

## SPEAKING NOTES

Hon. Shawn Graham, Premier of New Brunswick  
Swearing-In – October 3, 2006

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Your Honour, distinguished guests, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen and fellow New Brunswickers: I want to thank you for sharing this special and historic occasion with us.

Before I begin today I want to pay tribute to two gentlemen who have passed away recently but who have left a great legacy of public service to our province. On September 24, Charles Hughes passed away at the age of 97. He had served as Chief Justice of New Brunswick from 1972 to 1984.

And last week, we mourned the passing of former MLA Ernest Richard who was first elected in 1948 when in his mid-20s. He had a distinguished career as an elected official and after he left office, he continued to be a mentor to young politicians.

I want to take a moment to reflect on the legacy left by these two New Brunswickers and the offer their friends and families our most sincere sympathies.

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Ladies and gentlemen, I want to thank the people of Kent County who have supported me for eight years. My parents, you taught me that there is no greater privilege than to serve your fellow citizens. Thank you. And to my wife, Roxanne, without your love and support, none of this is possible.

I want to acknowledge our outgoing Premier, Bernard Lord, and his caucus. We are united by far more than divides us; our love for New Brunswick outweighs our partisan differences. Mr. Premier, thank you for your commitment to our province and thank you for your cooperation during this transition.

I want to take a moment to speak to the 28 men and women who will form our new government. I am so proud of each of you. But I also want to impress upon you the important and rare duty being placed on you today. From day one we will govern boldly and fairly and wisely. It is not enough for us to set the highest standards in our province; we will set the highest standards in the country.

We serve our Province not merely through a series of grand gestures but rather through each action and each decision we make. Approach your duties with the greatest diligence, the strongest sense of purpose and the clearest commitment to put the interests of New Brunswickers first.

Above all, I want to thank the people of New Brunswick. I am aware of the great trust that you have placed in us and I pledge to you that I will strive to be worthy of that trust every day that I serve as your Premier.

We have worked tirelessly to earn your trust. Now we will work tirelessly to keep it.

Fellow New Brunswickers, we will need your help, we will need your ideas and your energy and we will need your understanding. There will be times when difficult decisions will have to be made. There will be times when you will not always agree with us. That is the risk we run in charting a new course for our province. I cannot promise that you will always agree with our decisions, but I pledge that I will always be open with you about why we are making them.

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Standing here today, I can't help but think back to my early visits to this Chamber. As a young boy, sitting in my father's chair just over there, I was in awe of this room. Today, I still am. This is a chamber full of history and full of possibility; it has been a meeting place for generations before us and it will welcome generations long after we have gone. Decisions made here have changed the face of our province and there will be choices to come that we've not yet imagined.

Governments come and go, but two words remain through the history of our province: Hope restored.

Ours is a province built on hope. Our First Nations people, the Acadians, the Loyalists and wave after wave of new immigrants – this is a province built by people who dared to imagine a better life.

Hope restored is not simply a motto in New Brunswick; it is a way of life.

It demonstrates itself in the smallest of ways.

A few days after the election, Roxanne and I attended a church supper and afterwards, we stopped by the home of a lady in my riding. She has been battling diabetes for some time. It was a struggle to make ends meet before that diagnosis. She couldn't afford the expense to travel to Moncton for dialysis. And a few months ago, the disease took her eyesight in one eye.

But she doesn't expect miracles. She just wants someone to listen. She wants government to do better. She believes that we can do better. She has every reason to feel despair but instead she chose hope.

Our government will continue to choose hope each and every day. We will not lose a moment to fear or complacency. Ours will be a government based on hope and hard work.

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Our *Charter for Change* sets out the foundation for a better future.

Our goals are lofty, our vision is bold.

We will put New Brunswick on the road to self-sufficiency. We will work with our teachers to build the best education system in this country. We will be a North American leader in energy generation and conservation. And we will make economic development a priority again.

I don't want to waste a moment. In a few minutes we will head into our first cabinet meeting. There we will implement new policies for seniors, new support for students and new consumer-relief at the gas pumps.

We have been given four years to shape the future of New Brunswick and I want to know that we approached each day with a strong sense of purpose and a bold vision.

Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for your support. I thank you for your trust.

I pledge to do my best each and every day.

And I invite you all to join with us as we build a stronger New Brunswick!