

Thursday, January 13, 1977

TEN O'CLOCK A.M.

Mr. Speaker announced that His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor was about to enter the Chamber.

Mr. *Macdonald* addressed the Chair and stated he wished to raise a matter of privilege.

Mr. Speaker ruled that the House being in the process of prorogation it was not competent for him to do so and referred to a ruling of Mr. Speaker Dowding to that effect in the 1975 Journals, pages 11-13.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor having entered the House, and being seated in the chair, was pleased to deliver the following gracious speech:

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly:

It is with great pleasure that I address you on this closing day of the First Session of the Thirty-first Parliament of British Columbia. I express my appreciation for the earnest attention and careful consideration you have given to the Bills, Resolutions, the Supply granted to Her Majesty, and the other numerous and important matters which I outlined in my message to you on opening this Parliament on March 17, 1976.

During the session, 56 Bills were passed, many of them new Bills of great significance to the future of the Province.

In the field of finance the *British Columbia Deficit Repayment Act* was passed providing borrowing authority to raise funds for repayment of prior deficits. Under the *Special Funds Revenue Recovery Act*, all money in certain special funds was transferred back to Consolidated Revenue. Necessary increases in taxes were provided under the *Income Tax Amendment Act*, *Social Services Tax Amendment Act*, and *Cigarette and Tobacco Tax Amendment Act*. The necessary legislation was passed to enable the Province to participate in the Federal anti-inflation program, under the *Anti-Inflation Measures Act*. The *Provincial Home-owner Grant Amendment Act* raised to \$380 the home-owner tax relief for persons over the age of 65 years. Furthermore, in order to ensure that the financial affairs of the Province are kept in order, an *Auditor General Act* was passed providing for the appointment of an auditor general upon the recommendation of a special committee of this Legislative Assembly.

In order to facilitate the reorganization of the Executive Government of the Province, a *Government Reorganization Act* was passed.

In the Attorney-General's area of jurisdiction a uniform *Extra-provincial Custody Orders Enforcement Act* and an *Interprovincial Subpœna Act* were passed. A *Judicial Review Procedure Act* provided for a simple procedure in applications for prerogative writs. A new *Sheriffs Act* emphasized the Provincial responsibility for sheriff services and the necessary role of sheriffs in the administration of justice. The *Credit Unions Act* and the *Companies Act* were amended.

Ferry services in the Province were placed under the control of a Crown corporation under the *British Columbia Ferry Corporation Act*. Similarly, all

Government buildings and property were placed under the jurisdiction of a Crown corporation under the *British Columbia Buildings Corporation Act*.

In the field of mining and petroleum resources the *Prospectors Assistance Amendment Act*, *Mineral Amendment Act*, *Mineral Resource Tax Act*, and the *Petroleum and Natural Gas (1965) Amendment Act* were all focused on the need for economic stability and increased productivity in the mining and petroleum industries.

The *Guaranteed Available Income for Need Act* was passed to provide an improved system of social assistance for the people of our Province.

Legislation in the field of labour was represented by amendments to the *Labour Code of British Columbia* and a new *Public Construction Fair Wages Act*.

A new *Public Service Act* was passed to set up a Government Employee Relations Bureau as agent of the Treasury Board with jurisdiction over establishment, classification, and salaries of public servants. The *Public Service Labour Relations Act* was amended accordingly.

In addition, amendments to a great number of existing Acts of various departments were made.

Therefore, at the close of this session, I wish to congratulate you on the substantial legislative program which you have achieved, and I trust that the blessing of Divine Providence will be with you as you shortly resume your duties.

The Hon. *Grace McCarthy* (Provincial Secretary) then said:

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly:

It is His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor's will and pleasure that the Legislative Assembly be prorogued until 2 o'clock p.m. today, and this Provincial Legislative Assembly is hereby prorogued accordingly.

The House prorogued at 10.14 a.m.

2 Mr. *Wallace* asked the Hon. the Premier the following questions:

Regarding use of Government vehicles by Ministers—

1. Which Ministers have been provided with Government vehicles?
2. Have any directives been issued regarding the use of Government vehicles?
3. If the answer to No. 2 is yes, what are those directives?
4. (a) As of March 17, 1975, what was the total number of Government vehicles in use and (b) as of March 17, 1976, what was the total number of Government vehicles in use?

The Hon. *W. R. Bennett* replied as follows:

“A study on the use of Government vehicles is being made and a report on the study will be tabled in the next Session of the Legislature.”

20 Mr. *Wallace* asked the Hon. the Premier the following questions:

In regard to the statement contained on page 18 of the Budget Speech referring to the reduction of the salaries of Provincial Ministers and Members of the Legislative Assembly, and the additional statement on the same page that “similar cuts are being extended to some members of the Premier's office staff and some ministerial assistants”—

1. Who are the persons to be affected by this decision?
2. What salaries do these individuals receive prior to proposed budget changes?
3. By how much will their salaries be reduced?

The Hon. *W. R. Bennett* replied as follows:

"1. Persons affected were Executive Director to the Premier, Executive Director of Intergovernmental Relations, and Special Adviser, Ministry of Economic Development.

"2. Executive Director to the Premier, \$36,432; Executive Director of Intergovernmental Relations, \$36,432; and Special Adviser, Ministry of Economic Development, \$29,000.

"3. Executive Director to the Premier, \$3,643; Executive Director of Intergovernmental Relations, \$3,643; and Special Adviser, Ministry of Economic Development, \$2,900."

26 Mr. *King* asked the Hon. the Premier the following questions:

1. Are any Ministers, Deputy Ministers, or Ministerial Executive Assistants assigned the use of Government vehicles?

2. If the answer to No. 1 is in the affirmative, (a) what are the names of the persons involved, (b) who is responsible for paying the insurance coverage for the vehicles, and (c) what is the insurance cost for each vehicle and the name of the person using the vehicle?

The Hon. *W. R. Bennett* replied as follows:

"A study on the use of Government vehicles is being made and a report on the study will be tabled in the next Session of the Legislature."

27 Mr. *King* asked the Hon. the Premier the following questions:

With reference to "Where British Columbia Stands," an address by the Premier February 20, 1976, printed by the Queen's Printer—

1. What was the total number of copies printed?
2. What was (a) the total cost and (b) the cost per copy?
3. How many copies were distributed?
4. Who were the recipients of the copies distributed?
5. What was the total cost of distribution?

The Hon. *W. R. Bennett* replied as follows:

"1. Total number of copies printed, 82,000.

"2. (a) \$17,654.18 and (b) 21½ cents per copy.

"3. Approximately 81,000.

"4. Copies were mailed to those on the computerized CORE mailing list maintained by the Ministry of Energy, Transport and Communications (which includes MLA's, Government agents, weekly and daily newspapers, radio and television stations and magazines, and British Columbia citizens who have requested Government mailings) and in response to separate requests by groups and individuals.

"5. This information is not available."

55 Mrs. *Wallace* asked the Hon. the Minister of Labour the following questions:

With reference to Workers' Compensation claims before boards of review in 1975 and 1976 to date—

1. How many cases were placed before boards of review in each year?
2. How many recommendations of the boards were confirmed by the Compensation Board in each year?
3. How many recommendations of the boards were rejected by the Compensation Board in each year?

The Hon. *L. A. Williams* submitted correction of a typographical error to part I of the answer to question No. 55, tabled on June 30, as follows: by deleting the words "confirmed by the Workers' Compensation Board" in the first and second lines, so that the answer will read:

"1. Cases placed before the boards of review in each year: 1975, 1,583; 1976 (January to April), 618."

67 Mr. *Levi* asked the Hon. the Minister of Human Resources the following questions:

1. Did any employable persons receive social assistance in 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, and to date in 1976?

2. If the answer to No. 1 is yes, what were the totals in each year on a monthly basis?

The Hon. *W. N. Vander Zalm* replied as follows:

"1. Yes.

"2. Totals are as follows:

	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
January	23,706	18,446	21,564	26,160	22,559
February	22,558	17,479	21,746	25,707	19,686
March	20,733	17,076	21,836	27,055	20,021
April	18,696	16,127	21,361	25,093	20,847
May	18,492	16,304	22,606	21,991	21,157
June	15,564	15,707	22,500	21,207	18,925
July	16,343	16,019	21,168	21,365	18,332
August	16,997	16,456	23,978	23,537	17,949
September	15,847	16,663	21,968	25,231	17,778
October	15,044	16,654	21,006	25,375	16,682
November	16,211	18,843	21,066	23,342	17,408
December	17,142	18,896	22,507	22,413"

D. E. SMITH, Speaker