



**Legislative Assembly
Province of Alberta**

No. 14

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Second Session

Twenty-Eighth Legislature

Tuesday, April 8, 2014

The Speaker took the Chair at 1:30 p.m.

Speaker's Statement – Member's Anniversary

The Speaker made a statement in recognition of the 12th anniversary of Hon. Mr. Griffiths, Minister of Service Alberta, who was elected to the Legislative Assembly of Alberta in a by-election held on April 8, 2002.

Speaker's Statement – Speaking Times for Ministerial and Members' Statements

Honourable Members, yesterday was a very historic day in this Assembly. Not only was it the first day for Alberta's new Premier, Alberta's 15th Premier, but it was also very noteworthy to hear his very important message delivered at a time called Ministerial Statements, as it was important to hear from other Members as well when everyone spoke about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Your Chair knows of the deeply held emotions that are triggered by the subject of residential schools because I grew up very near to the Alexis reserve, and I saw some of what was talked about yesterday occurring.

The work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission allows and empowers people to tell their stories. In keeping with that theme, yesterday there were some very emotional statements made in this Assembly. As Speaker, I was proud to preside over an Assembly, over a Chamber, where, for example, the Honourable Member for Lesser Slave Lake was able to stand and tell her personal story involving residential schools. The speeches that were given by other Members and by the Leader of the Official Opposition also spoke to many outside these walls who know that their stories have resonance with all of us.

As I mentioned yesterday at page 351 of Alberta Hansard for April 7, 2014, there were some complaints by some Members forwarded to me regarding the time that was given by me to Members who asked to participate in responding to the Ministerial Statement. I indicated that I would provide some guidelines with respect to the speaking times for Ministerial Statements today, including responses to Ministerial Statements.

In reviewing the background and rulings on this subject over the years, I found the most succinct statement to be in a document that I sent to House Leaders on January 23, 2014, entitled "Proposed Changes to Assembly Procedures: Comments Prepared by Table Officers." To quote from that document, I said the following:

There is nothing in the Standing Orders that provides for the length of time that a Minister may take in delivering a Ministerial Statement. Likewise, there is nothing about the length of responses by the Official Opposition or by any other opposition Member. The practice of allowing a Member of the Official Opposition a response of three minutes has been followed since the June 13, 1986, ruling by former Speaker David Carter. As there is nothing in that ruling or in the Standing Orders, a further practice has evolved of seeking unanimous consent of the Assembly to have a Member of any other opposition party respond for three minutes. In the interests of certainty, House Leaders may wish to consider amending the Standing Orders to either codify the existing practice or modify it.

Some Members may recall a ruling I gave on May 14, 2013, at page 2391 of Alberta Hansard for that day that dealt with the topic of Ministerial Statements, especially the length of them. I also want to point out that one of the most important jobs of the Speaker, although not much is written about it, is to sense the mood of the Assembly and to apply the rules in light of those circumstances. That is what I did yesterday with respect to the speaking times that I allowed in responding to the Ministerial Statement. In fact, the Premier spoke for exactly five minutes, according to what I've been provided by way of timing. The Leader of the Official Opposition spoke for three minutes and 47 seconds. Forty-seven seconds over the traditional allotted time, but well worth it. Same with the Premier, bang on.

The Leader of the Liberal Opposition spoke for three minutes and five seconds. The Leader of the New Democrats spoke for one minute and 54 seconds. The Member for Calgary-Foothills spoke for a minute and 38 seconds. The Member for Lesser Slave Lake spoke for five minutes and 41 seconds. The Member for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo spoke for two minutes and 40 seconds. So I granted the appropriate amount of leeway judging the mood of the House at the time.

Moving on to another subject, that being the subsequent order of business, specifically for those who are participating in Members' Statements, we have a different rule, which is why I enforced the speaking times found in Standing Order 7(4) and, unfortunately, I had to cut off two people, at least, because they ran over the time of more than two minutes. Members will know that these statements are part of the Daily Routine and are not unique. Members know the rules on speaking times and also should know the anxiety caused when one Member is seen to be allowed more time than another, which is in direct violation of the rules. I have no choice but to enforce those rules and to try and be as fair and as impartial in my rulings as possible when doing so.

I am sorry to have taken up a couple of minutes of your time from the Assembly on this point, but it was of great concern to me, as it was to some Members who wrote to me, sought clarification, and, as I mentioned earlier, even complained. If there are any further questions on this or any other matter, I encourage you to please contact me, privately if you wish. Many of you have been in and we have spoken about numerous items over the past nearly two years, and I would welcome you to come in again and we can pursue the conversation even further. Thank you for your kind attention and your adherence.

Members' Statements

Ms Fenske, Hon. Member for Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville, made a statement regarding rural homelessness.

Mr. Anglin, Hon. Member for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre, made a statement regarding several Government and Wildrose policies.

Ms Calahasen, Hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake, made a statement regarding the First Nations Interpretation Internship Program at Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park.

Mr. Xiao, Hon. Member for Edmonton-McClung, made a statement regarding the Government's April 8, 2014, announcement of the Open Educational Resources Initiative.

Ms Cusanelli, Hon. Member for Calgary-Currie, made a statement regarding the work of the Sonshine Centre, a second-stage women's shelter in Calgary.

Mrs. Towle, Hon. Member for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake, made a statement congratulating Sylvan Lake, winner of Kraft Hockeyville 2014.

Tabling Returns and Reports

Mr. Eggen, Hon. Member for Edmonton-Calder:

Copies of 50 postcards from Albertans to Hon. Mr. Lukaszuk, former Deputy Premier, regarding post-secondary education funding cuts

Sessional Paper 107/2014

Dr. Swann, Hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View:

Reprint of a Stettler Independent article dated March 26, 2014, entitled “Redford agriculture legacy sparse at best”

Sessional Paper 108/2014

Mr. Allen, Hon. Member for Fort McMurray-Wood-Buffalo:

Document entitled “Public response via email, Facebook and telephone with regard to the question posed on January 28, 2014” regarding Motion Other Than a Government Motion 504 to be proposed by Mr. Allen, Hon. Member for Fort McMurray-Wood-Buffalo

Sessional Paper 109/2014

Mr. Webber, Hon. Member for Calgary-Foothills:

CBC News website article dated January 16, 2014, entitled “Husky, kitten found dead, muzzled in Calgary alley,” Calgary Herald website article dated January 16, 2014, entitled “Pet owners warned after attacks on animals in Willow Park,” and Calgary Herald website article dated January 29, 2014, entitled “Home searched in case of dog, cat found with muzzles taped shut”

Sessional Paper 110/2014

Alberta Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals webpage outlining its core values and beliefs

Sessional Paper 111/2014

Hon. Mr. McIver, Minister of Infrastructure:

Excerpt from Budget 2009, Capital Plan 2009-12

Sessional Paper 112/2014

Excerpt from Budget 2010, 2010-13 Capital Plan

Sessional Paper 113/2014

Biography of Mr. Anderson, Hon. Member for Airdrie, from the robanderson.ca website

Sessional Paper 114/2014

Mr. Donovan, Hon. Member for Little Bow:

Email message dated December 26, 2013, from Tom Filgas of Lethbridge to Mr. Donovan, Hon. Member for Little Bow, expressing several concerns regarding resource royalties and Government policies

Sessional Paper 115/2014

Adjournment

Pursuant to Standing Order 59.01(5)(b) the Assembly adjourned at 3:24 p.m. until Wednesday, April 9, 2014, at 1:30 p.m.

Hon. Gene Zwozdesky,
Speaker

Title: Tuesday, April 8, 2014