



No. 15

N° 15

Votes and Proceedings

Procès-verbaux

Legislative Assembly
of Ontario

Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario

Tuesday
March 25, 2008

Mardi
25 mars 2008

Daytime Meeting - Sessional Day 15

Séance de l'après-midi - jour de session 15

1st Session
39th Parliament

1^{re} session
39^e législature

PRAYERS
1:30 P.M.

PRIÈRES
13 H 30

The Speaker delivered the following ruling:-

On Thursday, March 20, the Member for Wellington-Halton Hills (Mr. Arnott) raised a point of privilege with respect to an article that appeared in a Toronto newspaper. The Member asserted that the article contained information which must have been deliberately leaked by someone with knowledge of today's Budget.

As a result, the Member asked me to consider the tradition of Budget secrecy and to find a prima facie breach of privilege has occurred because "members of provincial Parliament should be first to hear all of the contents of the provincial budget.....and most importantly, the government should not selectively leak contents of the budget to the press in advance of its presentation in the House without being challenged."

The Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal (Mr. Caplan) also spoke to this matter.

In his presentation, the Member for Wellington-Halton Hills referred to an important 1983 ruling by the Speaker of this House on the subject of Budget secrecy. In that ruling, the Speaker found that "Budget secrecy is a political convention, as is the practice that the Treasurer presents his budget in the House before discussing it in any other public forum. It has nothing to do with parliamentary privilege." The Speaker went on to state that "(t)he disclosure of information relating to the Budget has to do with the conduct of a minister of the Crown in the performance of his ministerial duties." The Speaker found that ministerial conduct is addressed through other avenues and remedies, but that parliamentary privilege is not one of these avenues.

A successful question of privilege must convince the Speaker that the peculiar rights that are accorded to members of parliament to permit them to discharge their parliamentary duties have in some way been violated. These rights are extremely narrow and specific – for instance, the right to speak freely in this place; or to attend here without obstruction. They relate to the Member's functions in this Chamber.

Like previous Speakers, here and in other jurisdictions, I cannot find that the possible disclosure of Budget contents amounts to a breach of the privileges of the Member. It is undoubtedly at minimum a matter of courtesy and respect for this institution that all important announcements be made here first, but there is no procedural support for the proposition that failure to do so gives rise to a successful question of privilege.

PETITIONS

PÉTITIONS

Petition relating to requesting the TTC to allocate proper funding to build washrooms at their subway stations (Sessional Paper No. P-21) Mr. Berardinetti.

Petition relating to construction of an Ambulatory Surgery Centre to serve the Mississauga Halton area (Sessional Paper No. P-23) Mr. Delaney.

Petitions relating to the Lord's prayer (Sessional Paper No. P-48) Mr. Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka), Mrs. Munro, Mr. Murdoch, Mr. Ouellette, Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Yakabuski.

Petition relating to adding a second compulsory Physical Education credit for secondary schools (Sessional Paper No. P-52) Mr. Craitor.

Petition relating to establishing an independent commission to make recommendations for setting social assistance rates (Sessional Paper No. P-54) Mr. Hardeman.

Petition relating to approving Bill 11 and amending the Smoke-Free Ontario Act (Sessional Paper No. P-55) Mr. Delaney.

Petitions relating to asking the Federal Government to reform the Employment Insurance program (Sessional Paper No. P-57) Mr. Colle and Mr. Ruprecht.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

With unanimous consent, at 3:07 p.m., the sitting was suspended until 4:00 p.m.

Mr. Duncan moved, seconded by Mr. McGuinty, That this House approves in general the Budgetary Policy of the Government, and in doing so presented his 2008 Budget and Budget papers / Budget de l'Ontario de 2008 et les Documents budgétaires (Sessional Paper No. 86).

And a debate having ensued, it was,

On motion by Mrs. Witmer,

Ordered, That the debate be adjourned.

ORDRE DU JOUR

Avec le consentement unanime, à 15 h 07, la séance est suspendue jusqu'à 16 h.

Un débat s'ensuit et

Sur la motion de M^{me} Witmer,

Il est ordonné que le débat soit ajourné.

Pursuant to Standing Order 57(a), the House reverted to "Introduction of Bills".

The following Bill was introduced and read the first time:-

Bill 44, An Act respecting Budget measures, interim appropriations and other matters. Hon. Mr. Duncan.

Conformément à l'article 57 a) du Règlement, l'Assemblée revient à l'appel de «Dépôt des projets de loi».

Le projet de loi suivant est présenté et lu une première fois:-

Projet de loi 44, Loi concernant les mesures budgétaires, l'affectation anticipée de crédits et d'autres questions. L'hon. Mr. Duncan.

Mr. Duncan delivered to the Speaker a message from His Honour the Lieutenant Governor signed by his own hand, and the said message was read by the Speaker and is as follows:-

DAVID C. ONLEY

The Lieutenant Governor transmits Supplementary Estimates of certain sums required for the services of the Province for the year ending 31st March 2008 and recommends them to the Legislative Assembly.

Toronto, March 25, 2008.

(Sessional Paper No. 87, Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Attorney General, Economic Development and Trade, Finance, Health and Long-Term Care, Municipal Affairs and Housing, Natural Resources, Public Infrastructure Renewal, Training, Colleges and Universities, and Transportation (Supplementary)).

Le lieutenant-gouverneur transmet les prévisions supplémentaires des dépenses visant les montants nécessaires au fonctionnement de la province pour l'exercice se terminant le 31 mars 2008 et les recommande à l'Assemblée législative.

Toronto, le 25 mars 2008.

(Document parlementaire no 87, l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales, Procureur général, Développement économique et du Commerce, Finances, Santé et des Soins de longue durée, Affaires municipales et du Logement, Richesses naturelles, Renouvellement de l'infrastructure publique, Formation et des Collèges et Universités et Transports (supplémentaires)).

Ordered, That the message of the Lieutenant Governor together with the Estimates accompanying same be deemed to be referred to the Standing Committee on Estimates pursuant to Standing Order 62(c).

Mr. Bryant moved, That the House do now adjourn.

M. Bryant propose que l'Assemblée ajourne les débats maintenant.

The question, having been put on the motion, was declared carried.

Cette motion, mise aux voix, est déclarée adoptée.

The House then adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

À 16 h 40, la chambre a ensuite ajourné ses travaux.

le président

STEVE PETERS

Speaker

**SESSIONAL PAPERS PRESENTED
PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 39(a)**

**DOCUMENTS PARLEMENTAIRES
DÉPOSÉS CONFORMÉMENT À L'ARTICLE
39 a) DU RÈGLEMENT**

COMPENDIA:

Bill 44, An Act respecting Budget measures, interim appropriations and other matters (No. 88).
