

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: Tuesday, January 27, 1998

3:00 p.m.

Date: 98/01/27

THE SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Order! All rise, please.

[The Clerk read the Royal Proclamation dated December 3, 1997, summoning the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta to convene on this date]

THE CLERK: Please be seated.

[The Sergeant-at-Arms left the Chamber]

THE SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Order! Order! Mr. Speaker.

[Preceded by the Sergeant-at-Arms, the Speaker, accompanied by the officers of the Assembly, entered the Chamber and took the chair]

head: **Prayers**

THE SPEAKER: Let us pray.

Father, on this day of a new beginning we ask for Your guidance in the responsibility we have undertaken and Your help in fulfilling our duties.

As Members of this Legislative Assembly may we faithfully serve all Albertans and, in serving them, serve You.

Amen.

Ladies and gentlemen, I would now invite Mr. Paul Lorieau to lead us in the singing of our national anthem.

[Mr. Lorieau led the singing of *O Canada*]

O Canada, our home and native land!
True patriot love in all thy sons command.
With glowing hearts we see thee rise,
The True North strong and free!
From far and wide, O Canada,
We stand on guard for thee.
God keep our land glorious and free!
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.

THE SPEAKER: Please be seated.

Entrance of the Lieutenant Governor

[The Premier, the Clerk, and the Sergeant-at-Arms left the Chamber to attend the Lieutenant Governor]

[The Mace was draped]

THE SPEAKER: Ladies and gentlemen, while we await the arrival of His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, it is my great pleasure to share with you information about a very important historic event that took place this morning in the Legislative Assembly building rotunda.

Now, many of you may have noticed that on special ceremonial occasions when the Sergeant-at-Arms escorts and announces His Honour into the Chamber, he carries with him a Black Rod. In the annals of parliamentary history the earliest known reference to this particular staff dates from 1361, when knights moving in processions from one point to another as part of the frequent festivals at Windsor

Castle were led by an usher who carried a black rod. When they arrived at their destination, the usher "kept the doors"; that is, denied admission to those not entitled to be present. This gave him the name of "usher," for *ussarius*, the medieval Latin for doorkeeper.

In 1522 a statute relating to the Usher explained the purpose of the Black Rod. It was carried in lieu of a Mace as a symbol of authority. The Usher's responsibility was chiefly to keep the doors "in the High Court called the Parliament."

The last Black Rod presented in Canada was given to the Senate in 1919 by the British House of Lords and replaced the one destroyed in the great fire on Parliament Hill in 1916. The motion of acceptance of the Senate's Black Rod on February 28, 1919, was moved by the Conservative House leader of the Senate, Senator the Hon. Sir James Lougheed, an Albertan and grandfather to the Hon. E. Peter Lougheed, Premier of Alberta from 1971 to November of 1985.

This morning at a unique ceremony held in the Legislature Building's rotunda, the Alberta-Northwest Territories Command Royal Canadian Legion presented a specially commissioned Black Rod to the Legislative Assembly, through the Speaker, for use by the Sergeant-at-Arms. At the 1994 Commonwealth Parliamentary Association conference held in Banff, the then Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the hon. Stanley Schumacher, was presented with a 1905 British gold sovereign by the Parliament of the United Kingdom. Speaker Schumacher was subsequently presented with an ebony rafter by the Parliament of Sri Lanka in 1995. We are fortunate to have with us today in the galleries the high commissioner for Sri Lanka as well as the British consul general.

The concept of using these two items to create a new Black Rod for use in Alberta was commissioned by the Sergeant-at-Arms, and the design was done by the Chief Herald for Canada. Its execution was entrusted to a well-known Calgary silversmith and artisan, Charles Lewton-Brain, who is also present in the galleries today. The design incorporates a number of themes which are a combination of the traditional and are representational of Alberta as well.

I would like to extend our very sincere thanks to the Alberta-Northwest Territories Royal Canadian Legion for completely funding the creation of this unique shaft. We are appreciative that a number of Royal Canadian Legion members were able to join us today in the galleries to witness the special item that will be taking place at the end of this afternoon's ceremonies to record this auspicious moment in the Assembly's history. I also invite all of you present today in the Chamber to take note of our new Black Rod as it enters into the Assembly with the Sergeant-at-Arms.

[The Sergeant-at-Arms knocked on the main doors of the Chamber three times. The Associate Sergeant-at-Arms opened the doors, and the Sergeant-at-Arms entered]

THE SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Ladies and gentlemen, all rise, please.

Mr. Speaker, His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor awaits.

THE SPEAKER: Sergeant-at-Arms, admit His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor.

[A fanfare of trumpets sounded]

[Preceded by the Sergeant-at-Arms, Their Honours the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta, H.A. "Bud" Olson, and Mrs. Olson, their party,

the Premier, and the Clerk entered the Chamber. His Honour took his place upon the throne)

head: **Speech from the Throne**

HIS HONOUR: Please be seated.

Fellow Albertans, it is my privilege and my pleasure to welcome you to the Second Session of the 24th Alberta Legislature.

Preparing for the future is very important to Albertans. Our greatest obligation is to leave our children and our grandchildren a province that is even better than the one which was left to us. This is the mission to which my government rededicates itself as we approach a new millennium. Our young people must be our top priority.

Over the past five years Albertans have built a solid foundation for the next generation. Thanks to their hard work there is renewed and more balanced prosperity throughout our house. Alberta enjoys the highest employment rate in Canada [Source: Statistics Canada, December 1997] and the highest forecasted economic growth in the country [Source: Conference Board of Canada, October 21, 1997]. This year's budget surplus is projected at \$2 billion. The net provincial debt should be gone by 2000 or 2001 if oil and gas prices remain stable.

But there is more work to do. After eliminating the net debt, Albertans will still face their first mortgage, a total accumulated debt of \$14 billion. Although this debt is offset by assets like the Alberta heritage savings trust fund, it still costs the province more than \$1 billion in interest payments each year. At the same time, Alberta's strong economic growth is generating more activity and attracting more people, boosting demand for government services such as schools, hospitals, and roads.

At the Alberta Growth Summit, Albertans told their government to respond to the pressures of growth and to develop the heart of our Alberta advantage, our people, while remaining fiscally responsible. Our government must strike a balance between paying down the mortgage and expanding the house to meet the needs of a growing household. Accordingly, for the next three years the government will direct the first \$1 billion of any annual surplus to pay down the provincial debt, the next \$250 million to onetime initiatives in Albertans' priority areas, and any remaining surplus to further payments on the mortgage.

Reinvesting in Albertans is a pillar of our government's agenda for opportunity, but it will never return to simply throwing money at problems. It will keep searching for new and better ways to deliver responsive and responsible programs and services. At the Alberta Growth Summit the private sector committed to being an energetic and responsible partner with government in efforts like work experience, apprenticeship, and mentor programs.

Albertans' priority on developing people reflects an understanding that they are the driving force in our society and our economy and that all Albertans must have the opportunities they need to develop their full potential and to contribute actively to their families, their workplaces, and their communities.

The primary foundation for this is education. Our goal is to have the best educated young people in Canada with our students posting the highest achievement results in the country by 2001. Albertans want an education system that instills in our children the values that made our province strong, the values of self-reliance, self-discipline, respect for others, honesty, and industriousness.

Our government will increase funding for kindergarten to grade 12 by 13 percent, or \$380 million, over the next three years. The grant for basic instruction will increase to give school boards more

flexibility to meet their students' needs. The government will ensure that this flexibility remains by planning for and funding annual increases in enrollment. It will continue both to ensure public quality education through public, separate, and charter schools and to support parents who choose private or home schooling.

The government will continue its commitment to help students learn through the use of technology. For the first time it will outline a standard of knowledge and technical skills which students are expected to acquire. It will make funding for technology more flexible by eliminating the requirement for school boards to match government funding for that purpose, and it will provide further funding to address the costs of transporting students and also revise its formula for funding transportation to and from rural schools to encourage greater safety and efficiency.

Our government will launch a program to catch and correct reading problems as soon as they appear, even as early as kindergarten. It will enable school boards to hire intern teachers to help teachers assess and further support students who show early signs of falling behind. It will extend funding for English as a Second Language programs to give Canadian-born children from families in which English is the second language the same chance and support to learn English as immigrant students. It will increase funding for students with special physical and mental difficulties. It will keep working with local service providers to find ways to better co-ordinate services for children to help them overcome social, economic, and family-related barriers to learning.

Albertans stressed the importance of ensuring that our young people have every opportunity to learn a marketable skill and to improve their skills as they progress through life. The government's reinvestment plan for Advanced Education and Career Development calls for an increase of about 7.5 percent, or \$95 million, between now and 2001.

The government will create more places for the rising number of high school graduates entering our postsecondary institutions. It will expand its apprenticeship programs, particularly in areas required by Alberta's thriving economy. It will work with institutions and the private sector to create a \$30 million tuition bursary for students with the greatest financial need and to identify requirements for knowledge and skills.

Our government will communicate these requirements through efforts like the Alberta learning information system, which gives young people details on opportunities for learning and careers. It will modernize research infrastructure and help to attract quality researchers, and it will consider with students and others the merits of legislating a freeze on the tuition cap at 30 percent of expenditures related to credit programs.

The government maintains its commitment to help all Albertans maintain or regain their independence and to support the truly needy. Over the next three years it will increase funding for Family and Social Services by more than 5 percent, or about \$70 million, to handle growing caseloads in child welfare and handicapped children's services and to fund women's shelters and family and community support services.

Our government will aim to keep children physically, mentally, and emotionally safe through a Forever Homes initiative that serves them until their original home is healed or an adoptive home is found to nurture them for the long term. The move towards more community-based services will continue with the transfer of responsibilities to the child and family services regional authorities and the persons with developmental disabilities boards. This will ensure the delivery of comprehensive, integrated programs to meet the developmental needs of children and families.

The government will take new steps to combat teenaged prostitution and to address the needs of children affected by fetal alcohol syndrome and find ways to prevent it. Children in low-income families will receive further support under the national child benefit, for which our government will complement increases in federal child tax benefits, and reflecting the government's commitment to easing Albertans' tax burden, low- and middle-income working families will receive two payments for 1998 totaling up to \$1,000 under the Alberta family employment tax credit.

High-quality, accessible, and sustainable health care remains an important part of our government's agenda for opportunity. It will increase funding for health to meet the changing needs of a growing and aging population. Reflecting the broad view of health taken at the Alberta Growth Summit and elsewhere, there will be more emphasis on monitoring the state of Albertans' health and on protecting and promoting good health and continued emphasis on treating illness, especially in the area of mental health.

The government will frame standards and measures for our health system. It will continue to develop a modern system to use and share information on health. After consulting extensively with Albertans, it will develop new legislation to protect the privacy of information on their personal health.

Our government will address the needs of Alberta's seniors through a review of long-term care services in the province. It will assess the effectiveness of its new legislation to protect persons in care, and it will review the impact of an aging population on public programs such as social housing to respond to the changing needs of our seniors.

Our government will provide more protection within the legal system to victims of family violence. It will act on the pending report of the MLA committee set up to recommend improvements to the province's maintenance enforcement program and access to children. It will act on the report of the task force on the appointment of Provincial Court judges. It will better protect vulnerable consumers under new, consolidated legislation governing fair trading, it will explore issues relating to aboriginal justice, and it will keep pressing to make our roads safer and to reduce the incidence of traffic collisions.

Our government will join with Albertans to strengthen our communities even further. It will complete regional library systems and a provincewide electronic library network. It will help problem gamblers through nonresidential treatment, a site on the Internet for young people, and training programs, and in keeping with the government's commitment to return more lottery revenues directly to communities, volunteer local boards will allocate some \$50 million to worthy community projects.

The government will encourage local governments to plan for their future by finding new ways to manage resources and to structure collaborative systems of delivering services. It will provide targeted financial support to communities which need help to establish and sustain essential services.

Another priority identified by Albertans is managing the increasing demands and wear on the roads, buildings, and technology required to meet the challenges of economic growth in our province. The government will reinvest in Alberta's infrastructure starting with accelerating the development of the north/south trade corridor, extending from Alberta's border west of Grande Prairie down to the American border at Coutts. When this is substantially finished by 2007, it will allow for escalating traffic by industry and tourists.

Although financial indicators suggest that our province's economy will continue to thrive, Albertans recognize the danger of

complacency. Our government's goal is to have this province acknowledged as the centre of economic growth and prosperity in Canada by the turn of the century. It will continue to create the climate for prosperity for all Albertans and to build on the Alberta advantage that attracts business, investment, and jobs to our province.

Through its unique partnership with the Alberta Economic Development Authority our government will improve the climate for expanded manufacturing and processing and advanced and emerging technologies. It will pursue international trade through efforts like Team Canada's recent visit to Latin America and Team Alberta's mission to Asia last fall. It will continue to improve the province's tax climate by phasing out provincial taxes on machinery and equipment, and it will look at reforming Alberta's personal income tax system.

In energy our government will produce legislation to complete the deregulation of the electricity industry to provide consumers with more choice in a competitive market. It will act on industry-led consultations on royalty and related information systems. It will work with industry to resolve outstanding issues around pipeline tolls and to encourage more construction of pipelines. It will contract out its rural electrification loan portfolio to give farmers more flexibility and to reduce administration, and responding to requests from rural gas co-operatives, it will allow customers to control gas brokerage services through an elected board of directors.

In agriculture the government will design plans to allow the cattle industry to inspect brands on its own, and it will discuss with interested parties and develop a new approach to locating intensive livestock operations.

Environmental issues are a pressing concern for all Albertans. The government will streamline and clarify decision-making structures and processes regarding natural resources. It will include a strategy to protect Alberta's water in its new framework to manage the province's water resources when the Water Act comes into force, and it will improve its program to build a network of protected areas of wilderness and to manage a growing system of parks for people to enjoy long into the future.

In science and research our government will introduce legislation to bring a cohesive and efficient approach to encouraging innovation. It will foster investment by the private sector and other partners.

As proud Canadians, Albertans will continue to play a leading part in renewing a strong and effective federation including Quebec. Following the Alberta Legislature's unanimous approval of the Calgary declaration, Albertans will continue to take the lead in negotiating intergovernmental issues like roles and responsibilities in various sectors of social policy and federal spending powers.

Our government will help to complete a Canada-wide agreement to harmonize environmental management. It will work to meet the reductions for emissions of greenhouse gases agreed to by the provinces and the federal government while ensuring the continued development and growth of Alberta's energy industry. It will seek to include the nation's municipalities, academic institutions, schools, and hospitals in the Canadian agreement on internal trade.

Our government will work with the federal government to address outstanding land claims by Alberta's aboriginal peoples. It will clarify its approach to land claims obligations, intergovernmental relations, and aboriginal self-reliance, and it will improve the governance of Alberta's Métis settlements.

Our government will continue to listen to Albertans and to respond to their concerns. This year an all-party committee of this

Legislature will seek people's views on the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. After more than three years of discussions with the public and with health professionals, the government will table legislation relating to the governance, registration, and continuing competence and conduct of professionals in the field of health care.

The government will continue to provide responsive and responsible programs through a public service recognized as among the most focused, creative, and productive in Canada. It will strive to retain, attract, and develop the talented, skilled, and versatile employees required to serve Albertans' developing needs into the next century.

Shortly our government will provide a detailed response to each of the recommendations made at the Alberta Growth Summit. In mid-February the Provincial Treasurer will present a budget outlining the fiscal blueprints for the government's agenda for opportunity.

Fellow Albertans, our government's mission and its commitment are clear. Responding to your wishes, it will stay its course of fiscal responsibility with balanced budgets and diminishing debt. It will reinvest wisely in Albertans' priorities, and as the Premier has declared, children will come first in the house we call Alberta.

Now I leave you to the business of this session confident that as elected representatives you will in every way fulfill your responsibilities to Albertans.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly, I pray that the blessing of God may rest on your deliberations.

God bless Alberta.

God bless Canada.

God save the Queen.

THE SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: All rise, please.

[Preceded by the Sergeant-at-Arms, Their Honours, their party, and the Premier left the Chamber as a fanfare of trumpets sounded]

THE SPEAKER: Please be seated.

[The Mace was uncovered]

[The Premier returned to the Chamber]

head: **Introduction of Bills**

THE SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

**Bill 1
Protection of Children
Involved in Prostitution Act**

MR. KLEIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill 1, being the Protection of Children Involved in Prostitution Act, 1998.

Mr. Speaker, Bill 1 demonstrates our commitment to protecting the well-being of our children and youth. It recognizes the seriousness of the issue of children involved in prostitution and takes steps to address it.

Mr. Speaker, the honour of presenting this bill today gives me the opportunity to recognize the individual who will be carrying it through the Legislature, the MLA for Calgary-Fish Creek. This hon. member spent countless hours with police and social agencies not only to obtain information to prepare the bill but to get personal

insight into the seriousness of the problem.

The Department of Family and Social Services will allot \$5.2 million over the next three years to support this legislation. Bill 1 will strengthen our ability to combat child prostitution. All government departments must work together along with other levels of government, nongovernment organizations, law enforcement agencies, and communities to make the matter of children involved in prostitution a priority and stop the abuse of our children.

Thank you.

[Leave granted; Bill 1 read a first time]

Tablings

THE SPEAKER: I have the honour to table a copy of the speech graciously given by His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor.

Motions

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I move that the speech of His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor to this Assembly be taken into consideration tomorrow.

[Motion carried]

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, I move that the Votes and Proceedings of this Assembly be printed after first having been perused by Mr. Speaker and that he do appoint the printing thereof and that no person but such as he shall appoint do presume to print the same.

[Motion carried]

MR. HANCOCK: Mr. Speaker, I move that the select standing committees for the present session of the Legislative Assembly be appointed for the following purposes:

- (1) Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund,
- (2) Law and Regulations,
- (3) Legislative Offices,
- (4) Private Bills,
- (5) Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing,
- (6) Public Accounts, and
- (7) Public Affairs.

[Motion carried]

MR. HAVELOCK: Mr. Speaker, I seek the Assembly's unanimous consent to waive Standing Order 49(1), providing for the establishment of a striking committee to prepare, recommend, and report a list of the members, chairmen, and deputy chairmen to comprise the Assembly's seven standing committees.

THE SPEAKER: Having heard the request from the Government House Leader, those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

THE SPEAKER: Those members opposed, please say no. So ordered.

MR. HAVELOCK: Mr. Speaker, I seek the Assembly's unanimous

consent to waive Standing Order 38(1)(a) in order to move the motion appointing the chairmen, deputy chairmen, and members to comprise the Assembly's seven standing committees.

THE SPEAKER: Having heard the request from the hon. Government House Leader, those in favour of the motion, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

THE SPEAKER: Those members opposed, please say no. So ordered.

MR. HAVELOCK: Mr. Speaker, I move that the following members be appointed to the Assembly's seven standing committees.

- (1) Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Committee: Mr. Pham, chairman; Mr. Doerksen, deputy chairman; Ms Carlson; Mr. Clegg; Mr. Hierath; Mr. Lougheed; Mr. Shariff; Mr. Stevens; and Mr. Zwozdesky.
- (2) Law and Regulations Committee: Mrs. Tarchuk, chairman; Mr. Doerksen, deputy chairman; Mr. Amery; Mr. Broda; Mr. Boutillier; Mrs. Burgener; Mr. Coutts; Mr. Dickson; Mrs. Fritz; Mr. Johnson; Mrs. Laing; Ms Leibovici; Mr. MacDonald; Mr. Melchin; Ms Olsen; Mr. Renner; Mr. Severtson; Mrs. Sloan; Mr. Thurber; Mr. Trynchy; and Mr. Yankowsky.
- (3) Legislative Offices Committee: Mr. Langevin, chairman; Mr. Friedel, deputy chairman; Ms Barrett; Mr. Dickson; Mrs. Fritz; Mr. Hierath; Mr. Jacques; Mrs. O'Neill; and Mr. Sapers.
- (4) Private Bills Committee: Ms Graham, chairman; Mrs. Burgener, deputy chairman; Mr. Bonner; Mr. Cao; Mr. Cardinal; Mr. Coutts; Mr. Herard; Ms Kryczka; Mr. Langevin; Mr. MacDonald; Mr. Magnus; Mr. Marz; Mr. McFarland; Mrs. Paul; Mr. Pham; Mrs. Sloan; Mrs. Soetaert; Mr. Strang; Mr. Tannas; Mrs. Tarchuk; and Mr. Thurber.
- (5) Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing Committee: Mr. Stevens, chairman; Mr. Boutillier, deputy chairman; Mr. Cao; Mr. Clegg; Mr. Dickson; Mr. Fischer; Mrs. Forsyth; Mr. Gibbons; Mrs. Gordon; Mr. Hlady; Mr. Klapstein; Ms Kryczka; Ms Leibovici; Dr. Massey; Dr. Pannu; Mr. Renner; Mr. Sapers; Mr. Severtson; Mr. Strang; Mr. Tannas; and Mrs. Tarchuk.
- (6) Public Accounts Committee: Mr. White, chairman; Mr. Shariff, deputy chairman; Mr. Amery; Ms Blakeman; Mr. Ducharme; Mr. Friedel; Mr. Hierath; Mr. Hlady; Mr. Johnson; Mr. Lougheed; Mr. Melchin; Ms Olsen; Mrs. O'Neill; Dr. Pannu; Mr. Stevens; Mr. Yankowsky; and Mr. Zwozdesky.
- (7) Public Affairs Committee: Mr. Strang, chairman; Mr. Cardinal, deputy chairman; and all members of the Assembly.

[Motion carried]

MR. HAVELOCK: Mr. Speaker, I seek the Assembly's unanimous consent to waive Standing Order 38(1)(a), dealing with the notice requirement prior to introducing a resolution, in order to move a motion pertaining to the acceptance of the Black Rod by the Assembly.

THE SPEAKER: Having heard the motion from the hon. Government House Leader, those members in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

THE SPEAKER: Those members opposed, please say no. The motion is carried.

MR. HAVELOCK: Mr. Speaker, I seek the Assembly's unanimous consent to allow the Deputy Speaker and hon. Member for Highwood to move the motion pertaining to the acceptance of the Black Rod by the Assembly.

THE SPEAKER: Having heard the request from the hon. Government House Leader, those members in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

THE SPEAKER: Those members opposed, please say no. So ordered.

MR. TANNAS: Mr. Speaker, be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Alberta accept with sincere gratitude the Black Rod presented by the Alberta-Northwest Territories Command Royal Canadian Legion, recognizing the gift as an expression of their loyalty, service, and sacrifice to sovereign, country, and province. Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Alberta-Northwest Territories Command Royal Canadian Legion and that an engrossed scroll of presentation, including a list of current officers of the Legion's executive, be entered upon the *Journals* of the Legislative Assembly.

THE SPEAKER: Having heard the motion as proposed by the hon. Deputy Speaker and Member for Highwood, all those in favour of the motion, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

THE SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. The motion is carried unanimously.

[At 3:55 p.m. the Assembly adjourned to Wednesday at 1:30 p.m.]

