



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

1st Session

Day 2

15th Assembly

HANSARD

Friday, December 12, 2003

Pages 15 - 18

The Honourable David Krutko, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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(Mackenzie-Delta)

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(Inuvik Twin Lakes)

Hon. Joe Handley
(Weledeh)
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Box 1320
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
Tel: (867) 669-2200 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784
<http://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca>

Published under the authority of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Friday, December 12, 2003****Members Present**

Mr. Allen, Honourable Brendan Bell, Mr. Braden, Mr. Delorey, Honourable Charles Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Mr. Hawkins, Honourable David Krutko, Ms. Lee, Honourable Michael McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Honourable Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Pokiak, Mr. Ramsay, Honourable Floyd Roland, Mr. Villeneuve, Honourable Henry Zoe

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. David Krutko): I wish to inform the House that I received the following message from Her Honour, the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories: "Dear Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise and recommend to the Legislative Assembly the passage of Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 2003-2004 during the First Session of the 15th Legislative Assembly. Yours truly, Glenna Hansen, Commissioner."

Item 2, Ministers' statements. Premier Handley.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS**Minister's Statement 1-15(1): Congratulations To Canada's New Prime Minister**

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have an emergency statement.

This morning in Ottawa, the Honourable Paul Martin officially took the reins as the 21st Prime Minister of Canada.

On behalf of the 15th Legislative Assembly and the people of the Northwest Territories, I would like to publicly congratulate the Prime Minister as he assumes his new responsibilities.

With the appointment of his new Cabinet this morning, Prime Minister Martin has provided a new outlook and fresh approach that I believe will be reflected in a new and vibrant relationship between the Northwest Territories and Ottawa.

I was pleased to receive a call from Mr. Martin immediately following my acclamation on Wednesday as Premier of the Northwest Territories. Our discussion was very positive and I am greatly impressed by the understanding and enthusiasm he has shown regarding our issues. I am looking forward to working with him and his new Cabinet to get things done.

Mr. Speaker, I would also, at this time, like to congratulate the Member of Parliament for the Western Arctic, Ethel Blondin-Andrew, who has been reappointed to the federal Cabinet as Minister of State for Children and Youth.

The Government of the Northwest Territories has always been well supported and encouraged by the work that Ms. Blondin-Andrew has performed on our behalf.

It is appropriate in this time of change and new beginnings that her portfolio of Children and Youth remains the same. The young people of the Northwest Territories are and will be our most precious resource and the foundation of our future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**Member's Statement On Strength Of The New Cabinet Membership**

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, since the makeup of the Cabinet has been announced, I have been getting calls from the media and the public with the concern that there are no women on this Cabinet and that's the issue that I wish to speak about today.

Mr. Speaker, first off, I want to state categorically that I support Premier Handley and his Cabinet 100 percent. I believe this is a very good team and I know they will work very hard to advance the interest of the people we are all here to serve. I wish in particular to express my full support to Yellowknife Ministers Mr. Bell and Mr. Dent. While very young in age, no one who comes into contact with Mr. Bell is left unimpressed by his intelligence and his ability to analyze and communicate issues. I also know that this Cabinet and government will benefit greatly from the steady and calm leadership based on strong work ethics that Mr. Dent has to offer. I have benefited greatly from working with them both as regular YK MLAs and I would look forward to working with them in future.

Mr. Speaker, what should be noted in this House, however, is the fact that we are now the owner of the only Cabinet in Canada without women representation. We are also a legislature with a little over 10 percent women representation. Given that 50 percent of our population are women, this should cause us alarm. It should also be strongly noted that we have no aboriginal women representation in this House and we have the power and duty to change this situation.

Mr. Speaker, I am fully aware that I am not here as an MLA for women. I am here as the MLA for Range Lake, but by virtue of being a woman and a visible minority, I feel I have the obligation to speak on their behalf. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I come upon this legislature, this Cabinet, and all aboriginal governments to step up to the plate and take strong measures to improve this situation. Any common sense will tell you that this inequality does not happen by chance or accident. It is because there are structural and attitudinal barriers that ensures status quo. It is because there is unwillingness to share real power among all of us who make up our population.

Mr. Speaker, long gone are days when we expect the non-aboriginal people to speak for aboriginal people in this House, no matter how well intentioned or well qualified

they are. The same principle must apply to the principle of gender equality. Mr. Speaker, may I seek unanimous consent to complete my statement?

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent. Are there any nays? No, there aren't. Ms. Lee, you have unanimous consent to conclude your statement.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, in the coming days and months, the Premier, Cabinet and this legislature will be making important choices about who will not only do the important jobs, but who will be the face of this government. I want to put them all on notice that I expect to see the face reflect equal representation of everyone in this vast land. I would insist that we see an increased number of women and aboriginal peoples in the senior management of our government and on important boards, not just as advisors to men and non-aboriginal people, but as equal players with equal power.

I know, Mr. Speaker, that everyone here believes the constitutionally guaranteed principle of equality and I look forward to seeing us making a huge stride in that regard. I would also challenge the public, aboriginal governments and organizations committed to the principle of equality to take on this task and to work to change the status quo. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to see in our midst again our former colleague and Speaker, Mr. Tony Whitford. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Welcome, Mr. Whitford. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to recognize my sister Elizabeth Hardisty in the gallery.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, petitions. Item 10, reports of standing and special committees. Item 11, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 12, tabling of documents. Item 13, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

ITEM 13: NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 6-15(1): Appointments To The Board Of Management

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Monday, December 15, 2003, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for North Slave, that the following Members be appointed to the Board of Management of this Assembly: The Honourable David Krutko, Member for Mackenzie Delta; the Honourable Brendan Bell, Member for Yellowknife South; Mr. David Ramsay, Member for Kam Lake; Mr. Kevin Menicoche, Member for Nahendeh; and, Mr. Calvin Pokiak, Member for Nunakput;

And further, that the following Members be appointed to the Board of Management as alternative Members: the Honourable Charles Dent, Member for Frame Lake; Ms. Sandy Lee, Member for Range Lake; Mr. Robert Villeneuve, Member for Tu Nedhe.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time, I will seek unanimous consent to deal to this motion today.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 13, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Motion 7-15(1): Appointments To The Standing Committee On Accountability And Oversight

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Monday, December 15, 2003, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Kam Lake, that the following Members be appointed to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight: Mr. Roger Allen, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes; Mr. Bill Braden, Member for Great Slave; Mr. Paul Delorey, Member for Hay River North; Mr. Robert Hawkins, Member for Yellowknife Centre; Mrs. Jane Groenewegen, Member for Hay River South; Ms. Sandy Lee, Member for Range Lake; Mr. Kevin Menicoche, Member for Nahendeh; Mr. Calvin Pokiak, Member for Nunakput; Mr. David Ramsay, Member for Kam Lake; Mr. Robert Villeneuve, Member for Tu Nedhe; Mr. Norman Yakeleya, Member for Sahtu.

Mr. Speaker at the appropriate time, I will be seeking unanimous consent to deal with this motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 13, notices of motion. Item 14, notices of motion for first reading of bills.

ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTION FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 1: Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 2003-2004

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Monday, December 15, 2003, I will move that Bill 1, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 2003-2004, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Item 14, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 15, motions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with the motion I gave notice of earlier today.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with his motion. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You have unanimous consent to continue.

ITEM 15: MOTIONS

Motion 6-15(1): Appointments To The Board Of Management, Carried

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you again, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS this Legislative Assembly is required to appoint Members to the Board of Management in accordance with section 36(3) of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act;

AND WHEREAS appointments to the Board of Management are required to be made during the first session of each legislature;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for North Slave, that the following Members be appointed to the Board of Management of this Assembly: Honourable David Krutko, Member for Mackenzie Delta; the Honourable Brendan Bell, Member for Yellowknife South; Mr. David Ramsay, Member for Kam Lake; Mr. Kevin Menicoche, Member for Nahendeh; and, Mr. Calvin Pokiak, Member for Nunakput;

AND FURTHER that the following Members be appointed to the Board of Management as alternative Members: Honourable Charles Dent, Member for Frame Lake; Ms. Sandy Lee, Member for Range Lake; Mr. Robert Villeneuve, Member for Tu Nedhe.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 15, motions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with the motion I gave notice of earlier today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You have unanimous consent to continue, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Motion 7-15(1): Appointments To The Standing Committee On Accountability And Oversight, Carried

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS Rule 85 requires that Members be appointed to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Kam Lake, that the following Members be appointed to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight: Mr. Roger Allen, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes; Mr. Bill Braden, Member for Great Slave; Mr. Paul Delorey, Member for Hay River North; Mr. Robert Hawkins, Member for Yellowknife Centre; Mrs. Jane Groenewegen, Member for Hay River South; Ms. Sandy Lee, Member for Range Lake; Mr. Kevin Menicoche, Member for Nahendeh; Mr. Calvin Pokiak, Member for Nunakput; Mr. David Ramsay, Member for Kam Lake; Mr. Robert Villeneuve, Member for Tu Nedhe; Mr. Norman Yakeleya, Member for Sahtu.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 15, motions. Item 16, first reading of bills. Item 17, second reading of bills. Item 18, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters. Item 19, report of Committee of the Whole. Item 20, third reading of bills.

At this time, I would just like to acknowledge that we will be leaving the House and going back to our communities and our constituents and families. Christmas is around the corner. I think it's important that we all take the time to enjoy our families and friends over the Christmas season. Enjoy every moment of it because you aren't going to have many moments after that. It will be pretty hectic around here. It's important that you take advantage of spending some real quality time with your families and friends, especially your constituents. It's important that the time that you do have at home, you have to make every moment count. Like I said yesterday, there is some balance that you have to strike between yourselves as Members in this House and your families. Sometimes we lose sight of that because we get so wrapped up with what we do in this House and on committees that we don't realize how important our families are. During the festive Christmas season, we have to look at what is happening around us, but take the time to relax and enjoy yourselves because it will be hectic in the upcoming weeks and months.

There is a tight timeline between now and trying to get the budget into the House and you realize you aren't going to be doing much walking. Most of the time, you are going to be running between committee meetings and running in and out of session to try to deal with your constituency issues. Having that time to spend with your families is going to be so valuable since you will be spending a lot of time away from home and away from your families. For those of you who have children, I remember Mr. Roland stating that he used to go home and his kids used to come to the airport to greet him and after awhile, they came to the airport and asked him what he had for them. They weren't really seeing much of their dad and there was a point in time they weren't coming to the airport anymore because he would come and he would be gone again. Those events really tell us a lot. Spend the special moments because the time you have with your family is going to be key.

I would also at this time recognize the Pages. They are from William McDonald Junior High School.

---Applause

As you can see, I am trying to burn up the clock here. I won't have much opportunity to speak over the next days and months ahead, so I am taking this opportunity before we prorogue the House for the Christmas break.

Again, I would really like you to seriously consider what I have stated because it is crucial that you spend moments with your families and with your constituents and really relax. You have to energize those batteries because you will be like the Duracell commercial. You will be going and going and going and there will be days when you wonder if this process ever slows down. So take that time.

I would like to wish you all the best for Christmas and the New Year. Take the time that you are going to need for yourselves and your families and your children. With that, I would like to take a short break and we will come back in 15 minutes.

---SHORT RECESS

ITEM 21: PROROGATION

COMMISSIONER HANSEN: Please be seated. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Premier and Members of the Legislative Assembly, prior to proroguing this First Session of the 15th Legislative Assembly, as Commissioner I wish to announce the Second Session of the 15th Legislative Assembly will convene on Tuesday, January 20, 2004, at 1:30 p.m.

I would also like to wish each Member and the people of the Northwest Territories the best for the coming holy season. May your Christmas be a joyous one and may you be healthy and prosperous in the New Year.

As Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I hereby prorogue the First Session of the 15th Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories. Thank you and Merry Christmas.

---PROROGATION

---The House prorogued at 10:37 a.m.