

**JOURNALS**  
of the  
**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
of the  
**PROVINCE OF NEW BRUNSWICK**

**FOURTH SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 2001-2002**

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**THE HONOURABLE MARILYN TRENHOLME COUNSELL  
LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR**

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Fredericton, N.B.  
Tuesday, November 20, 2001.

**PROCLAMATION**

**WHEREAS** the third session of the fifty-fourth Legislative Assembly of this Province was prorogued on the first day of June, 2001;

**AND WHEREAS** I have thought fit to call the fourth session of the fifty-fourth Legislative Assembly of this Province into session, I hereby issue a Proclamation that the same be called to meet on the twentieth day of November, 2001.

Given under my hand and the Great Seal of the Province at Fredericton on this second day of November, in the year of our Lord Two Thousand and One and in the fiftieth year of Her Majesty's Reign.

**BY COMMAND OF THE  
LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR**

Bradley Green, Q.C.  
Attorney General

Marilyn Trenholme Counsell.  
Lieutenant-Governor.

This being the day appointed for the Opening of the Fourth Session of the Fifty-fourth Legislative Assembly of the province of New Brunswick for the dispatch of business pursuant to the proclamation hereinbefore annexed, and the Members being present:

Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor was announced and having been bidden to enter, took her seat in the chair upon the Throne and was pleased to open the session with the following speech from the Throne:

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members of the Legislative Assembly, invited guests, and all New Brunswickers:

Welcome to the opening of the Fourth Session of the 54th Legislative Assembly of the Province of New Brunswick.

The cover of this year's Speech from the Throne portrays the official insignia of the new Order of New Brunswick as approved by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Next fall, New Brunswickers will welcome Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, Queen of Canada and His Royal Highness The Prince Philip to our province in celebration of the Queen's Golden Jubilee, the 50th anniversary of Her Majesty's coronation.

This year, once again, the Speech from the Throne begins by recognizing the accomplishments of individual New Brunswickers over the past year, some of whom are with us today.

Two New Brunswick scouts, James McPhee of New Maryland and Evan Reade of Upper Cape, received the Jack Cornwell Award for scouting from the Governor General of Canada just last week. Thirteen-year old Pierre-Olivier D'Amours, a Grade 8 student from Edmundston, won "The Great Canadian Geography Challenge" in May.

New Brunswickers stood tall on the medal podium this past summer winning 14 medals at the Canada Summer Games for rowing, swimming, wrestling, athletics, and canoe/kayak, along with two others for boxing at the Jeux de la Francophonie.

Seventeen-year old Julie Bélanger of Edmundston was named National Junior Women's Cycling Champion in July. Jeff Scholten of Fredericton established a new world record in 500 metre short-track speed skating in October.

As part of the cultural component of the Jeux de la Francophonie, the DancEast Young Company from Moncton was selected to participate in the finals of the international traditionally inspired dance competition. New Brunswick was awarded a gold medal for its gastronomic pavilion during the Fêtes Gourmandes Internationales as part of the Super Francofête, which took place alongside the games.

Several New Brunswickers received membership into the Order of Canada including Jacqueline Cool-Collette of Moncton, Edward Byrne of Moncton, Gordon Ferguson of Fredericton, J.W. (Bud) Bird of Fredericton, and Héliodore Côté of Drummond.

The Meritorious Service Medal was awarded to Mark Cary of Quispamsis who made aviation history by co-piloting the first successful flight to the South Pole during the polar winter.

The Medal of Bravery was awarded to Tommy Coulombe of Clarendon who, as an 11-year old on July 12, 1996, rescued his mother from their burning house.

All New Brunswickers join together in saluting their achievements.

### **September 11**

On September 11, 2001, New Brunswickers watched in horror and dismay as terrorism struck our closest international friend and ally, the United States. Yet New Brunswickers rose to the occasion providing comfort and shelter to about 2,000 American, Canadian, and international travelers whose planes were diverted to our province. The citizens of Moncton, in particular, opened not just their hearts but their homes to aid complete strangers. This represented New Brunswick at its best.

New Brunswickers have not been silent in expressing their outrage and compassion on this tragedy. That's why the Legislative Assembly will be asked to dedicate its first order of business to the unanimous approval of a motion condemning this act of terrorism, expressing solidarity with our neighbours to the south, and supporting our armed forces now engaged in the international conflict against terrorism as well as humanitarian actions in Afghanistan.

### **Securing Our Future**

This year's Speech from the Throne is set against a rapidly changing national and international economic backdrop. We are all living in a time of increased uncertainty and insecurity. Nevertheless, New Brunswickers wish to signal their determination to forge ahead and secure their future.

Your government's Speech from the Throne outlines over 30 initiatives and actions to help secure New Brunswickers' future in key areas of public safety, finances and the economy, health care, education, families, the environment, energy, and within Canada itself.

### **Securing Public Safety**

The events of September 11 have raised public safety and security issues to the forefront. It has pointed out to Canadians everywhere the

need for governments at all levels to take those actions needed to secure public safety.

Your government takes this responsibility seriously and will implement a **series of initiatives to protect the safety of New Brunswickers**. The Minister of Public Safety will provide more details on these measures in a statement to the Legislative Assembly.

#### **Securing our Financial and Economic Future**

An already difficult economic situation in the United States, Canada, and elsewhere in the world was made worse by the events of September 11. An economic slowdown is clearly upon us all. New Brunswick is not immune to this global situation. We have already felt and will continue to feel the effects of a slowing national and international economy for the immediate future.

Choices made over the past two years have helped prepare our province for the difficult road ahead. Your government will take further steps to plan ahead and secure our financial and economic future.

As a first step, your government will present a **Financial and Economic Update** to the Legislative Assembly, setting out the current financial situation and economic challenges facing the province. Staying the strong financial course already set is essential to ensure we have the financial flexibility to invest in key public priorities like health care, education, jobs and economic growth, and public safety. At a time when our financial resources are becoming more limited, we must be prudent about where we invest.

As a second step, your government will table a **Capital Budget** setting out proposed capital investment plans for highways, schools, hospitals, and other public infrastructure. At this time, it is important to invest wisely in key strategic infrastructure that will not only help create jobs for New Brunswickers today, but help secure our economic future tomorrow.

As a third step, your government will release its comprehensive, long-term economic growth agenda and **Prosperity Plan** for New Brunswick. Focused on four key building blocks - Investing in People; Creating a Competitive Fiscal and Business Environment; Embracing Innovation; and Building Strategic Infrastructure - this 10-year plan will set out the objectives we must pursue to help secure our province's economic future in a globally competitive world. Despite the short-term financial difficulties we now face, your government believes we must continue to invest in our long-term economic future. That's why your government will continue to provide **tax relief in its next budget** to help create jobs and economic growth.

At this time of economic uncertainty, companies need less red tape, not more. A vital private sector, free and competitive to invest, grow, and create jobs is essential to New Brunswick's continued economic growth. Your government will therefore introduce a series of **new red tape reduction** initiatives. This will include legislative amendments to begin creating a **single Business Registry System** for licences and permits, and amendments to **streamline the requirements of the Companies Act**. These measures and others will reinforce your government's strong red tape reduction measures taken to date. It complements further steps set out in the recently-released Council of Atlantic Premiers Action Plan for Regional Co-operation.

Our natural resources sector has been the backbone of our economy since before Confederation and remains vital to New Brunswick's economic future. We must ensure these valuable resources are managed well today to ensure more value tomorrow. Your government will therefore take two significant measures to meet this goal. First, **Total Development Strategies will be released** mapping out integrated value-added plans for the research, planning, harvesting, and processing of our key natural resource sectors of forestry, agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture, and mining. Second, to counter the economic losses of wood theft, **amendments to the Transportation of Primary Forest Products Act** will be brought forward.

Tourism provides significant economic benefits to our province. Recent events have impacted the tourism and travel industry throughout North America. To ensure New Brunswick remains an attractive, inviting, and safe tourism destination, your government will undertake **new marketing and promotion programs** through the new Department of Tourism and Parks.

Managing smarter is more important than ever in today's financial and economic circumstances. Managing smarter eliminates waste and saves money that can be directed to more important priorities. Your government will continue to manage smarter by introducing **legislation to eliminate a number of agencies, boards, and commissions** declared redundant, to save taxpayer dollars.

### **Securing Health Care**

Securing health care for New Brunswickers and their families is fundamental to your government's vision of a caring, compassionate society. Major new investments and improvements have already been made over the past two years. Today, New Brunswick has more doctors, nurses, and other health professionals than it did two years ago. The health care budget is at a record high level.

These steps were critical to help steady our health care system and make up for past neglect. Your government made a commitment to increase health care funding each year of its mandate. It will do so. Therefore, the health care budget will be increased once again next year as a further demonstration of your government's commitment to secure health care for New Brunswickers.

Your government will take a further step to create a more truly patient-focused, community-based health care system by introducing **legislation to create new Regional Health Authorities**. These new RHAs will ensure health services are more accessible to people and more integrated for patients and health care professionals. They will empower people and communities by allowing for more local input into health care decision-making. They will allow for more efficient and effective health service delivery and ensure greater accountability to New Brunswickers.

A further challenge for us all today is to make our health care system more sustainable and secure for tomorrow. It is a challenge that faces all governments in Canada, not just here in New Brunswick. It is a challenge that can only be addressed fully through a more dedicated federal government commitment to funding for health care, a clearer commitment by all provinces to collaborate on common health care solutions, a stronger commitment by health care providers to work cooperatively with governments and each other, and a greater awareness by patients of how they can more responsibly use our health care system.

The Premier's Health Quality Council has been examining longer-term solutions for health care renewal. They have consulted New Brunswickers and received valuable feedback. The final report of the Council early next year will help provide advice we need to take even further steps to renew health care for New Brunswickers.

Your government will continue to improve access to primary health care services through better utilization of health care providers. First, **the role of registered nurses and registered nursing assistants will be enhanced** in providing front-line services and care to patients. This will follow a comprehensive review of the roles of RNs and RNAs now being undertaken with the nursing community and other health care providers. Strategies to allow **nurses to work to their full scope in all practice settings, including emergency rooms**, will be developed and implemented. This will help improve access to care and reduce waiting times. As well, necessary **legislative changes to foster the introduction of nurse practitioners** in our health care system will also be introduced.

Your government will respond to the Select Committee on Health Care's report on wellness with the tabling of a **comprehensive wellness strategy**. This wellness strategy will be aimed at first, ensuring wellness policies and programs are better co-ordinated across government and, second, setting out priorities for action aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles in schools and communities.

### **Securing Educational Opportunities**

Investing in education is an investment in our future. Since taking office, your government has invested more in education, in our school system, in our universities, and in our students than ever before. It will continue to do so. Therefore, the education budget will be increased once again next year as a further demonstration of your government's commitment to education and the need to secure educational opportunities for New Brunswickers.

Over the past year, a new education governance structure was put in place to empower people and communities. This was a crucial step to improving our education system. As a next step, **an improved accountability framework** will be implemented to give parents, educators, and students a more systematic picture of school and district performance under the new District Education Councils. It will assist in measuring progress in meeting provincial education standards.

To further strengthen French second language programs, a **new Intensive Core French program** for Grade 5 students in the anglophone school system will be piloted.

To improve access to post-secondary education for those most in need, your government will implement the next phase of its improved **financial assistance initiatives of bursaries and scholarships**.

Steps will be taken to begin to **expand the Healthy Learners program to grades 6-8** to help students acquire basic health knowledge in support of healthy decision-making.

### **Securing our Families' Future**

Your government believes in the importance of strong, secure families. Significant steps have been taken over the past two years to improve programs and services for families, women, and children. Your government will take even more steps to help secure the future of New Brunswick families through **six new initiatives**.

First, a **special adoption project for children** in the permanent care of the Minister of Family and Community Services will be undertaken.

Second, **year two of your government's Early Childhood Agenda** will be implemented involving additional supports for child care, early

childhood intervention, community capacity building, and early language development.

Third, **amendments to reciprocal enforcement maintenance legislation** will be introduced to reduce waiting times and procedural burdens associated with the enforcement of inter-provincial child support orders.

Fourth, a comprehensive series of **amendments to the Pension Benefits Act** will be introduced to modernize our pension system for private sector employees and ensure the pension promise is kept.

Fifth, steps to reduce violence against women will be undertaken as part of your government's **response to the report of the Minister's Working Group on Violence Against Women**.

Sixth, the role and operations of the **Advisory Council on the Status of Women** will be strengthened through amendments to the act governing the council.

### **Securing our Environment**

An important goal for your government is to leave a legacy to our children of a more clean, secure environment. Securing our environment, by protecting and enhancing it, ensures a better quality of life for us all.

That's why your government has already taken a number of significant measures to secure our environment since taking office. These include new steps to protect watersheds, well fields, and groundwater supplies for which the Government of New Brunswick has won an international groundwater protection award. Over 80 per cent of funding under the Canada/New Brunswick infrastructure agreement has thus far been directed to "green infrastructure" projects. A new Protected Areas Strategy is in place. The province has signed a regional climate change action plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with the Conference of New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers.

Your government believes more steps should be taken to secure our environment for future generations. It will do so through **seven new initiatives**.

First, a provincial **action plan for waste reduction and diversion** will be unveiled.

Second, proposed provincial policies for **wetlands conservation and coastal zone protection** will be released for public input.

Third, legislation to give effect to the government's **Protected Areas Strategy** will be introduced.

Fourth, a **climate change discussion paper** will be released next year as part of the process of receiving public input into the development of a provincial climate change action plan as set out in the province's Energy Policy.

Fifth, amendments to the *Clean Environment Act*, *Clean Water Act*, and the *Clean Air Act* will be introduced to ensure **consistency in environmental order-making authority**.

Sixth, additional steps will be taken to **protect public drinking water supplies** for New Brunswickers.

Seventh, New Brunswick will once again take a leadership role to ensure the **sustainable development of New Brunswick's forests** through the greater recognition of our province's forest management practices.

#### **Securing our Energy Future**

A secure and reliable supply of energy to New Brunswick consumers and businesses is essential to our future as a province. The Energy Policy released in January sets out a comprehensive, 10-year approach to meet our energy needs.

As part of your government's controlled and deliberate approach to electricity market reform, **amendments to the *Electric Power Act*** will be introduced to allow for private, non-utility power generation consistent with the Energy Policy. **Amendments to the *Public Utilities Act*** will also be introduced to strengthen the Public Utilities Board's capabilities to serve as an effective regulator in a more open, competitive marketplace, as set out in the Energy Policy.

During this session, the Minister of Natural Resources and Energy will provide an update to the Legislative Assembly on N.B. Power, the work of the Market Design Committee, and issues affecting electricity competition in New Brunswick and North America.

#### **Securing New Brunswick's Place in Canada**

New Brunswickers are proud Canadians. We believe in our province, but we believe even more in our country. We subscribe to the "Canadian Ideal": an ideal of a country built on values like tolerance, respect, sharing, and fairness. Securing New Brunswick's place in Canada as a leader and a model for this ideal requires leadership from us all.

Each province strengthens the "Canadian Ideal" through the unique dimensions it brings to Canada. For us in New Brunswick, one particular dimension is that of being Canada's only officially bilingual province. The current *Official Languages Act* was adopted in 1969 and has remained virtually unchanged despite the adoption of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982. Your government will

continue its work to **ensure New Brunswick's *Official Languages Act* meets the required constitutional obligations.**

New Brunswick has a unique and vibrant culture flowing from our history, our communities, and the people themselves, particularly artists and cultural professionals. The cultural sector contributes to the economy and enhances our quality of life. To further strengthen our cultural sector, your government will release New Brunswick's first-ever **comprehensive cultural policy.**

New Brunswick has become an increasingly influential partner on the federal-provincial stage. We recognize the value of working together with the federal government to the benefit of our citizens. At the same time, we are committed to the idea that provinces must demonstrate leadership by working more closely together in areas for which we are constitutionally responsible. At the regional level we are already working more closely than ever with the other three Atlantic provinces, our New England neighbours, and the province of Quebec. These partnerships have led to real gains for New Brunswickers and advances in co-operative federalism.

Your government will take an additional step in this regard by creating a **Maine/New Brunswick Legislators' Forum** for elected members representing constituencies and districts along our border. At this particular time of common concern and need, this forum will help strengthen our close relationship with our Maine neighbour.

Your government will continue to demonstrate leadership on federal/provincial issues to bring about a stronger level of co-operative federalism throughout Canada.

### **Conclusion**

The initiatives set out in this year's Speech from the Throne are designed to "Secure Our Future" as a province.

As the session progresses, ministers will provide more details on policy and program initiatives set out in the Speech from the Throne. A series of other proposed legislative amendments will also be introduced.

The government's response to the report of the Judicial Remuneration Commission will be tabled, and a second annual Progress Report to New Brunswickers will be released to enhance accountability to New Brunswickers.

During this session, Members of the Legislative Assembly will be asked to review and approve supplementary estimates for the current fiscal year, a budget presented by the Minister of Finance, a Statement of Estimated Revenues and Expenses, and Capital Account appropriations for the 2002-2003 fiscal year.

This year's Speech from the Throne sets out your government's plans to secure our future.

May divine providence guide you in your deliberations.

Her Honour then retired from the Chamber.

Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.

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Ordered that Hon. Mr. Lord, Premier, have leave to introduce a Bill entitled *An Act to Perpetuate a Certain Ancient Right*. (Bill 1)

He accordingly presented the said Bill to the House and the same was received and read the first time.

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The Speaker then informed the House that in order to prevent mistakes he had obtained a copy of Her Honour's speech, which he offered to read. (Reading dispensed.)

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On motion of Ms. Poirier, seconded by Mr. Holder,

RESOLVED, that the speech of Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor be forthwith taken into consideration.

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Ms. Poirier, a Member for the electoral district of Rogersville-Kouchibouguac, proposed an Address to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor in answer to the speech, which she read in her place, and being seconded by Mr. Holder, a Member for the electoral district of Saint John Portland, it was handed to the Chair where it was again read and is as follows:

Fredericton, N.B.  
November 20, 2001.

To Her Honour,  
The Honourable Marilyn Trenholme Counsell,  
Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of New Brunswick.

May It Please Your Honour:

We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of New Brunswick, now in session, beg leave to extend our humble thanks to Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has addressed to us, and we assure Your Honour that all matters which may be submitted to us during the session will receive our most careful attention and consideration.

And a debate arising thereon, unanimous consent was granted for Ms. Poirier, the Member for Rogersville-Kouchibouguac to address the Assembly from a seat other than her own.

And the debate continuing, after some further time, it was on motion of Mr. Richard, the Leader of the Opposition and the Member for the electoral district of Shediac-Cap-Pelé, adjourned over.

And then, 4.13 o'clock p.m., the House adjourned.