



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

4th Session

11th Assembly

HANSARD
Official Report
Day 1

Wednesday, February 8, 1989

Pages 1 - 7

Speaker: The Hon. Red Pedersen, M.L.A.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1989

	<u>PAGE</u>
Prayer	1
Opening Address	1
Petitions	5
Tabling of Documents	5
Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills	
- Bill 2-89(1) Electoral District Boundaries Commission Act	6
- Bill 5-89(1) An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act	5
- Bill 6-89(1) An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act	6
Orders of the Day	6

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1989

MEMBERS PRESENT

Hon. Titus Allooloo, Mr. Angottitauruq, Mr. Arlooktoo, Hon. Tom Butters, Hon. Nellie Cournoyea, Mr. Crow, Mr. Ernerk, Mr. Gargan, Hon. Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Kilabuk, Mr. Lewis, Hon. Jeannie Marie-Jewell, Mr. Morin, Mr. Nerysoo, Hon. Dennis Patterson, Mr. Pollard, Hon. Red Pedersen, Mr. Pudluk, Mr. Sibbeston, Mr. Whitford, Hon. Gordon Wray, Mr. Zoe

ITEM 1: PRAYER

CAPT. JOAN SHAYLER: Shall we pray? Our most gracious heavenly Father, we come to You at this time and we would ask for Your wisdom and for Your guidance and for Your direction as we strive to work together for the benefit of all the people of this land. We ask that Your Spirit would be in us and will guide us in directing us to do what is best for everyone that we may have a peaceful society in which to live. We ask it all in Your precious name. Amen.

SPEAKER (Hon. Red Pedersen): Thank you, Capt. Shayler. Please be seated. Mr. Clerk, would you ascertain if the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories is prepared to address the Legislative Assembly at this time?

ITEM 2: OPENING ADDRESS

COMMISSIONER PARKER: Please be seated. Mr. Speaker, Members of the Legislative Assembly, it is my pleasure to welcome you to this fourth session of the 11th Legislative Assembly. May I say at the outset how pleased I am to wear this beaded moosehide jacket which was made for me by Mary Louise Norwegian of Fort Simpson. The beaded moccasin slippers came from Aklavik. My intention is to support your efforts, Mr. Speaker, in demonstrating the traditional crafts and clothing of our Dene and Inuit people.

A few short months ago I presented a comprehensive Opening Address to your fall session that spoke about our government's intentions in the areas of social services and about its desire to stimulate the northern economy. The address detailed initiatives that were planned in the area of child care, substance abuse and benefits for the elderly. Among other things, it also spoke about national and international concerns and action that had taken place on various economic priorities identified in your government's Directions for the 90s policy paper.

Today I want to break from the traditional kind of opening remarks associated with the annual budget session in order to focus briefly on the important matter of public government in the Northwest Territories. Your Minister of Finance, the Hon. Michael Ballantyne, will talk about the government's spending and program plans during his Budget Address on Monday afternoon. I want to speak about public government because it is, and will continue to be, one of the most important issues that our government will face over the next few years.

With the settlement of aboriginal claims and the growth of regional bodies, boards and institutions, political and constitutional development of the NWT is at a crossroad. Just as various events in 1965 led to creation of the Advisory Commission on the Development of Government in the

Northwest Territories, better known as the Carrothers Commission, there is a renewed need for a consensus on the shape of public government in the North.

Discussion Paper

Our government recognizes this fact and placed a discussion paper on political and constitutional development before you during the last session. It plans to bring that paper back during this session in order to initiate debate on this important matter.

Public government in the North has developed at a rapid pace, particularly during the past 10 to 15 years. The Legislative Assembly is responsible for this progress and has itself evolved into a Legislature with a full system of committees, chaired by MLAs, similar to those found in other jurisdictions. Through this process, a northern public government has evolved that is increasingly sensitive to northern interests and traditional values.

During the same period, Members of the Assembly and aboriginal organizations began working together, through the Constitutional Alliance, to develop positions on the shape of government in the NWT. Various models of government have been developed and advocated by the alliance, and aboriginal groups have advanced models based on aboriginal self-government.

More recently, through a process of devolution, the federal government began transferring the provincial-type responsibilities to the North which it had continued to manage following the major transfers of 1969 and 1970. As well, relations with Canada and the provinces have reached the point where there is increasing recognition of the Northwest Territories' emerging role as a distinct jurisdiction.

This recognition places our Government Leader and Members of our cabinet in a better position to speak individually with other First Ministers and Ministers about territorial and national concerns such as the Meech Lake Accord.

What is missing, of course, is official participation in First Ministers' Conferences on the Constitution. As a result, our government continues to make representations outside that forum on full participation and on what we believe to be shortfalls in the accord. The most recent presentation was made by the Hon. Titus Allooloo and the Member for Pine Point, Bruce McLaughlin, to a select committee of the New Brunswick legislature in Fredericton.

At this time, our government believes that northern self-government is well advanced within the existing public government system of the Northwest Territories and that many of the goals of aboriginal self-government are already in place or potentially in place within the present system.

As a result, your government wants now to lead a public discussion toward developing new social contracts between aboriginal and non-aboriginal people of the NWT. These new models of government will provide for the sharing of power and responsibility for our lives and our futures. At the community level, your government has a similar commitment that is reflected in the prime public authority concept and the Charter Communities Act.

The prime public authority concept recognizes that community governments have evolved to the point where they must be fully and formally recognized as the legitimate, representative, democratic and responsible bodies acting on behalf of community residents. The objective of this concept is to strengthen and enhance the responsibilities and authorities of local governments.

The Charter Communities Act on the other hand, sets the legislative base for the design and development of local government structures which meet the needs of a particular community. The concept grew from the desire of chiefs and band councils in the Western Arctic to have aboriginal government structures recognized and incorporated into a public governing structure at the local level. As a result, if the membership of a community is predominantly treaty Indian, the chief and council structure will likely form the nucleus of government structures, while allowances are made for the participation of community residents who are not.

It is this combination of the prime public authority concept and the Charter Communities Act that represents our government's answer to aboriginal self-government at the community level. At this point in time, our government believes there is a need to consolidate northern efforts, to review its present position and to achieve a clear consensus on northern self-government.

Through careful discussion and planning, our government believes that a form of northern self-government will emerge that protects aboriginal interests and embodies and strengthens municipal and territorial structures, and their decision-making authority. It will do this in a manner that will provide us with the necessary strength to tackle the many issues facing the North now and as we move into the 1990s.

Seeking Advice

In seeking the advice and direction of all Members, our government recognizes that it will not be easy to reach consensus. The very nature of the task, and the various parties involved, will work against a speedy resolution. Regardless, the process must begin. As a result of your debates, our government will develop recommendations on the process, framework and form for the shaping of a public government that best serves the interests and program needs of all northern people.

Personally, I believe that your deliberations will be successful and that your political abilities will ensure development of a northern public government that will serve us well as we move into the next decade.

Recognition Of Awards

At this time I would like to recognize individuals who have made particularly important contributions to our northern society. Her Excellency Madame Sauve, the Governor General of Canada, conferred the Order of Canada on two territorial people at an investiture held at Government House last November 8th. Hugh Ungungai of Baker Lake was installed as a member of the order in recognition of his community service and leadership, particularly in bridging the life on the land and current business-oriented activities.

Rosemarie Kuptana, who was raised in Sachs Harbour, was admitted to the order as a member for her significant contribution towards the enhancement of Inuit cultural and traditional values as the first woman president of the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation.

Leah Nuteraq of Iqaluit, who is more than 100 years old, will receive an honorary diploma from the human services program of Arctic College Iqaluit Campus for her great contribution to the communities of Pangnirtung and Iqaluit, made throughout her lifetime. Deputy Commissioner Ann Hanson will present this diploma to Mrs. Nuteraq.

Last month, the Minister of Indian Affairs presented the Northern Science Award for 1988 to Father Guy Mary-Rousseliere of Pond Inlet for his important contribution to the scientific knowledge and cultural preservation of Inuit history through his archaeological excavations in many parts of the Eastern Arctic and his writing on these subjects. I know that Members join me in extending congratulations to these most deserving people.

Loss Of Distinguished Elders

The people of the Northwest Territories mourn the loss of several elders who have died since the time of the last sitting of this House. Our elders provide wise guidance and a sense of direction based on past history and their passing leaves us with a great sense of loss.

I will mention six people whose service in the public sense was particularly notable. Marie Celestine Mercredi died in Fort Smith, January 6th at 80 years of age. She was a matron for the

RCMP, she took in foster children and ran a medical boarding home for people from other communities. She had 16 children, 42 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren.

Charlie Charlo of Fort Simpson died recently at the age of 81. He had been a trapper, prospector and interpreter. Mr. Charlo had also been involved in the Fort Simpson senior citizens committee as a resource person.

Philip St. Pierre of Kakisa died in December at 89 years of age. He was a trapper for most of his life. He is survived by his wife Emilie.

The people of Repulse Bay mourn the loss of Lionel Angotingoar who died November 28th at 83 years of age. He was a respected elder who was the stepfather of Nunatsiaq MP, Jack Anawak.

William Joseph Tanitton Norman was born in Fort Franklin in 1898 and moved to Arctic Red River in 1923. He and his wife Clara celebrated 72 years of married life before her death last August. The Normans raised 10 children and lived a traditional life on the land. William died January 20th just two months short of his 91st birthday.

Only yesterday a funeral was held in Sachs Harbour for one of the beloved pioneers of Banksland. Susie Sydney died January 31st at the age of 78 years. She was born at Shingle Point and married her first husband, Fred Wolki, around 1927. Together they were very successful white fox trappers. Mr. Wolki died in 1940 and Susie carried on as a strong and capable trapper. She married Peter Sydney in 1950. The Panikpak Hall in Sachs Harbour carries Susie's Inuvialuit name. She was a half sister of the late Fred Carpenter.

Our sympathy is extended to the families of each of these elders.

Legislative Schedule

During this session, a legislative program including the following bills will be introduced for your consideration. Amendments to the following acts will be advanced: Income Tax Act, Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, Motor Vehicles Act, Petroleum Products Tax Act, Tobacco Tax Act and the Labour Standards Act.

New bills include: the Appropriation Act, 1989-90, Electoral District Boundaries Commission Act, Public Utilities Act and the Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 1988-89.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Assembly, our government considers these bills essential to the good conduct of government business. I recommend the passage of each of these acts.

On a personal note, I wish to advise you that it is my intention to leave the position of Commissioner at the end of July this year. I have informed the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development of my plans.

In April, I will have completed 10 years as Commissioner, preceded by 12 years as Deputy Commissioner. During that time tremendous changes have taken place in the constitutional framework of the Northwest Territories. The territorial Council of the late 1960s with its mix of appointed and elected Members has evolved to the fully-elected Legislature in session today. While the authority in law of the Commissioner has not changed, through practice and precedent the responsibility for executive direction of the government has been assumed by the Government Leader and Executive Council. To a very great extent, responsible government has been achieved and the constitutional clock cannot be turned back. The role of the Commissioner has become much more like that of a provincial lieutenant-governor. It will continue to be an important role, one that is essential to the Canadian parliamentary system.

From my first experience with government in the North at the municipal level and continuing through my service with the Carrothers Commission, I have supported the changes and advances which have taken place. My part in our constitutional growth has been a source of tremendous

satisfaction and pleasure to me, but I now feel that it is time for a change. The goals which I set for myself when I accepted this position have, in large measure, been realized. It is vital that the momentum of constitutional development not be lost and by stepping aside now I believe that further opportunities for those developments are available. The political future of the Northwest Territories is in good hands with you as Members of this House and all of your constituents working together.

Be assured that there will be no lessening of my interest in or concern for all of the people of the Territories when I leave this office. There will be other opportunities in the months ahead for me to express my gratitude to those with whom I have served; however, at this time I can say that I have had the good fortune to work with the most caring, dedicated and competent people one could ask for. I have strong confidence in the ability of northerners to work together to achieve the goals and aspirations that are important to us all.

I now commend to you for your earnest consideration and wise judgment the business of this House as I declare open the fourth session of the 11th Assembly of the Northwest Territories.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER: We will proceed with orders of the day.

Item 3, Ministers' statements.

Item 4, Members' statements.

Item 5, oral questions.

Item 6, written questions. Item 7, petitions. Mr. Pudluk.

ITEM 7: PETITIONS

MR. PUDLUK: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to present Petition 1-89(1), 64 names included, from Arctic Bay regarding a day-care centre. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pudluk. Item 7, petitions.

Item 8, reports of standing and special committees. Item 9, tabling of documents. Mr. Patterson.

ITEM 9: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table Tabled Document 1-89(1), Government of the Northwest Territories 1988 Annual Report. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Government Leader. Item 9, tabling of documents.

Item 10, notices of motion. Item 11, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

ITEM 11: NOTICES OF MOTION FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS

Notice Of Motion For First Reading Of Bill 5-89(1): An Act To Amend The Legislative Assembly And Executive Council Act

HON. JEANNIE MARIE-JEWELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, February 10, 1989, I shall move that Bill 5-89(1), An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, be read for the first time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Minister. Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Mr. Patterson.

Notice Of Motion For First Reading Of Bill 2-89(1): Electoral District Boundaries Commission Act

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, February 10, 1989, I shall move that Bill 2-89(1), Electoral District Boundaries Commission Act, be read for the first time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Mr. Butters.

Notice Of Motion For First Reading Of Bill 6-89(1): An Act To Amend The Motor Vehicles Act

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, February 10, 1989, I shall move that Bill 6-89(1), An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act, be read for the first time.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Notices of motion for first reading of bills.

Item 12, motions.

Item 13, first reading of bills.

Item 14, second reading of bills. Item 15, Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Announcements, Mr. Speaker. There will be a meeting of Nunavut caucus at 3:30 this afternoon. There will be a meeting of the ajauqtit committee at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow morning and a meeting of the standing committee on finance at 10:00 a.m. tomorrow morning.

ITEM 15: ORDERS OF THE DAY

Orders of the day for Thursday, February 9th.

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Oral Questions
6. Written Questions
7. Returns to Written Questions
8. Replies to Opening Address
9. Petitions
10. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
11. Tabling of Documents
12. Notices of Motion
13. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
14. Motions

15. First Reading of Bills
16. Second Reading of Bills
17. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
18. Report of Committee of the Whole
19. Third Reading of Bills
20. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Thursday, February 9th, at 1:00 p.m.

--ADJOURNMENT

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