

ADMINISTRATOR (Honourable David B. Orsborn): Members of the House of Assembly, I have it in command of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor to acquaint you that it is not convenient that the purposes for which he has called the General Assembly together should be declared until the Members of the House of Assembly have chosen a Speaker. It is therefore His Honour's will that you, the Members of the House of Assembly, do proceed to the election of a Speaker.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: All rise, please.

[His Honour the Administrator leaves the Chamber]

CLERK: Please be seated.

At the close of nominations for the Office of Speaker at 4:30 yesterday, two candidates put their names forward: Mr. Tom Osborne and Mr. Ross Wiseman. Mr. Tom Osborne has since withdrawn his candidacy. Accordingly, further to suborder 4 (4) of the Standing Orders, I declare Mr. Ross Wiseman elected as Speaker for the Forty-Seventh General Assembly.

[Applause]

[The hon. the Premier and the hon. the Leader of the Official Opposition lead Mr. Wiseman to the Speaker's Chair]

MR. SPEAKER (Wiseman): Ladies and gentlemen of the House, thank you very much.

Please be seated.

[Laughter]

MR. SPEAKER: That was my first order of business.

Ladies and gentlemen of the House, thank you very much. It is indeed an honour to be elected as the Speaker of this House, this great Assembly.

For those of you who were sworn in this morning for the first time, this is your first opportunity to sit in this House. After being here for eleven-and-a-half years, I can tell you it is truly an honour to sit here and to represent the people of your constituencies.

You will find that your experience here will be a rewarding one, challenging on occasion but a very rewarding one. For those of you who are returning, congratulations on your re-election.

This is about to start a new session of the Legislature and I really wanted to take this opportunity to welcome you all back. For the new people coming in, congratulations on your success.

I want to acknowledge as well the outgoing Speaker, the former Member for Bonavista South, in the Speaker's gallery.

[Applause]

MR. SPEAKER: I want to acknowledge, in the gallery today, my parents Victor and Pearl Wiseman, my daughter Melissa Mulrooney, and my wife Sandra who has been a strong supporter of mine for the last eleven-and-a-half years. In fact, you might find this hard to believe but she supports me more than you people do.

[Applause]

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much for being here today and helping us celebrate this wonderful afternoon.

This Legislature is a wonderful place to be, and it is always an honour to be here and to represent our constituents, but we do not do our jobs without a lot of support. I really want to thank Elizabeth Gallagher for coming back today and acting as our Sergeant-at-Arms.

[Applause]

MR. SPEAKER: For those of us who have been here before, you will recall that Elizabeth retired in the spring; but she agreed to come back today, for this one day, for this ceremony. So thank you, Elizabeth, for that.

We have all witnessed her fourteen years of dedicated service, and her commitment to the task at hand was always recognized.

I always wondered, Elizabeth, how you would sometimes sit there for hours upon end listening to what was sometimes very spirited debate and sometimes not-so-spirited debate, but you had patience and tolerance through all that period.

Thank you for the tremendous service, not just to this Legislature but to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, and thank you for coming back today (inaudible).

[Applause]

MR. SPEAKER: For those of you who have been around to experience some of my time here during the last eleven years, you must have been somewhat surprised to know that I wanted to become the Speaker of the House of Assembly where brevity is the order of the day and you will hear me frequently call you to task and tell you your time has run out. So do not get any ideas that now you will be at liberty to speak on end just because I am the Speaker. It is one of those practices: Do as I say rather than do as I do.

I look forward to the opportunity to serve this House. I look forward to the opportunity to continue to serve the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. I look forward to the co-operation and support continuing from all sides of this House as we move into the next session of the Legislature.

With that, I do thank you and look forward to working with all of you, all three Parties, in a very co-operative way as we move forward.

There has been lots said about the House, how we function, how we do not function, but I think there is one thing that is really important. All of us here have one thing at heart, a single focus: to serve the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. I think it is an obligation of all of us to come together in this Legislature to serve their best interests.

My role as the Speaker is to try to facilitate that process and help the debate, help the discussion, move forward in the best interests of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Again, thank you for your support. I look forward to working with all Parties and all individuals in this Legislature. Have a wonderful afternoon.

[Applause]