



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FIRST SESSION

THIRTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

Votes and Proceedings

of the Assembly

Wednesday, 7 April 2004 — No. 59

**President of the National Assembly:
Mr. Michel Bissonnet**

QUÉBEC

The Assembly was called to order at 10.05 o'clock a.m.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Business Having Precedence

Debate on the Budget Speech

The Assembly resumed the debate on the motion by Mr. Séguin, Minister of Finance, —That this Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the Government, and on the want of confidence motions moved by Mr. Legault (Rousseau), Mr. Landry, Leader of the Official Opposition, Mrs. Lemieux (Bourget) and Mr. Dion (Saint-Hyacinthe).

At 11.59 o'clock a.m., Mr. Gendron, Third Vice-President, suspended the proceedings until 2.00 o'clock p.m.

7 April 2004

The proceedings resumed at 2.06 o'clock p.m.

Moment of reflection

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Mr. President rendered a directive on the questions raised by the Official Opposition House Leader, at the sitting of Wednesday, 31 March 2004, concerning the validity of a special warrant issued by the Government on 25 February 2004 and its impact on the examination of the estimates of expenditure at the Assembly.

DIRECTIVE FROM THE CHAIR

Notwithstanding that the adoption of interim supply on 31 March 2004 has rendered moot the question raised by the Official Opposition House Leader, the Chair deems that an answer is in order, owing to the importance of the matter at hand.

The issuing of a special warrant provided by statute comes under the financial initiative of the Government and the Chair of the Assembly does not have the authority to rule on the validity of such a warrant, nor on its advisability. It is well established in parliamentary law that the interpretation of statutes, subject to those which contain provisions relating to parliamentary procedure, comes under the jurisdiction of the courts and not of the Chair of the Assembly.

As the special warrant issued on 25 February essentially referred to the same period as that covered by interim supply, it would thus have had an impact on the examination and adoption of the estimates of expenditure for the 2004-2005 fiscal year, since interim supply would no longer have been necessary.

Notwithstanding the fact that the Standing Orders do not oblige the Assembly to adopt interim supply, the Chair is concerned with everything that could have the effect of restricting the role of the Assembly in the control it must exercise with regard to public expenditures. Therefore, a special warrant being an exceptional measure, it is not desirable that it replace the examination process and adoption of the estimates provided for in the Standing Orders, including interim supply.

7 April 2004

The Official Opposition House Leader addressed another request for a directive to the Chair with regard to one of the arguments he raised when he requested a directive on 31 March 2004. This argument concerns the reason given by the Government House Leader to justify the issuing of the special warrant of 25 February 2004.

Mr. President took this request for a directive under advisement.

Presenting Papers

Mrs. Gagnon-Tremblay, Minister of International Relations, tabled the following:

The Free Trade Agreement between the Government of Canada and the Government of the Republic of Chile and the supplementary agreements on cooperation in the fields of the environment and labour, as well as an explanatory note on the contents and effects thereof.

(Sessional Paper No. 807-20040407)

She then tabled the following motion:

THAT, pursuant to section 22.3 of the *Act respecting the Ministère des Relations internationales*, the National Assembly examine and approve, within the delay stipulated in the Act, the Free Trade Agreement between the Government of Canada and the Government of the Republic of Chile and the supplementary agreements on cooperation in the fields of the environment and labour.

(Sessional Paper No. 808-20040407)

Mrs. Gagnon-Tremblay, Minister of International Relations, tabled the following:

The Free Trade Agreement between the Government of Canada and the Government of the Republic of Costa Rica and the supplementary agreements on cooperation in the fields of the environment and labour, as well as an explanatory note on the contents and effects thereof.

(Sessional Paper No. 809-20040407)

7 April 2004

She then tabled the following motion:

THAT, pursuant to section 22.3 of the *Act respecting the Ministère des Relations internationales*, the National Assembly examine and approve, within the delay stipulated in the Act, the Free Trade Agreement between the Government of Canada and the Government of the Republic of Costa Rica and the supplementary agreements on cooperation in the fields of the environment and labour.

(Sessional Paper No. 810-20040407)

Mr. Dupuis, Government House Leader, on behalf of Mr. Bellemare, Minister of Justice, tabled the following:

The annual report of the Ordre des agronomes du Québec for the fiscal year ended 31 March 2003.

(Sessional Paper No. 811-20040407)

Mr. Bergman, Minister of Revenue, tabled the following:

The activity report of the Ministère du Revenu stemming from the comparison, linkage or matching of information files obtained under the utilization plan as at 31 March 2003.

(Sessional Paper No. 812-20040407)

Presenting Reports from Committees

Mrs. Lemieux (Bourget), chairman, tabled the following:

A report from the Committee on Labour and the Economy, which met on 6 April 2004 for clause-by-clause consideration of the following Bill:

39 An Act to amend the Forest Act.

7 April 2004

The report does not contain any amendments to the bill.

(Sessional Paper No. 813-20040407)

Presenting Petitions

By leave of the Assembly to set aside Standing Order 63, Mr. Jutras (Drummond) tabled the following:

The abstract of a petition respecting the development of roadside rest areas, and signed by 8 citizens of the riding of Drummond.

(Sessional Paper No. 814-20040407)

By leave of the Assembly to set aside Standing Order 63, Mr. Bachand (Arthabaska) tabled the following:

The abstract of a petition respecting the increase in Hydro-Québec's rates, and signed by 3487 citizens of Québec.

(Sessional Paper No. 815-20040407)

Oral Questions and Answers

The Assembly proceeded to Oral Question Period.

By leave of the Assembly to set aside Standing Order 59, Mr. Simard (Richelieu) tabled the following:

Copy of a letter, dated 6 April 2004, received by 23 employees of the Direction générale des particuliers at the Ministère du Revenu informing them of their dismissal.

(Sessional Paper No. 816-20040407)

7 April 2004

Motions Without Notice

Mrs. Gagnon-Tremblay, Minister of International Relations, moved:

THAT the National Assembly mark the
10th commemoration of the Rwandan genocide and observe a
minute of silence in memory of the victims of this sad event.

By leave of the Assembly under Standing Order 84, a debate arose thereon.

After debate thereon, the question was put on this motion; a recorded division was thereupon demanded.

The motion was carried on the following vote:

(Division No. 64 in Appendix)

Yeas: **98** Nays: **0** Abstentions: **0**

At the invitation of Mrs. Leblanc, Second Vice-President, the Assembly then observed a minute of silence.

By leave of the Assembly to set aside Standing Order 53, the Assembly immediately took Notices of Proceedings in Committees.

Notices of Proceedings in Committees

Mr. Dupuis, Government House Leader, convened the following Committee:

- the Committee on Education, to conclude its public hearings within the framework of a general consultation on the quality, accessibility and funding of Québec universities.

7 April 2004

Motions Without Notice

Mr. Marcoux, Minister of Transport, moved:

THAT the National Assembly mark World Health Day,
which is being held today and whose theme this year is road
safety.

By leave of the Assembly under Standing Order 84, a debate arose thereon.

The debate being concluded, the motion was carried.

Mr. Grondin (Beauce-Nord) moved:

THAT the National Assembly mark the 75th anniversary
of *La Terre de chez nous* farmer's newspaper.

By leave of the Assembly under Standing Order 84, a debate arose thereon.

The debate being concluded, the motion was carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Business Having Precedence

Debate on the Budget Speech

The Assembly continued the debate on the motion by Mr. Séguin, Minister of Finance, —That this Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the Government, and on the want of confidence motions moved by Mr. Legault (Rousseau), Mr. Landry, Leader of the Official Opposition, Mrs. Lemieux (Bourget) and Mr. Dion (Saint-Hyacinthe).

7 April 2004

At the end of her speech, Mrs. Harel (Hochelaga-Maisonneuve) moved the following want of confidence motion:

THAT the National Assembly severely blame the Liberal Government for having failed to observe its solemn commitment to invest \$2.2 billion in health and social services in 2004-2005.

And debate continuing on the motion by Mr. Séguin, Minister of Finance, —That this Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the Government, and on the want of confidence motions moved by Mr. Legault (Rousseau), Mr. Landry, Leader of the Official Opposition, Mrs. Lemieux (Bourget), Mr. Dion (Saint-Hyacinthe) and Mrs. Harel (Hochelaga-Maisonneuve);

At the end of his speech, Mr. Turp (Mercier) moved the following want of confidence motion:

THAT the National Assembly condemn the Liberal Government for its incapacity to defend the best interests of Québec before the Federal Government.

And debate continuing on the motion by Mr. Séguin, Minister of Finance, —That this Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the Government, and on the want of confidence motions moved by Mr. Legault (Rousseau), Mr. Landry, Leader of the Official Opposition, Mrs. Lemieux (Bourget), Mr. Dion (Saint-Hyacinthe), Mrs. Harel (Hochelaga-Maisonneuve) and Mr. Turp (Mercier);

Mr. Dupuis, Government House Leader, moved the adjournment of the debate.

The motion was carried.

Debates Upon Adjournment

By leave of the Assembly to set aside Standing Order 309, the Assembly held the two debates upon adjournment that had been deferred at the sitting of 6 April 2004:

7 April 2004

- the first, on a question by Mrs. Papineau (Prévost) to Mrs. Courchesne, Minister of Relations with the Citizens and Immigration, about the cutbacks in the immigration programmes;
- the second, on a question by Mr. Arseneau (Îles-de-la-Madeleine) to Mr. Audet, Minister of Economic and Regional Development and Research, about the shutdown of the Gaspésia plant.

By leave of the Assembly to set aside Standing Order 53, Mr. Audet, Minister of Economic and Regional Development and Research, tabled the following:

Copy of a letter, dated 25 March 2004, from Mr. Jean Pronovost, Deputy Minister at the Ministère du Développement économique et régional et de la Recherche, to Mr. Sylvain Pelletier, responsible for the Regroupement des entrepreneurs de la Gaspésia, concerning the measures implemented to help the contractors involved in the Gaspésia project.

(Sessional Paper No. 817-20040407)

At 6.10 o'clock p.m., Mr. Sirros, First Vice-President, adjourned the Assembly until Thursday, 8 April 2004, at 10.00 o'clock a.m.

MICHEL BISSONNET

President

7 April 2004

APPENDIX

Recorded Divisions

On the motion by Mrs. Gagnon-Tremblay, Minister of International Relations:

(Division No. 64)

YEAS – 98

Arseneau	Cholette	Jérôme-Forget	Pagé
Auclair	Clermont	Jutras	Papineau
Audet	Copeman	Kelley	Paquet
Bachand	Corbeil	Lafrenière	Paquin
Beaudoin	Couillard	Lamquin-Éthier	Paradis
Béchar	Courchesne	Landry	Pelletier
Bergman	Cousineau	L'Écuyer	Perreault
Bernard	Cusano	Legault	Picard
Bernier	Delisle	[Chambly]	Reid
Blackburn	Descoteaux	Legault	Richard
Boisclair	Deslières	[Rousseau]	Rioux
Bouchard	Després	Legendre	Robert
[Vachon]	Dion	Léger	Séguin
Boucher	Dionne-Marsolais	Lemieux	Simard
Boulet	Doyer	Lessard	Soucy
Brodeur	Dubuc	Létourneau	Théberge
Caron	Dumont	MacMillan	Thériault
Chagnon	Dupuis	Maltais	[Masson]
Champagne	Fournier	Marcoux	Thériault
Charest	Gabias	Marois	[Anjou]
[Matane]	Gagnon-Tremblay	Marsan	Tomassi
Charest	Gaudet	Mercier	Turp
[Sherbrooke]	Gendron	Moreau	Vallières
Charest	Grondin	Morin	Vermette
[Rimouski]	Hamel	[Montmagny-L'Islet]	Vien
Charlebois	Harel	Mulcair	Whissell
Chenail	Houda-Pepin	Ouimet	