



CPA Activities: *The Canadian Scene*

New Speaker in New Brunswick

John Bradley McKay was elected Speaker of the New Brunswick Legislative Assembly in November 1997. He was born June 8, 1948 at Newcastle, New Brunswick, the son of William John McKay and Elmira Scott.

He received his early education at Harkins Academy and attended the New Brunswick Teachers' College. He later graduated from the University of New Brunswick.

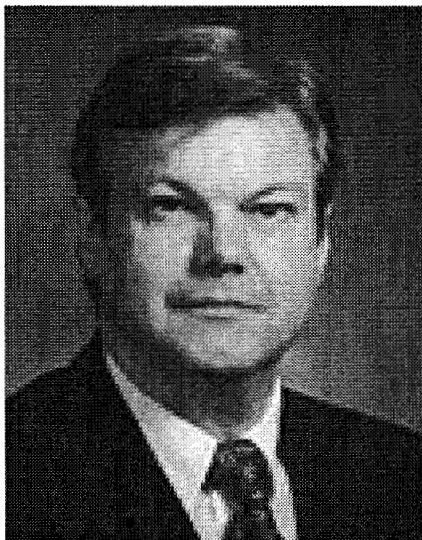
A teacher, Mr. McKay was first elected to the legislature on November 18, 1974 to represent the Liberal Party in the new single-member riding of Miramichi-Newcastle. Re-elected October 23, 1978, he served four years as Financial Critic. He was reelected in 1987 and 1991. After a provincial redistribution, he was reelected in 1995 to represent the new constituency of Miramichi Centre.

He served on the legislature's Standing Committees on Agriculture, Natural Resources and Fisheries; Contingencies; Crown Corporations; Energy; Law Amendments; Legislative Administration; Municipalities and Corporations; Natural Resources; Private Bills; Procedure; Public Accounts, and Standing Rules. He served on the Select Committee on Renewable Resources and the Special Committee on Economic Policy Development. He was a member of the Standing Committees on Privileges

and from 1989 to 1997 he was Chairman of Government Caucus.

On November 4, 1997 Mr McKay was elected Speaker of the 53rd Legislature. As Speaker, he chairs the Legislative Administration Committee.

A Newcastle town councillor for nine years, Mr. McKay was chairman of the Finance Committee, deputy mayor, and he was elected



mayor in 1986. He has been president of the Miramichi Airport Commission, vice-president and director of the Miramichi Agricultural Exhibition Association, member of the Miramichi Hospital Board, director of Big Brothers, director of the Miramichi Planning District Commission, and president

of the North Shore Trotting Association.

Mr. McKay is past president of the Miramichi Historical Society, former director of the French Fort Cove Development Commission, former director of the Northumberland Organization of the Disabled and a member of the Newcastle Rotary Club.

Canadian Presiding Officers Conference

The Annual Meeting of the individuals who preside over Canadian legislative assemblies took place in Victoria British Columbia from January 15-18, 1998. The host of the Conference was Speaker **Dale Lovick** of British Columbia. There were nine business sessions, three of which were round table discussions with presentations on developments in each jurisdiction. Every Speaker or Deputy Speaker was given an opportunity to outline important rulings or other procedural issues during the last year.

On Saturday morning Speaker Lovick chaired an Oxford style debate on the following topic:

BE IT RESOLVED that parliamentary reform is the sole prerogative of the government in consultation with opposition parties (and initiatives for reform are not the domain of Speakers or Officers of the House).

Debating the affirmative were **Gretchen Brewin**, Deputy Speaker in British Columbia, Speaker **Chris**

Stockwell of Ontario and **Patrick Michael**, Clerk of the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

Opposing them were **Peter Miliken**, Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons, Speaker **Wilbur MacDonald** of Prince Edward Island and **Loredana Catalli-Sonier**, Clerk of the New Brunswick Legislative Assembly.

There were also sessions on

- The Speaker's Latitude as an MLA
- the Structure and Operation of the Parliamentary Committee System
- Issues Relating to Private Members' Business
- Speaker's private consultation regarding business of the house, decorum and procedural issues
- How a Ruling is Prepared.

Each session began with a short presentation by a Clerk or House officer. The presenters included

David Hamilton, Clerk of the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly, **Lucie Giguère**, procedural advisor with the Quebec National Assembly, **Robert Walsh**, General Legislative Counsel with the House of Commons, **Glenn Hagel**, Speaker of the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly and **Claude DesRosiers**, Clerk of the Ontario Legislative Assembly.

As usual this small gathering of presiding officers and officials was very useful for new and even experienced Speakers and Deputy Speakers. Such meetings go a long way to assuring legislators (and Canadians generally) that the presiding officers of our legislative assemblies take a serious and professional approach to their duties. When they are called upon to make a ruling they do so in accordance with precedent and in light of the

best non partisan advice available to them.

Upcoming CPA Events

The following is a list of some CPA activities that will be taking place during 1998.

- The Canadian Regional Conference of CPA will be held in Toronto from July 11-17
- The Canadian Regional Seminar will be held in Alberta in November
- The Centre for Legislative Exchange is once again organizing a visit to Washington in the fall of 1998. The focus will be on educational policy.
- At the international level the CPA conference will be held in New Zealand this year. A Commonwealth-wide parliamentary seminar will be held in Prince Edward Island in June 1998.