which the Committee was to begin consideration of the Convert-to-Rent Program of the Ministry of Housing, the member for Brantford, **Phil Gillies**, and his executive assistant were served with statements of claim in a libel action arising out of a news release containing allegations with respect to a loan made under Huang and Danczkay under the Convert-to-Rent Program and the involvement of Ivan Fleischmann in procuring the loan.

The Committee made a special report to the House and recommended that the matter be referred to the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly for investigation. The House set aside its ordinary business for part of the afternoon to debate the report and later referred the matter to the Legislative Assembly Committee where it will be the subject of hearing during the Recess.

On November 24, the Standing Committee on Resources Development concluded its consideration of Bill 51, the *Residential Rent Regulation Act*, and the Chairman of the Committee, **Floyd Laughren**, reported the Bill to the House the next day with amendments. This brought to an end almost three and one-half months of meetings during which 240 written and 314 oral briefs were made to the Committee.

For the balance of the session, the Committee considered the Estimates of the Ministries of Agriculture and Food, Energy, and Northern Development and Mines. The Committee also considered Bill 115, the *Ontario Lottery Corporation Amendment Act*, which would prohibit persons from engaging in a business that involves the sale, distribution or advertisement of lottery tickets unless authorized by the Ontario Lottery Corporation. The Bill was reported to the House without amendment. However, the matter of abusive and harassing telephone calls received by the Chairman of the Committee with respect to the Committee's hearings on the Bill was referred to the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly for investigation. During the Recess, the Committee will consider the Annual Report of the Workers' Compensation Board and the circumstances of the announced closure of the Goodyear Tire Manufacturing Plant and the various closures of other manufacturing facilities particularly in northern Ontario.

The Standing Committee on Social Development devoted its time to the consideration of the Estimates of the Offices responsible for Disabled Persons, for Senior Citizens' Affairs and for Women's Issues, and the Ministries of Skills Development, Health, Education, and Labour. During the Recess, the Committee will consider Bill 52, the *Health Protection and Promotion Amendment Act*, which is a bill introduced by a private member, **Jack Pierce**. The Committee will also consider Bill 176, the *Nursing Homes Amendment Act*, and Bill 177, the *Health Facilities Special Orders Amendment Act*.

On January 27, the House appointed a Select Committee on Retail Store Hours to review and report its recommendations pertaining to Sunday shopping and retail store hours. The Committee will meet during the recess to hear public submissions from interested persons in Toronto and in various areas throughout the Province.

**Smirle Forsyth**

## Contributors

Gary O'Brien is Director of Committee's Branch of the Senate.

Kathleen Marta is a Legislative Intern with the Alberta Legislative Assembly.

Smirle Forsyth is Assistant Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.