

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: **Monday, April 9, 2001**

1:30 p.m.

Date: 01/04/09

[The Mace was on a cushion below the table]

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

[The Clerk read the Royal Proclamation dated March 21, 2001, summoning the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta to convene on this date]

THE CLERK: 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 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Order! All rise, please.
Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor.

[Preceded by the Sergeant-at-Arms, Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta, Lois E. Hole, CM, the Premier, and the Clerk entered the Chamber. Her Honour took her place upon the throne]

HER HONOUR: Would everyone please be seated.

MR. HANCOCK (Provincial Secretary): Hon. members, I am commanded by Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor to inform you that she does not see fit to declare the causes of the summoning of the present Legislature of this province until a Speaker of this Assembly shall have been chosen according to law.

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

[Preceded by the Sergeant-at-Arms, the Lieutenant Governor and the Premier left the Chamber]

THE CLERK: Please be seated.

Election of a Speaker

THE CLERK: Hon. members, pursuant to the Lieutenant Governor's direction and section 16(1) of the Legislative Assembly Act nominations are invited for the Office of Speaker of this Assembly for the 25th Legislature. Ms Haley.

MS HALEY: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. I can't tell you how pleased I am to be able to rise in this Assembly to participate in the Speaker's election process, a process that here in Alberta we are already taking for granted but which is so rare on a global basis as to almost be nonexistent, and I say global because even though we rarely think about it, we are in fact part of a network of parliaments, a system that is rooted in over 800 years of history.

I am so proud to be able to nominate this gentleman for the position of Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. On April 14, 1997, when I nominated him the first time, I believed that his knowledge of the parliamentary system, his sense of history, and his work as an MLA as well as his pride in being a parliamentarian would serve us all well, and I believe the same holds true today. I believe that our Assembly has been enhanced by his ability to make this marvelous building a place not just for us as MLAs but for all the people.

He has initiated many things for the people of Alberta, such as Mr.

Speaker's Youth Parliament, which just concluded last week, School at the Legislature, the display of the Famous Five, the choirs that now come here at Christmastime, and moments such as the Holocaust memorial service, which serve as reminders to us and to all Albertans that this building belongs to all the people of this province. One of the projects he is currently working on will see a series of plaques that will correspond to each of the elections in the province of Alberta, leaving a reminder to future generations of the role that elected people from 1905 onward have played in the history of our province.

As a historian he has a keen sense of the role parliamentarians play on a global basis. All of us are in fact parliamentarians. He has encouraged many of us to be participants at various times in different parliamentary meetings, whether it is the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the European Partnership of Parliaments, the Francophone parliamentary association, or as participants in the National Association of State Legislators in the U.S.A. By encouraging us to participate, we not only learn about situations in other countries but pass on what we have learned here in Alberta to others around the world. The purpose, of course, is to remind all of us that we are part of something larger than one constituency or one province and that the more we learn, the better we will do right here in our own Assembly on behalf of Albertans. The more barriers we remove globally, the stronger democracy will be.

I believe that he wants each of us to be proud of who and what we are and that he has tried to instill a sense of dignity and honour into our daily Routine and into our role as legislators. Each MLA, regardless of party, is important here.

When I was first elected in 1993, I was sitting upstairs in my office one day when he appeared at my door. He was just doing a walk-around to say hello to some of the new MLAs in the building. He told me that day that if I ever needed any help or advice not to hesitate to call him. Well, I kind of laughed, Mr. Clerk, because at the time he was Deputy Premier, he was a minister, and he had a number of areas of responsibility not just to one constituency but to the whole province. I really didn't think he'd have time.

Strangely enough, several months later I did have a problem and no comprehension of how to deal with it. I called him, and sure enough, he set aside what he was doing to talk to me. He took the time to listen to the issue and give me his best advice. I truly appreciated it, and since that time I have seen him do the same thing for many in this Chamber. He set an example for me that day, and it's an example that I try really hard to aspire to, not only to be the best MLA in the province of Alberta but to be there for my colleagues when they have a problem.

When I nominated him four years ago, I said that he believes that all MLAs play a fundamental role in our democracy, that this Legislature is truly our home away from home, and that it should be a Chamber of respect, of honour, and of integrity. In fact, it must be an environment in which all of us can function freely on behalf of our constituents. The Speaker has a vital role to play in ensuring that that is what happens here.

It is a privilege for me to once again nominate Ken Kowalski, the Member for Barrhead-Westlock, to the position of Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta.

THE CLERK: Thank you, Ms Haley.

Mr. Kowalski, do you wish to accept the nomination?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Clerk, I'd be honoured to accept the nomination.

THE CLERK: Are there further nominations? If there are no further nominations, I declare the nominations closed, and accordingly I

declare that Mr. Ken Kowalski, MLA for Barrhead-Westlock, is elected Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta for the 25th Legislature. [applause]

[The Speaker, with apparent reluctance, was escorted to the chair by Mr. Klein and Dr. Nicol]

THE SPEAKER: Hon. members, let me at the outset very humbly say thank you very, very much. I know that the tradition of Speaker dates back to 1381 in the British parliamentary form of governance. This Assembly is the continuation of that, and what we do here is important. This is democracy. This is the highest court in the province of Alberta. This is a place of dignity. This is a place of decorum. This is a place where honourable men and women come together and debate policies and exchange their views on issues. It is a place that can bring great pride to all of the citizens of Alberta and will continue to bring great pride to all of the citizens of Alberta.

You honour me today with the greatest of honours, and I thank you very, very humbly. To the hon. Member for Airdrie-Rocky View, thank you so much for the very kind words. They're very much appreciated.

Hon. members, I'm very, very proud to be among you. I'm very, very proud to be one of you. I will not let you down. Thank you very much.

[The Sergeant-at-Arms placed the Mace on the table]

Prayers

THE SPEAKER: I would now like to invite everyone to stand for the prayer.

Let us pray. Dear God, author of all wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, we ask Thy guidance in order that truth and justice may prevail in all of our judgments. Amen.

Please be seated.

Election of a Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees

THE SPEAKER: Hon. members, pursuant to section 17(1) of the Legislative Assembly Act and Standing Order 55(1)(a) nominations are invited for the Office of Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees of this Assembly for the 25th Legislature. I now open nominations. The hon. Member for St. Albert.

MRS. O'NEILL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my honour today to stand in this Assembly to nominate the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Highwood. This member was first elected to the Legislature in 1989. He was re-elected in 1993, 1997, and in 2001. On August 30, 1993, he became the first elected Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. He was re-elected to this position on April 14, 1997.

The Member for Highwood is indeed, in my opinion, an experienced, fair-minded, honourable, courteous, and firm member of this Assembly. So it is my honour to present this member for election to be the Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Member for Highwood, would you accept the nomination?

MR. TANNAS: It's with honour that I would accept this, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. members, would there be additional nominations? It's my pleasure to declare that Mr. Don Tannas, the MLA for Highwood, is elected Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees for the Legislative Assembly of Alberta for the 25th Legislature.

The hon. Member for Highwood.

MR. TANNAS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I first would like to offer congratulations to you on being re-elected to the chair, and I would like to express my appreciation to the hon. Member for St. Albert for her kind words and to thank all hon. members for this honour. I will do my best to uphold the centuries-old tradition of this office.

Election of a Deputy Chairman of Committees

THE SPEAKER: Hon. members, pursuant to section 17(1) of the Legislative Assembly Act and Standing Order 55(1)(b) nominations are invited for the Office of Deputy Chairman of Committees for the 25th Legislature. The hon. Member for Calgary-East.

MR. AMERY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a real pleasure and honour to rise today and nominate the hon. Member for Calgary-McCall for the position of Deputy Chairman of Committees. During the mandate of the 24th Legislature the hon. member fulfilled the duties of Deputy Chairman of Committees on countless occasions on a voluntary basis. He demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the House rules and respect for the parliamentary process. Knowing him personally and professionally, I am certain that he will be fair and impartial and that he will be an excellent addition to the highly dignified and esteemed team of Speaker and Deputy Speaker. Therefore, I nominate the hon. Member for Calgary-McCall.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Member for Calgary-McCall, will you accept the nomination?

MR. SHARIFF: With honour I accept.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. members, are there further nominations? There being none, then it's my pleasure to declare that Mr. Shiraz Shariff, the hon. Member for Calgary-McCall, is hereby declared the elected Deputy Chairman of Committees for the Legislative Assembly of Alberta for the 25th Legislature.

The hon. Member for Calgary-McCall.

MR. SHARIFF: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to begin by first thanking each and every one of you for entrusting me with this responsibility. I would also like to congratulate you on your election to the position of Speaker, and I would also like to congratulate the Deputy Speaker on his election. Friends, I look forward to serving you, and I will not let you down.

Thank you.

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