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Subject : Telegram - Marshall promises more than a 'caretaker government'

## Marshall promises more than a 'caretaker government'

Marshall wants public to 'open up to us'

25 Jan 2014 The Telegram (St. John's) BY JAMES MCLEOD THE TELEGRAM

Shortly after he was sworn in Friday, a reporter asked Premier Tom Marshall what he needs to do to make the PC party more popular. "Govern well," he said. "Anything else?" the reporter asked. "Listen to the people," he said. Marshall became the province's 11th premier at a short ceremony in Government House on Friday, and while he's only expected to hold office for a few months, he said he intends to keep things moving.

"We're not just a caretaker government," Marshall said. "Our main job is to reassure the public that government is continuing unabated, that we're carrying on with the budget, that we're carrying on with the legislative session."

In that vein, Natural Resources Minister Derrick Dalley told reporters Friday morning that he'll make a decision on a third power line from Churchill Falls to Labrador West within the next week or so — a costly infrastructure project expected to facilitate mining development in the region. Marshall was thrust into the premier's office this week when Kathy Dunderdale announced her resignation on Wednesday morning.

He said quite firmly that he's got no plans to spend a long time in the premier's office; he'll hold the job for the next few months, while the PC party holds a contest for a new permanent leader.

Marshall used his speech Friday to talk about inequality in society, especially set against the backdrop of the current oil boom.

"Let the motto of my administration be the words in Deuteronomy that Moses used to set the highest standards for all who would serve in public office: 'Justice,' he said, 'justice shall you pursue.' So it is therefore very important for me that all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians shall share fully and fairly in the benefits of our newfound prosperity, and have a voice in the way it is distributed. So let us ensure that the fight against poverty and inequality intensifies in our province, and we never forget the needs of those who are aged, who have disabilities, who are infirm, and who live on low and fixed incomes."

Marshall also said he wants the government he leads to be more responsive to the citizens of the province.

"I only ask that you work with us and that you open up to us. If we're doing something right, tell us," he said.

"If we're doing something wrong and need to do better, tell us. We will never promise what we cannot deliver, but what I will promise you is my full attention, my best judgment and my tireless service."

When it comes to the nuts and bolts of governing, Marshall said he's still getting up to speed, and he'll be doing a cabinet shuffle next week to fill the Minister of Finance portfolio, which he held until he got promoted to the premier's office.

There may be some other gaps to fill, too. Marshall said that any ministers planning to run in the PC party leadership race will need to step down during the campaign.

"Our party is now going to go through a very exciting process of renewal, and we'll see what happens. At this point, there just hasn't been enough time," he said. "The process won't be that long."

Dunderdale was nowhere to be seen Friday morning, but Marshall took a moment to thank her for her three years as premier.

"Kathy Dunderdale has earned my admiration as one of the finest, most dedicated, capable and compassionate people I have ever had the pleasure of working beside," he said.

"As my first act as premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, allow me, on behalf of our people, to thank Kathy Dunderdale for her dedication and remarkable service."