



4th Session, 37th Parliament

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

(HANSARD)

Tuesday, February 10, 2004

Morning Sitting

Volume 19, Number 9

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**PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA**  
(Entered Confederation July 20, 1871)

LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR  
Honourable Iona Campagnolo

**4TH SESSION, 37TH PARLIAMENT**

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Morning Sitting

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TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2004

The House met at 10:03 a.m.

**Mr. Speaker:** Good morning, hon. members. Nice to see you all. The member for Kamloops-North Thompson will lead us in prayer this morning.

Prayers.

[1005]

### Tabling Documents

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. members, I have the honour to present the auditor general's report No. 5, 2003-04, *Monitoring the Government's Finances*.

### Reports from Committees

**B. Locke:** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the fourth report of the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services for the fourth session of the thirty-seventh parliament, entitled *Annual Review of the Budgets of the Independent Offices of the Legislative Assembly*.

I move that the report be taken as read and received.

Motion approved.

**B. Locke:** Mr. Speaker, I ask leave of the House to permit the moving of a motion to adopt the report.

Leave granted.

**B. Locke:** Mr. Speaker, I move that the report be adopted.

In moving the adoption of the report, I wish to make the following comments. This has become the annual review by the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services on the three-year rolling service plans and the budgets for each of the statutory officers. The committee arrived at its recommendations on December 12, 2003, and this is the first opportunity the committee has had to table the report in this House. The report was previously deposited by the Clerk of the House.

Motion approved.

**Hon. G. Collins:** I request leave to move a motion in the hands of the Clerk as well as the opposition.

Leave granted.

### Motions without Notice

#### AMENDMENT TO SESSIONAL ORDER

**Hon. G. Collins:** Over the past three sessions since we took office, we've moved what's called a sessional

order, which is a temporary amendment to the standing orders of the Legislature — the rules by which we govern our House, which include its sitting times and sitting days — to move towards a fixed parliamentary calendar with regard to when the House began and when the House adjourned, as well as those weeks where we were choosing to spend our time in our constituencies as well as with our families.

I think it's been virtually unanimous that those changes have been an improvement. For those of you who weren't here in the past, you may not know just how big an improvement it's been. In previous times in this House it was not uncommon for the House to sit very odd hours, very odd days and sometimes well into the summer as well as times when our constituents would rather have had us in our constituencies celebrating local events and local holidays.

I think the standing order has, as well, affected the times the House sits. We now sit no later than 9 p.m., but we end up sitting into the evenings earlier in the session than was previous. I think it's been agreed by all members that those improvements have been beneficial to the House. Through consultation with the opposition, the government now is going to move this as a permanent amendment to the standing order, given that it's worked well for three years.

I would move the motion.

[That the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia be amended as follows:

1. That Standing Order 2 be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

#### Sittings

#### Daily sittings.

2. (1) The time for the ordinary meeting of the House shall, unless otherwise ordered, be as follows:

Monday:	Two distinct sittings:  10 a.m. to 12 noon 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. effective the first week of March
Tuesday:	Two distinct sittings:  10 a.m. to 12 noon 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Wednesday:	2 p.m. to 6 p.m. 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. effective the first week of March
Thursday:	Two distinct sittings:  10 a.m. to 12 noon 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

(2)(a) Unless otherwise ordered, the House shall meet:

- (i) the second Tuesday in February to the last Thursday in May inclusive

and  
(ii) the first Monday in October to the last Thursday in November inclusive

(b) The House shall stand adjourned during the week of Spring Vacation as provided in the School Act, the week of Good Friday, the week of Easter Monday, the 4th week after Easter (if Easter falls in March), the week of Victoria Day; the week of Thanksgiving Day and the week of Remembrance Day.

(c) As soon as possible after New Year's Day, the Clerk of the House shall publish a calendar which shows the days on which the House shall meet, according to the Standing Orders.

2. That Standing Order 3 be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

**Hour of interruption.**

3. If at the hour of 6 p.m. (or 9 p.m. effective first week of March) on any Monday; 6 p.m. on Tuesday; or 6 p.m. (or 9 p.m. effective first week of March) on Wednesday; or 6 p.m. on Thursday, the business of the day is not concluded and no other hour has been agreed on for the next sitting, the Speaker shall leave the Chair:

On Monday	until 10 a.m. Tuesday
On Tuesday	until 2 p.m. Wednesday
On Wednesday	until 10 a.m. Thursday
On Thursday	until 10 a.m. Monday

subject to the provisions of Standing order 2 (2)(b).

3. That Standing Order 25 be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

*Routine Business*

**Daily routine.**

25. The daily routine business of the House shall be as follows:

Prayers (morning or afternoon sitting)  
Introduction of Bills  
Statements (Standing Order 25B) (afternoon sittings)  
Oral question period (15 minutes, afternoon sittings: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday)

Presenting Petitions  
Reading and Receiving Petitions  
Presenting Reports by Committees

Motions on Notice  
Written Questions on Notice  
Proposed Amendments on Notice

**Orders of the Day.**

The order of business for consideration of the House day by day, after the above routine, shall, unless otherwise ordered, be as follows:

Monday  
10 a.m. to 12 noon  
(*Private Members' Time*)

Private Members' Statements (10 a.m.)  
Public Bills in the hands of Private Members  
Private Members' Motions

Private Bills

Public Bills and Orders and Government Motions on Notice

No division, on Orders of the Day, will be taken in the House or in Committee of the Whole during Private Members' Time, but where a division is requested, it will be deferred until thirty minutes prior to the ordinary time fixed for adjournment of the House on the Monday, unless otherwise ordered.

MONDAY (AFTERNOON), TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY  
(*Government Days*)

Throne Speech Debate  
Budget Debate including Committee of Supply  
Public Bills and Orders and Government Motions on Notice  
Private Bills  
Public Bills in the hands of Private Members  
Adjourned debate on other motions

4. That Standing Order 25B be repealed and the following substituted therefor:

*Private Members' Statements*

**Private Members' Statements.**

25A.(1) Every Monday at 10 a.m. four Private Members may make a statement, notice of which has been tabled no later than 6 p.m. the preceding Wednesday.

(2) The order in which such statements are to be called shall be determined by lot by the Speaker, before appearing on the Orders of the Day.

(3) The time allocated on Monday for statements and discussion thereon shall not exceed one hour, and the time for each statement shall be limited to 15 minutes as follows:

Proponent: maximum of 7 minutes  
Any other Members: maximum of 5 minutes  
Proponent in reply: maximum of 3 minutes

(4) Private Members' statements shall not be subject to amendment, adjournment or vote.

(5) Statements and discussions under this Standing Order:

(a) shall be confined to one matter;  
(b) shall not revive discussion on a matter which has been discussed in the same Session;  
(c) shall not anticipate a matter which has been previously appointed for consideration by the House, in respect to which a Notice of Motion has been previously given and not withdrawn;  
(d) shall not raise a question of privilege.

5. That new Standing Order 25B be adopted:

*Statements*

**Statements.**

25B. Three Private Members shall be permitted a two minute statement each day immediately prior to Oral Question Period subject to the following guidelines:

(1) A Member desiring to make a statement shall so advise his or her Whip 24 hours prior to the relevant day the statement is to be made.

(2) Party Whips shall confer to settle the names of the three Members who will be recognized for "Statements" for the following sitting day and shall advise the Speaker by noon of the day in question as to who has been selected, together with the topic of the statement.

(3) Statements under this Standing Order shall be subject to the ordinary parliamentary rules of decorum and debate.

6. That Standing Order 27 (2) and (3) be amended by deleting the word "Friday" wherever stated and substituting "Monday morning" so that it reads as follows:

**Government Orders.**

27 (2) Whenever Government business has precedence, Government orders may be called in such sequence as the Government thinks fit, and the Government may place Government orders at the head of the list on every sitting except Monday morning.

**Urgent Government business.**

27 (3) Notwithstanding Standing Orders 25, 25A and 27(2), urgent Government business may, with the consent of the Speaker, be considered on Monday morning, and given priority over any other business.

7. Oral question period Friday.

47B. This Standing Order is repealed.

8. That new Standing Order 81.1 be adopted:

81.1 (1) When a Minister of the Crown, from his or her place in the House, states that there is agreement among the representatives of all parties to allot a specified number of days or hours to the proceedings at one or more stages of any public bill, the Minister may propose a motion, without notice, setting forth the terms of such agreed allocation; and the motion shall be decided forthwith, without debate or amendment.

(2) A Minister of the Crown who from his or her place in the House, has stated that an agreement could not be reached under the provisions of section (1) of this Standing Order in respect of proceedings at one or more stages of a public bill, may propose without notice a motion for the purpose of allotting a specified number of days or hours for the consideration and disposal of proceedings at one or more stages of a public bill. The motion shall be decided forthwith, without debate or amendment. Any proceedings

interrupted pursuant to this section of this Standing Order shall be deemed adjourned.]

**J. MacPhail:** Just to begin, I welcome all of us back, Mr. Speaker and my colleagues.

Yes, the opposition will be supporting this motion. I do understand that the Government House Leader has shared it with our staff. My colleague and I are looking at this for the first time now, but he did share it with our staff. I do note, though, that while the Government House Leader praises the practice of this current government, there have been some substantial noteworthy exceptions to their claim to have a regular order to the House business. Those exceptions, I hope, will not continue.

Motion approved.

[1010]

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. members, I am advised that the Lieutenant-Governor is in the precincts and ask that members remain seated.

Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor entered the chamber and took her place in the chair.

**Prorogation Address**

**Hon. I. Campagnolo (Lieutenant-Governor):** Pray be seated.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly, in closing the fourth session of the thirty-seventh parliament of British Columbia, I wish to commend you on the accomplishments of the past year. The session has seen the passage of measures of wide-ranging and significant importance to the people of the province. On behalf of all British Columbians, I wish to express my appreciation for the care and attention that you have given to your deliberations, and I now relieve you of your duties.

Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor retired from the chamber.

[Mr. Speaker in the chair.]

**Hon. G. Plant:** Members of the Legislative Assembly, it is Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor's will and pleasure that the Legislative Assembly be prorogued until 2 p.m. today, and this Legislative Assembly is hereby prorogued accordingly.

The House prorogued at 10:13 a.m.