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Daily Sitting 18

Wednesday, February 16, 2000.

10 o'clock a.m.

Prayers.

Hon. Mr. Lord paid tribute to the late Angus MacLean, Premier of Prince Edward Island (1979-1981), Progressive Conservative Member of Parliament (1951- 1979), veteran of the Royal Canadian Air Force, and a recipient of the Order of Canada.

During Statements by Ministers, Mr. Speaker advised that ministerial statements should relate to a minister's department but in so doing a minister should not offer a statement with the intent of being provocative or leading to a debate.

During Statements by Members, Mr. Speaker interrupted proceedings and reminded Members that the Standing Committee on Procedure had thoroughly reviewed the allotted time for making Members' Statements and that therefore the time limit provided for in the Standing Rules would be adhered to more strictly in the future.

Ms. Weir rose on a Point of Order stating that there were rules for Statements by Ministers and in accordance with Standing Rule 40(1), Ministers could make brief statements on, or explanations of a government policy or ministerial administration, but in doing so "shall not offer arguments or observations beyond the fair bounds of explanation."

Hon. Mr. Green then rose to speak on a point of order and claimed that Ms. Weir was technically not permitted to make a Member's Statement according to Standing Rule 40.1(3) which allows only Members of recognized parties to make statements.

Other Members spoke to the point of order.

Mr. Speaker advised that he had already addressed the matter of ministerial statements. On the matter of Members' Statements, Mr. Speaker ruled that there was enough ambiguity in the wording of Standing Rule 40.1 respecting Members' Statements to allow the rule to be interpreted in such a manner that would permit all Members of the House to make a statement.

At the conclusion of the oral question period, Mr. Robichaud rose on a Point of Order and quoted from *Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules & Forms 6th Edition*, paragraph 409(2) which states:

409(2) The question must be brief. The preamble need not exceed one carefully drawn sentence. A long preamble on a long question takes an unfair share of time and provokes the same sort of reply. A supplementary question should need no preamble.

Hon. Mr. Robichaud claimed that if the opposition were to follow the rules, maybe more members would have the opportunity to ask more questions.

Mr. C. Thériault spoke on the point of order and stated that if the Ministers would answer the questions that were asked, the Opposition could ask more questions.

Mr. Speaker ruled the points of order well taken and again sought the cooperation of both sides of the House to keep both the questions and answers brief and concise.

Hon. Mr. Betts, Minister of Finance, delivered to Mr. Speaker a Message from Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, and the said Message was read by Mr. Speaker, all the Members standing, and is as follows:

February 16, 2000.

The Lieutenant-Governor transmits Bills entitled *Special Appropriation Act 2000* and *Special Appropriation Act 2000 (2)*, and having been informed of the subject matter of these bills, recommends the same to the

The following Bills were introduced and read the first time:

By Hon. Mr. Betts,

Bill 30, *Special Appropriation Act 2000*.

Bill 31, *Special Appropriation Act 2000 (2)*.

Ordered that the said Bills be read the second time at the next sitting.

Mr. S. Graham gave Notice of Motion 76 that on Tuesday, February 22, 2000, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Lee:

That an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House copies of all contracts entered into by NB Coal and a breakdown of all amounts received by NB Coal since June 21, 1999, in connection with the removal of any soil, rocks, earth, clay, sand, gravel, or other such substance from any lands owned, leased or controlled by NB Coal.

Hon. Mr. Betts gave Notice of Motion 77 that on Tuesday, March 28, 2000, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Hon. Mr. Lord:

THAT this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Mr. Allaby gave Notice of Motion 78 that on Tuesday, February 22, 2000, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Kennedy:

That an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House a copy of the communications audit that resulted from the government's decision to cut the number of communications officers by at least half including the following information:

1. The number of communication officers on June 6, 1999, with an indication of their respective departments, location of employment, classification, pay scale, years of service, gender, language, profile and age;
 2. The number of communication officers on January 6, 2000, with an indication of their respective departments, location of employment, classification, pay scale, years of service, gender, language profile and age;
 3. The allocation of communications officers to each department as a result of the communications audit including Communications New Brunswick.
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Mr. Kennedy gave Notice of Motion 79 that on Tuesday, February 22, 2000, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. B. Thériault:

That an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House a detailing of all costs, expenses and/or disbursements incurred as of February 16, 2000, in connection with the Premier's Health Quality Council and/or any of its members and an indication of how many meetings have taken place and who has attended those meetings.

Mrs. Mersereau gave Notice of Motion 80 that on Tuesday, February 22, 2000, she would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. C. Thériault:

That an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House copies a complete listing of the government agencies, boards and commissions subject to this government's six month review announced on October 21, 1999, including an indication of each such agency's, board's and commission's:

1. Mandate or mission
2. Budgeted and actual costs for the years 1997-1998 and 1998-1999
3. Date of establishment

4. Legislative authority; and

5. Schedule of meetings.

Mr. Blanchard gave Notice of Motion 81 that on Tuesday, February 22, 2000, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Lee:

That an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House copies of documents dated January 22, 1998, between New Brunswick Highway Corporation, New Brunswick (Fredericton-Moncton) Project Company Inc. And/or Maritimes Road Development Corporation dealing with the Fredericton-Moncton highway project including complete copies of the Project Partnering Agreement, the Concession Agreement, the Development and Design-Build Agreement and the Operation, Management, Maintenance and Rehabilitation Agreement with the respective accompanying schedules.

Hon. Mr. Green announced that it was the intention of the government that following second reading, the House would resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider Bills 19, 21, 22, 24, , 25, 26 and 8.

The following Bills were read the second time and ordered referred to the Committee of the Whole House:

Bill 28, *An Act to Amend the Assessment Act*.

Bill 29, *An Act to Amend the Assessment Act*.

The House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole with Mr. Bernard in the chair.

And after some time, the Chairman declared it to be 12.30 o'clock p.m., and left the chair, to resume again at 2 o'clock p.m.

2 o'clock p.m.

The Committee resumed with Mr. Ashfield in the chair.

And after some time Mr. Steeves took the chair as Acting Chairman.

And after some further time, Mr. Ashfield resumed the chair.

Mr. Richard rose on a Point of Order and questioned the accuracy of statements made by Ms. Fowlie, the Member for Kennebecasis. Mr. Ashfield, the Chairman, in delivering his ruling, quoted from *Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms 6th Edition*, paragraph 494 regarding the acceptance of the word of a member which governs such a situation as follows:

¶494. *It has been formally ruled by Speakers that statements by Members respecting themselves and particularly within their own knowledge must be accepted. It is not unparliamentary temperately to criticize statements made by Members as being contrary to the facts; but no imputation of intentional falsehood is permissible. On rare occasions this may result in the House having to accept two contradictory accounts of the same incident.*

And after some time, Mr. Speaker resumed the chair and Mr. Ashfield, the Chairman, after requesting Mr. Speaker revert to the Order of Presentations of Committee reports, reported:

That the Committee had directed him to report the following Bills as agreed to:

Bill 24, *An Act to Amend the Medical Consent of Minors Act*.

Bill 25, *An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act*.

Bill 26, *Supplementary Appropriations Act 1999-2000*.

And that the Committee had directed him to report progress on the following Bills:

Bill 8, *An Act to Amend the Employment Standards Act*.

Bill 19, *An Act to Amend the Quieting of Titles Act*.

Bill 21, *An Act to Amend the Medical Consent of Minors Act*.

Bill 22, *An Act to Amend the Family Services Act*.

And the Committee asked leave to make a further report.

Pursuant to Standing Rule 78.1, Mr. Speaker put the question on the motion deemed to be before the House, that the report be concurred in, and it was resolved in the affirmative.

And then, 6 o'clock p.m., the House adjourned.

The following documents, having been deposited with the Clerk of the House, were deemed laid upon the table of the House pursuant to Standing Rule 39:

Documents requested in Notices of Motions 57, 58, 62, 65 - February 15, 2000