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PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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Speaker: Hon. Kathleen M. Casey

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MATTERS OF PRIVILEGE AND RECOGNITION OF GUESTS	1222
STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS	1225
VERNON RIVER-STRATFORD (Tween Bays Farm-Master Breeds Award)	1225
TYNE VALLEY-LINKLETTER (Tyne Valley Fire Department Long Service Awards)	1226
MONTAGUE-KILMUIR (Recognizing Colton Matheson)	1226
ORAL QUESTIONS	1227
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Use of Proceeds Agreement)	1227
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Review by DM of PNP Files)	1230
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Process of Ensuring Compliance with Use of Proceeds Agreement)	1231
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Use of Proceeds Agreement and Stone Depot)	1232
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Use of Proceeds Agreement and Pat's Retail)	1233
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Review by DM of PNP Files-further)	1235
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Use of Proceeds Agreement and Pat's Retail-further)	1235
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Use of Proceeds Agreement and Dumville Restaurants)	1237
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Use of Proceeds Agreement Wording)	1237
WEST ROYALTY-SPRINGVALE (Transfer of Jobs from Milton to Tignish)	1238
TYNE VALLEY-LINKLETTER (Assessment Tools for Kindergarten System)	1240
GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS (ITSS Contract)	1241
STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS	1245
TOURISM AND CULTURE (Tourism Workshops)	1245
INNOVATION AND ADVANCED LEARNING (Quickstart Global)	1245
TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL (Dump and Run at UPEI)	1246
ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY AND FORESTRY (Pesticide Usage and Information Sessions)	1247
HEALTH AND WELLNESS (Community Stakeholder Forum)	1248
EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND ATTORNEY GENERAL (2010 Regional Conference on Learning Disabilities)	1249
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS	1249
GOVERNMENT MOTIONS	1250
MOTION 49 (Event Marking the Passing of Canada's Last Known First World War Veteran The End of an Era)	1250
PREMIER	1251
SUMMERSIDE-ST. ELEANORS	1252
KELLYS CROSS-CUMBERLAND	1253
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION	1253
WEST ROYALTY-SPRINGVALE	1254

D

R

A

<i>H</i>	VERNON RIVER-STRATFORD	1255	
	CHARLOTTETOWN-SHERWOOD	1256	
	HEALTH AND WELLNESS	1257	
	AGRICULTURE AND DEPUTY PREMIER	1259	
	MONTAGUE-KILMUIR	1260	
	TOURISM AND CULTURE	1261	
	ALBERTON-ROSEVILLE	1262	
	STRATFORD KINLOCK	1262	
	COMMUNITY SERVICES, SENIORS AND LABOUR	1263	
	EVANGELINE-MISCOUCHE	1264	
<i>A</i>	TYNE VALLEY-LINKLETTER	1265	
	BELFAST-MURRAY RIVER	1265	
	EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND ATTORNEY GENERAL	1266	
	GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS	1266	
	ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY AND FORESTRY	1267	
	INNOVATION AND ADVANCED LEARNING	1267	
	FINANCE AND MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS	1268	
	PREMIER	1269	
	<i>N</i>	MOTION 18 (Regional Red Meat Industry)	1270
		AGRICULTURE AND DEPUTY PREMIER	1270
VERNON RIVER-STRATFORD		1272	
ADJOURNED	1274		

S

A

R

D

The Legislature sat at 10:00 a.m.

Matters of Privilege and Recognition of
Guests

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier Ghiz: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome everyone to the gallery. I know for a fact that there is someone who is probably going to be in the gallery who didn't step in yet, probably doesn't want me to recognize them, but I saw Paul MacNeill in the hallway, who happens to be my biggest fan, and I'd like to welcome him when he comes back into the House a little later on.

Later on today I will be moving a motion, and there will be a ceremony out in front of Province House marking the end of an era, and this is with the passing of Canada's last First World War Veteran. February 18th, John Babcock passed away at the age of 109 and this will be an opportunity for all of us to mark this end of an era for those who helped provide the freedom that we enjoy today. I encourage everyone to join us outside in front of Province House at 1:00 p.m. today.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'd like to rise and welcome our guests in the gallery and to the visitors watching us at home. I'd like to wish everybody a good season from the agriculture community, aquaculture and certainly fishing.

(Indistinct) as well.

Thank you and have a great day.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Gallant: I, too, would like to rise and welcome everyone to the gallery, and a special welcome to Dick Arsenault from the wonderful District of Evangeline-Miscouche. I would also like to say hello to everyone at home in the District of Evangeline-Miscouche.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development and Attorney General.

Mr. D. Currie: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I'd like to welcome all guests in the gallery today, and also a special hello to my constituents in Charlottetown-Parkdale who watch faithfully, and also a special hello to some seniors that watch in my seniors' units in my district as well.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Sheridan: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I'd like to rise this morning on this fine Friday and wish everyone a wonderful weekend up in the great District 20 Kensington-Malpeque. We have George Hunter representing our district here in the

gallery today. A couple of students in Kensington at the high school started a great campaign this past week called Plan Not to Tan, which was I thought was a great initiative on their behalf. Kathleen Murphy and Chelsey Christensen gave away a couple of passes to the prom as a draw to those that would sign up and say they would not go and tan with the tanning bed for this prom. I thought it was brilliant. We all know the dangers that exist with those beds.

So my cap is off to them, and keep up those great initiatives from the young folk. We love it.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Tourism and Culture.

Mr. Vessey: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I, too, would like to welcome everyone to the gallery today. A good friend of mine, Wayne MacMillan's, with us today. Wayne drops in now and again and I hope you enjoy the proceedings today.

I'd also like to say hello to four former residents of York that tune in from Whisperwood on EastLink Cable 10: Ira Lewis, Helen Ready, Anne Crockett and Katie Vanekris. I hope you enjoy the proceedings today.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Community Services, Seniors and Labour.

Ms. Sherry: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I would also like to rise this morning and welcome all those that are in the gallery here, and to say a special hello to all the residents in the constituency of Summerside-Wilmot. I wish them a safe and

happy weekend.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Deputy Premier.

Mr. Webster: Madam Speaker, I, too, would like to rise today in the House and welcome everyone in the gallery, especially Dick Arsenault.

Dick is the gentleman that ended up installing the cob pellet burner for the Evangeline high school as a pilot project, and it's working fabulous. We investigated that and the system is great, and he's trying to promote some of those units further than that.

I'd like to extend a welcome to all those out watching on EastLink and all the people across PEI that are enjoying what happens in the House here. I wish them well.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Sherwood.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'd like to begin by welcoming all viewers today on EastLink from the Sherwood area. I hope you enjoy your weekend.

I'd also like to welcome those to the gallery today. I see several familiar faces. Mr. Arsenault, who recently took it easy on me in the hockey tournament which I appreciated very much. Eddie Lund is with us again today, and a good friend of mine, Wayne MacMillan, is here today. It's very fitting with the motion that's coming on the floor a little later. Wayne spent many years in service with the military, so it's great to

have you here today, Wayne.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

Mr. MacKinley: I want to welcome everybody to the gallery here today. I want to welcome the media back to cover the House and also like to recognize Teresa Wright, a reporter from the *Guardian*, who is up for the Jim MacNeill award in Halifax. Let's hope she wins it. She does a great job of reporting. I hope she follows in Jim MacNeill's footsteps, because actually he was about the only real investigative journalist that we had in PEI in a long time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Ms. Dunsford: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Welcome everyone in the gallery and those watching at home on EastLink. I would especially like to say hello to Don Fraser from the Confederation Centre of the Arts, who everyone knows is the music director there and has a very successful children's choir program, an adult choir program too. They recently held a fund-raising dinner, it was a great success, and I just wanted to bring it to the House's attention and be reminded of the great work that Don Fraser from Stratford does, and to all the kids in the choir too. They're planning a trip to New York very shortly and they're getting ready for that, so safe travels to them.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from

Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I rise today and welcome everyone to the gallery. I also rise and say best wishes to my mother-in-law. She is very sick right now with the flu. My wife just went up today to spend some time with her, so hopefully they're watching and that's she's feeling better and she will be feeling better in the next few days.

So with that, I hope everybody enjoys the proceedings.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Summerside-St. Eleanors.

Mr. Greenan: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I, too, would like to rise today to welcome all the people here in the gallery and say a special hello to the good people of Summerside-St. Eleanors who are watching on EastLink. Also, I wish to extend birthday greetings to my son, Mark, who was a Page here in the Legislature some years ago. He is 29 today.

Also, I know the hon. Minister of Community Services, Seniors and Labour would join me in extending condolences to the family of Darlene Craig who passed away this weekend. She was a great citizen for the city of Summerside.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Vernon River-Stratford.

Mr. McIsaac: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I'd like to welcome everyone to the gallery this morning and say hello to my constituents out in Vernon River-Stratford.

Just want to make note of an event I attended last night with the Member from West Royalty-Springvale and with the minister of agriculture, and that was the Honouring Excellence in Agriculture the federation put on at the Charlottetown Hotel. Just an absolutely fascinating and fantastic evening that they put on. A great dinner. To see the people who received these awards for environmental stewardship of the land, for best employer, top employee, things like that - it's nice to see these people recognized in our number one industry in the province.

So I congratulate the PEI Federation of Agriculture and all the winners of the awards last night.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from West Royalty-Springvale.

Mr. Dumville: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I, too, would like to echo the comments of the Member from Vernon River-Stratford. Like to welcome everybody to the gallery here today, especially Eddie Lund. He's faithfully here every day. I'd like to say hello to the constituents out in West Royalty-Springvale, and especially to Brian Andrew who had a mishap last weekend, but he's just fine. He's doing well. My best wishes go out to Brian and the staff.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Statements by Members

Speaker: The hon. Member from Vernon River-Stratford.

Tween Bays Farm Master Breeder Award

Mr. McIsaac: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I am pleased to rise in this House today and announce that we have yet another national winner here in Prince Edward Island. This evening at the Holstein Canada's 127th Annual Convention in Quebec, one of our Island's prominent dairy farm families will be honoured with a most prestigious recognition.

Tween Bay Farms of Earnscliffe, in the heart of Vernon River-Stratford, is being awarded with their Master Breeder Shield. This is the highest award that a dairy farmer can receive from our national Holstein association.

Listening and absorbing information from notable dairy producers and industry reps has aided Blair Tweedy in making wise breeding decisions. A good quality life is shared with his wife Debbie and involved children Katelyn, Matthew, Jillian and Christiana.

The Tween Bay Farms is well known for breeding strong, deep bodied foundation cows. Showing flashy, homebred, 4-H calves has netted their family farm All-Atlantic, All-Canadian, and All-American nominations and awards.

This marks six years in a row that a dairy farmer from our small Province has garnered this award. This is unprecedented across our country considering our size. This success has not gone unnoticed by dairy farmers in the other provinces as is seen by their great interest in obtaining our Island Holstein genetics.

Prince Edward Island Holsteins have become a highly sought after commodity and this is because of great leaders in our dairy industry such as the Tweedy family.

It is with a great deal of pride and admiration that I congratulate the Tweedy family on their national recognition, and I ask all hon. members to join me in recognizing their achievement.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Tyne Valley-Linkletter.

Tyne Valley Fire Department service awards

Ms. Biggar: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It is my pleasure this morning to recognize five members of the Tyne Valley Fire Department whose combined service totals 90 years.

The Tyne Valley Fire Department is the second-largest fire department on Prince Edward Island in geographical coverage, which includes 22 communities in the Tyne Valley region.

Tomorrow night I will have the pleasure of attending the Tyne Valley Firemen Annual Dinner which will honour these firemen and, in fact, all the department members.

Fire Chief Lowell Palmer of Conway has completed 15 years of service; Elzie Smith, Bideford, 30 years; Shawn Ellis, Northam, 15 years; William Bishop, Tyne Valley, 15 years and Dale Strongman of Poplar Grove, 15 years.

I offer a sincere thanks to these dedicated volunteer firemen for their service to our community.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Recognizing Colton Matheson

Mr. Bagnall: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'm pleased to rise today in recognition of an outstanding young gentleman from my great District of Montague-Kilmuir. Colton Matheson was named as the 2010 Easter Seals PEI Ambassador this past winter. Colton is a 12-year-old student from Montague who is currently in grade 6.

Colton, who says his motto is Feel the Joy!, had an extremely busy, and successful, few months. For the campaign, Colton travelled across the Island visiting schools, trade shows, and other events.

Colton's hard work heading up this campaign truly paid off. The total amount that was raised for this year's Easter Seals Campaign was \$170,131. This is an incredible amount of money raised for an incredible cause, and it beat the all-time record that was set in 2007. So it's refreshing to see Islanders stepping up to donate to a worthy cause in such large numbers even during such difficult economic times.

All the volunteers who helped make this event possible also need to be commended. I also hear that Colton, who is an accomplished musician, delighted the crowd with his piano playing skills during the event.

I ask all members of this House to join me in congratulating Mr. Colton Matheson, and all of the organizers of the Easter Seals Telethon, for their incredible work this past

year.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Responses to Questions Taken As Notice

Questions by Members

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Use of Proceeds Agreement

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

My first question this morning is to the Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning. Minister, the Auditor General reported that the province implemented a Use of Proceeds Agreement between businesses and IIDI in October of 2007. Would you please update the House on how many of these agreements were actually signed?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I'd have to go back to staff to get the exact number. I think it was somewhere in the neighbourhood of 600 or 650, but I will get that number and bring it back for the Leader of the Opposition.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I look forward to having that number back by Tuesday. Islanders continue to be quite

disgusted with the mismanagement in this program. The Auditor General mentions that there was different wording in these agreements that were on file. Mr. Minister, why would you have different wording in agreement?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Certainly, we're pleased as a government to actually have an agreement and have a Use of Proceeds Agreement, and I compliment the staff for their initiative.

As any program evolves or changes, changes are made. Yes, we take the work of the Auditor General very seriously. He's made a series of recommendations. We're responding to those recommendation. Each and every one of those recommendations are being implemented.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It's ironic. This tool could have been a good tool to enforce accountability, but it appears it became another tool to help provide prosperity for a very privileged few. My question is: Why was there different wording on those agreements?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I'm not sure what that Leader of the

Opposition's referring to as providing prosperity to a chosen few. As I indicated, I believe there's in excess of 600 to 700 Use of Proceeds Agreements. I don't see how that's a chosen few.

But again, as programs change and programs evolve, changes are made. We've reviewed all the recommendations of the Auditor General, take them very seriously, and those recommendations are being implemented.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

You were briefed on the Auditor General's report and these particular issues in January of 2009. The report's been out for a long while. Everybody agrees that it'd be nice to get to the bottom of the issues so perhaps we might be able to move forward. But my question to you this morning is: Why did you have different wording on the agreements? Why would you do that? And what's in the different wording?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

As I indicated, it's great to have a Use of Proceeds Agreement attached to this file. It brings accountability, and we're very pleased and very appreciative of the work of the staff at IIDI to bring that forward.

Again, as programs evolve and change over time, changes are made and changes were made. Again, the Auditor General in his recommendations asked for a consistency

and that consistency has been put in place. All policy changes are being approved through the board at IIDI. We very much value the work of the Auditor General and are fully implementing all of his recommendations.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I quote directly in 3.88 of the Auditor General's report: "We noted additional inconsistencies in the wording of certain Agreements." My question to you, Mr. Minister: What is the different wording in the different agreements among those 600 files?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I believe what the Leader of the Opposition is referring to is changes in the Use of Proceeds Agreement with respect to payments to shareholders. Use of Proceeds Agreement has been standardized across the board as per the request of the Auditor General.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you. To the same minister: Out of the 600 files, how many files have different wording?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Again, I'll have to check with staff on that. I'd be pleased to do that and to bring the information back for the Leader of the Opposition.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To the same minister, this is a minister that often talks like his Premier about open, transparent and accountable government. They continue to shut down Public Accounts. My question now: Will the minister bring back to the House an unsigned copy of each Use of Proceeds Agreement that has different words?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Again, I'll check with the senior officials at IIDI and if that information can be brought back, I'll be pleased to bring it back.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: My question to the minister: Why would it not be possible to bring it back?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I didn't indicate that it wasn't possible. I said I would check with staff and if we can,

we'll be pleased to bring the information back.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: To the minister: Are you not the minister of this department?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

The last time I checked, yes, I am.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: To the same minister then. We're asking for you to bring back an unsigned copy of each agreement that's used, a blank copy with no names of each business that you had different agreements on, just what the wording's like. It's up to you as minister, who keeps promising open, transparent and accountable government. Will bring back a copy or not?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

As I indicated, I will check with the senior officials at IIDI. I don't anticipate there's a problem bringing one back, and if that's the case, I'll be pleased to bring one back.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you. To the same minister. Mr. Minister, why would there be a problem? You're the minister that keeps talking that you'd like to move

forward. In fact, in today's paper it sounds like you're starting negotiations on a new program. We know it's about a year since you talked about the first fantasy that you had. You told us at that time that you were in discussions with the federal government, which that proved false.

But anyway, we'll give you the benefit of the doubt. Will you bringing back those copies, the unsigned, on Tuesday to the House?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Again, I didn't indicate that there would be a problem. Only, in fairness, that I would check with staff. If we can do that, I'd be very pleased to bring it back.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It looks like, once again, there's no open, transparent and accountable government here.

Review by DM of PNP files

My next question. In the fall of 2008, in the investment category of PNP, it was closed down. Surely you've had your staff, especially Dr. Michael Mayne, go back and review all the files of MLAs, deputy minister MacMillan, senior staff in your own department that participated in the program, to ensure there was no preferential treatment here, that their Use of Proceeds Agreement was not different than all the other 600 businesses. Did you have Dr. Michael Mayne do that work?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Actually, I believe that work was completed by the Auditor General. He did a fine job and we're very satisfied with his work. Again, as I indicated earlier, he's made a series of recommendations and we're implementing those recommendations.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'm sorry, Mr. Minister, but that doesn't work anymore. The Auditor General has actually said that he did not get to review all those files, and again it comes back to you. You're the manager of this program. It's worth a lot of money to the people of PEI. It was a good program. You're trying to encourage the feds that you're going to have confidence in the people of PEI and the federal government that you can move ahead.

My question to you is: Did you have Dr. Michael Mayne, your deputy, look at these files in particular to ensure there was no preferential treatment? Did you or did you not?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Again, I think it's fair to say that we've gone over and above that. We had the Auditor General, who is the most senior

person responsible for checks and balances here in this province, he reviewed the files, he made recommendations, and we're implementing the recommendations.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker, to the same minister.

We all know the Auditor General did less than 4% of the files. All we're asking is the in the particular files of your MLAs that participated in the program, in your senior people in your own department that participated in the program, on Brook's files, etc., did you have Dr. Michael Mayne go back and review to prove there was no preferential treatment? Six hundred good businesses are in that mix. They'd be quite upset to find out if the agreements for this select few are quite different than their own. Did you have that done?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

The Auditor General in his report indicated that he reviewed the files of all MLAs and deputy ministers. I'm not sure, maybe the Leader of the Opposition didn't have a chance to read the Auditor General's report. I do have a copy here, and if she'd like one I can provide one for her.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Once again, this government really

demonstrates open, transparent and accountable government and really demonstrates how prosperity's for everybody or prosperity for a very few people.

Process of ensuring compliance with Use of Proceeds Agreement

My question is: In October of 2009 the minister informed the media in a public statement that the process was underway with IIDI receiving files from businesses to ensure compliance with the Use of Proceeds Agreement. Would the minister be able to tell us what that looks like?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: I'm sorry, Madam Speaker, I missed the first part of the question.

I ask the Leader of the Opposition to please repeat the question.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To the minister. In October of 2009 you informed the media in a public statement that the process was underway with IIDI receiving files from businesses to ensure compliance. My question to you this morning, since you said that back in October: Please describe what that process looks like.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

The process basically is that two years

following the final investment with respect to use of proceeds, a letter goes out to the company requesting their financial information to evaluate how the use of proceeds has been followed. Those letters have gone out to the files where that investment has matured, where the two year period has lapsed. We're waiting for information. Now, what we have to remember, too, is that different companies have different financial year ends. There may be some that don't have their financial year ends and their information completed. We expect that we will be receiving information when those financial details are available.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To the same minister. Mr. Minister, would all the letters that are going out have the same wording? Because if you have your original Use of Proceeds Agreement with different wording, would they be consistent or would there be some people with Use of Proceeds Agreement that didn't actually have to comply at all?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I would expect that the business community in Prince Edward Island would be in compliance of the Use of Proceeds Agreement. The letter that goes out simply is requesting the financial statements for year end and then those financial statements would be evaluated to make a determination as to whether the Use of Proceeds

Agreement has been complied with.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Use of Proceeds Agreement and Stone Depot

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

In a few minutes we'll get to the numbers of people that are actually receiving the letters and complying. But first, Mr. Minister, you promised, again, open and accountable government. Did the company Stone Depot sign a Use of Proceeds Agreement?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Again, I can review that file and if that information can be provided, I'd be happy to provide it.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To the same minister. Mr. Minister, a lot of time's gone by since you were shut down because of the mismanagement in this program. Surely to heavens, Mr. Minister, you would have checked in particular with this Stone Depot which happens to be an MLA's company. Did they sign a Use of Proceeds Agreement?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation

and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

It's a shame that the Leader of the Opposition continues to misinform the House. She talks about the program being shut down because of mismanagement when she is fully aware that in March of 2008 the federal government changed the regulations with respect to the Provincial Nominee Program. We signed a new agreement that those new regulations came into effect in September of 2008 and that is why the former PNP - we were no longer accepting applications in the partner category.

She's aware of that. She went to Ottawa, I believe, herself, to lobby for an extension on the program that she is being so critical about.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To the same minister. In regards to the MLA, Stone Depot, the Auditor General actually said that that company did sign a Use of Proceeds Agreement. My question to you, though: Was the wording in that agreement the same as in other people that had other businesses? Was it the actual same?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Again, as I indicated, and the Leader of the Opposition has pointed out, that the wording

did evolve and change with respect to Use of Proceeds Agreement. I'll check with staff to see what the wording was in the Use of Proceeds Agreement and if we can share that information I'd be pleased to bring it back.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Once again, it's unbelievable that you haven't checked. It's April 9, 2010. We're trying to move on and yet you've never done the management job that you're supposed to do for the people of PEI in this program.

My question: Did this MLA that owns Stone Depot, did he get one of the letters asking if he complied with the Use of Proceeds Agreement? Did he get a letter?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

As I indicated earlier, the Auditor General reviewed the files of all MLAs, deputy ministers under the previous administration and the former administration. He's made recommendations and those recommendations are being followed.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: (Indistinct), Madam Speaker.

The Auditor General pointed out a number of mismanagement areas. It's up to the minister to follow through and make sure the checks and balances are in place to discover just how much problem is there. You still haven't done that.

Use of Proceeds Agreement and Pat's Retail

My next question to you Mr. Minister is: Did the company Pat's Retail sign a Use of Proceeds Agreement?

An Hon. Member: Yeah.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I guess we have some information that recently - we've received some information very recently that yes, that is the case. Again, as I indicated, the Auditor General viewed the files of all MLAs. He has made a series of recommendations and we are implementing each and every recommendation.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Going back to the same minister. Again, this Use of Proceeds Agreement could have been used as a tool to enforce accountability. On the other hand, because there is different wording in the agreements, it appears it's

another tool to provide prosperity for a very select few.

Premier Ghiz: How? You're making things (Indistinct).

Leader of the Opposition: My next question to the minister of innovation is: In the agreement that was signed by Pat's Retail, what is the wording? Is that consistent with the wording in other retail businesses that were approved? Is it consistent?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

The Leader of the Opposition refers to bringing accountability to this great program. Maybe she can tell us about the Use of Proceeds Agreement that her government had with respect to the PNP.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

My next question is to the same minister. Mr. Minister, I'm not sure if you heard my question. The question is: In Pat's Retail business, was the Use of Proceeds Agreement similar and the same wording as in other similar businesses? Was it?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Again, I'd be pleased to review the Use of

Proceeds Agreement with respect to the file. I'd be pleased to bring the information back if it can be provided.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Review by DM of PNP files (further)

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Again, it's deplorable that you haven't done this work. Again, I go back and the Auditor General's report talks a lot about Treasury Board guidelines being broke and accountability. I am surprised and shocked that you have not had Dr. Michael Mayne check these files. Is that correct, Mr. Minister?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I guess I'd categorize it as disheartening that the Leader of the Opposition has such little faith in the work of the Auditor General.

An Hon. Member: Shame!

Mr. Campbell: It's not new news, Madam Speaker.

She certainly attacked his work last fall in the sitting and apparently she's prepared to do that again. I think the Auditor General has done a fine job. He's made his recommendations. As I indicated, each and every recommendation is being implemented.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Use of Proceeds Agreement and Pat's Retail (further)

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Use of Proceeds Agreement could have been a great tool to enforce accountability. However, this minister has obviously put it into the category of a tool to provide prosperity for a very privileged few.

My question to the minister: In Pat's Retail business, was the wording the same as in other agreements? Was it, Mr. Minister?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Yes, all Use of Proceeds Agreements signed at the time of the file she mentions would be the same.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Mr. Minister, how would you know that when a few short minutes ago you told me no one reviewed the files? How would you know that they're the same?

Premier Ghiz: Because they're all the same.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

As indicated, the program change and

evolved and the wording of the Use of Proceeds Agreement did change. But it's clear that the Use of Proceeds Agreements that were signed at the same time as that file

-

Mr. Bagnall: (Indistinct).

Mr. Campbell: - sorry I can't. The Use of Proceeds Agreement with respect to that file, Madam Speaker, all Use of Proceeds Agreements that were signed at that time would have been the same wording.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Well, now, Madam Speaker, to the same minister.

Last year in April you told this House that you were in full discussions with the federal government on a new program. Just a few minutes ago you told the House that you didn't know because no one had checked the exact files to find out whether the agreements had the same word or not. Now you're telling us in the House that they all have the same when the Auditor General that you just -

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Leader of the Opposition: - referred to had said there was inconsistency.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct).

Leader of the Opposition: Can you explain, Mr. Minister?

Mr. Bagnall: Caught him again.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Bagnall: Caught him again.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Here we have the Leader of the Opposition splitting hairs again. I didn't say that the wording in every Use of Proceeds Agreement was the same. I wish the Leader of the Opposition would stop providing false information to the House and misleading the House. What I said was that with respect to that file, when the Use of Proceeds Agreement was signed, the Use of Proceeds Agreement wording at that time would have been the same as the other files that had a Use of Proceeds Agreement at that time.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To the same minister. Would you like to tell the House that statement again? Because just a while ago you were telling us that you hadn't had the chance, and Dr. Michael Mayne hadn't gone to review any of the files, to know what the wording is. The Auditor General has suggested that there's issues that in the files the wording of the agreements are actually different for different people. What are you telling the House now?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Bagnall: Caught again.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

What I'm telling the House now is that the Auditor General reviewed the files. He made

a recommendation around standardizing the wording of the Use of Proceeds Agreement, and that recommendation, as per all of his recommendations, are being implemented by IIDI.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Use of Proceeds Agreement and Dumville Restaurants

Leader of the Opposition: Madam Speaker, to the same minister.

Did the company Dumville Restaurants sign a Use of Proceed Agreement?

Premier Ghiz: Ask him.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct).

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'm not sure if the Leader of the Opposition had a chance to glance over her right shoulder, but certainly the Member from West Royalty-Springvale has indicated that yes, that is the case.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

If Public Accounts was allowed to have witnesses we wouldn't be here, but that's your definition of open, transparent and accountable government. Going back to Dumville Restaurants, my question: Did he actually get a letter asking him if he complied with the Use of Proceeds Agreement? Did he, Mr. Minister?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

As I indicated, the Use of Proceeds Agreement comes into effect two years after the final investment. As I've said to the Leader of the Opposition, and as she's well aware, that investment is a private investment between a private investor and a private company. So as to when that final investment took place, that's not information that I'm going to share with the Leader of the Opposition here on the floor of this House.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Use of Proceeds Agreement wording

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It's quite the definition this government has of open, and transparent and accountable government. Can the minister explain to the 600 people -

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct).

Leader of the Opposition: - who participated in the program, received units, can you offer reassurances that for a select few people with - were gaining or appeared

to have gained, preferential treatment? Because the wording in their agreements may be different than the wording in everybody else's. Can you assure those businesses that that's not the case, Mr. Minister?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier Ghiz: Absolutely, Madam Speaker.

The Leader of the Opposition likes to stand up in this House and try to mislead the general public in terms of exactly what the process was here. The process was plain and simple. Before we came into power the PNP process was in place. There was no Use of Proceeds Agreement that when a company received it they were supposed to invest in their company but you didn't know for sure.

When we came into government we implemented a Use of Proceeds Agreement to make it more accountable. That Use of Proceeds Agreement, the first one that went out, we've discovered that we could make it even better. It changed along the way, perhaps two times, as the Auditor General pointed out. In no way did it have anything to do with who was applying and who wasn't applying. It had to do with specific dates on when those letters went out. Whether or not it was the Member from Alberton-Roseville, the Member from West Royalty-Springvale, the member from Sherwood, Paul MacNeil, John Jeffrey, we didn't care who applied. We were doing what was right for the people of the Province of Prince Edward Island.

Mr. Sheridan: Right on. Great program.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from West Royalty-Springvale.

Transfer of jobs from Milton to Tignish

Mr. Dumville: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

My question today is to the hon. Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

Minister, I've received a copy of a letter to your department from the Miltonvale Park Community Council in regard to the transfer of jobs from Milton to Tignish. Could you explain the rationale for this move?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

Mr. MacKinley: Actually what we're doing, we're transferring the paint shop and the people, jobs that go with it if - we're hoping that we'll be hiring a lot of people in the Tignish area, but we've got to work through the unions and everything else.

What we could do when we're moving the paint shop up there, because number one is we want a new, modern paint shop. We're bringing the department of highways into the future. We're not doing what the previous government did, letting everything get all wore down and then sell it off to their friends.

What we're doing is we're taking, for instance, the plows, worth something like \$290,000, if the rust or something takes over, we want to send that complete unit, two or three of them on a float, send them up to Tignish. If they're in the Summerside area maybe drive them up to Tignish, whatever. There's going to be a bay there for welding and rebuilding, and then there's going to be the sandblasting area, and then there's going to be a paint shop there, etc.

But you've got to remember this. That if you get a fender bender in one of our trucks in Souris or Georgetown, for that matter, or anywhere, they're not going to be going to

Tignish to be painted. They'll be painted in another place here in the province of PEI close to Charlottetown or maybe in Bridgetown. We're not quite sure where that's going to be, but we've got to move ahead. We're spending millions of dollars on equipment. A problem with rust in the Province of Prince Edward Island - and anybody with a car knows that - but this equipment is not wearing out, it's rusting out.

I know the member from Georgetown when he was minister sent some school buses down to his cousin's or something down there, trying to fix it. Well, it didn't work.. It cost a fortune. What we're trying to do is help Tignish out.

From one end of PEI to the other, you've got to remember, the people in Tignish are just as important as the people in Cornwall, Charlottetown or Souris. They deserve so much government presence there. Look at the place in Montague. I was down there the other day. It's a booming town. We've got a new fisheries building down there.

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct).

Mr. MacKinley: Look, there's people criticizing this, but if you go to Tignish - and I've been up there lots of times - if you live in Cornwall or anywhere in the Cornwall area - let's look at my own riding. If you've got a young person going to college or something, they can get a job at a restaurant, jobs at motels, (Indistinct) there delivering papers, whatever. You go to Tignish, they don't have the opportunity for that.

We're trying to give these young people trying to get a start an opportunity to get work in their own riding where they prefer to live. That's what we're trying to do.

You talk about the traffic problems. We're

trying to tie this all in together. Here we're spending millions to get the traffic around Charlottetown, millions of dollars, we want to keep some of it up west and some down east.

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct).

Mr. MacKinley: So this is what we're trying to do is we're bringing the department into the future.

Speaker: Thank you, minister.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from West Royalty-Springvale.

Mr. Dumville: A supplementary, Madam Speaker.

They also made note of the potential future zoning issue for this vacated facility. In regards to fender benders and stuff, does the department have any use for this facility in the foreseeable future?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

Mr. MacKinley: It's a good question. We're not quite sure. The question we have with Miltonvale Park, and I stand to be corrected, but I don't think they have an industrial park. What we're trying to do is we had problems - a young fellow in Crapaud had a sandblasting unit. He had to move out because of noise levels. We're trying to avoid these situations. That's why we're moving up to that end of the Island, for instance. I'm trying to make sure - I said: Make sure it's not near any homes, that it's going to cause any trouble for anybody, for an area. That's what we're trying to do.

That particular building in industrial, out there in West Royalty, it's been there for

years. It used to be a fertilizer building. So I just can't say if we'd be utilizing that or not. I don't think we need quite that much space to put the decals on the trucks and that, but Charlottetown, look what we got Charlottetown. We can't add here, they want us out of Charlottetown. They want that for the exhibition and everything else. We've got to try to make sure when we build these expensive buildings that we're not pushed out by more development, That's what we're trying to avoid. We're trying to make a thing that these young people here aren't going to be paying for moves 20 years after from today. We want something to be there for a long time. We're trying to plan ahead, more than that previous government did. They couldn't plan a roundabout -

Speaker: Thank you, minister.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacKinley: They couldn't even look after the roundabout down there in Pooles Corner.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Tyne Valley-Linkletter.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacKinley: The former minister -

Speaker: The hon. Member from Tyne Valley-Linkletter.

Assessment tools for new kindergarten system

Ms. Biggar: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

My question today is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development and Attorney General. Minister, in September 2010 over 1,200 children will enter the new public kindergarten system on PEI. What

assessment tools are in place to identify learning disabilities and other special needs for those children?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development and Attorney General.

Mr. D. Currie: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The question is a great question from the hon. Member from Tyne Valley-Linkletter. Our government has set a huge priority in the investment of children in this province, with the bringing in of kindergarten to the public school system.

This spring we'll be implementing, for the first time in the province, a universal screening tool called the Early Years Evaluation. It'll be done in two components. It will be administered in the direct assessment. We've just recently brought in 25 educators from across the province that will provide that support. It's a research tool that was developed by Dr. Doug Willms out of the University of New Brunswick. That assessment will give us an overview of cognitive, developmental, and intellectual development of all our four-year-olds in schools across the province over the next two months.

The second part of the Early Years Evaluation is the teacher assessment. That will be administered in the public kindergarten system next fall and next spring. Once the direct assessment is done it will be given to parents, and that information will be shared with the educators, the kindergarten teachers, the resource teachers, to help us create individual educational plans and to address the needs and supports that need to be identified for children who do require supports in our province.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Tyne Valley-Linkletter.

Ms. Biggar: Thank you.

Minister, we all know that early intervention is very important in children who are assessed with special needs. So what resources are you going to be putting in place to assist those kindergarten children that are identified?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development and Attorney General.

Mr. D. Currie: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Our government does realize the importance, and best practice and best research indicates that early interventions are crucial in supporting children with unique needs.

Right now in our province we have identified 112 kindergarten teachers that will be placed in the public kindergarten program across Prince Edward Island. On top of those 112 kindergarten positions, we'll be bringing in 20 new teaching positions in respect to supporting those students in the areas of art, music, but most importantly in the areas of guidance and resource and special education.

Presently in the province today we've got approximately 350 educational assistants. We will also be bringing in approximately 30 new educational assistants to support that cohort of 1,200 five-year-olds coming into the province.

The magic of the Early Years Evaluation is that it give us a universal standard assessment tool which will allow the

kindergarten teachers and educators in this province to support and implement specific plans and IEPs for all those children across the province.

We also are in negotiations with -

Speaker: Thank you, minister, you've run out of time.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ITSS contract

Mr. M. Currie: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

My question today is for the minister of finance. Minister, last fall, it was uncovered that you gave a contract to an individual from New Brunswick to overview the IT services in this province - a six month contract for \$900 a day for \$118,000 to Mr. Allan MacDonald.

Can you tell me today, has he completed his work, and is he still - is he gone now?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Sheridan: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Allan MacDonald was brought in to oversee the transformation of ITSS. The previous administration brought the ITSS idea forward a number of years ago, and it was the right thing to do to coordinate all IT work right across government. But what they did was cut the program to a quick because they didn't realize how important it was to the system overall to run government.

So what we have done, after looking at the program over the first two years, we said we had to make some monstrous investments in our ITSS system in order for the government to go forward. We needed to find someone that could oversee this full process. I would say that there would be three individuals in the region that could do this.

Allan MacDonald was one of those, and he has worked out in spades. I make no issue of the monies that we have paid Allan MacDonald. He has done an amazing job for us, and is right now fulfilling a three-month program to make sure that the full implementation will take place.

Thank you very much.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: So, Madam Speaker, you're indicating that you gave Mr. Allan MacDonald \$900 a day again for another three months?

Did you get Treasury Board approval for any of these contracts?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Sheridan: Yes, Madam Speaker, I certainly did.

As the hon. member would know, I am chair of Treasury Board and we brought this all forward, not only to Treasury Board but also to Cabinet, to ensure that everyone was very well aware of what we're doing with the transformation of ITSS.

Inside of Treasury Board and Executive Council we're more concerned with making sure that the mechanisms are in place that we can enable this government to go forward and provide services for Islanders

that are needed. We'll make sure that we do that in fine form, and Mr. Allan MacDonald has done that exactly for us.

Thank you very much.

Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Could the minister please tell us today, did you or Mr. Allan MacDonald, did they give any contracts back to Accreon, the company he used to work for? Did they achieve any work out of this since he's been employed with the Province of Prince Edward Island?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Sheridan: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Accreon was one of the companies that has been applying for different contracts throughout the process. Anytime that Accreon is involved in any of the contracting of any of the work to be done on Prince Edward Island, Mr. MacDonald is removed from any of the proceedings and make sure that anything else goes on.

We have made it very clear that this is going to be very well documented. Allan MacDonald has conducted himself as the pure gentleman that he is, and we have been very pure in any of the competitions that have taken place.

Thank you very much.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Madam Speaker, a lot of people are concerned about is his close relationship.

So you hired this individual, he comes over and he gives his former company a bunch of work. How much work did they receive since he's been employed with you at \$900 a day?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Sheridan: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The expertise of a couple of firms have been used extensively during this transformation. One of which is Accreon and the other is DeltaWare. We have two other companies that have worked extensively on this program. All of which have been tendered, all of which have been put to the public. We want to have the very best individuals and companies coming forward to help us with this transformation.

This isn't something that is dreamed up and put together overnight. We need expertise, we have received it, and the transformation has been amazing. The feedback that we have from our biggest clients, with health, now community services and education, are overwhelmed with the changes that are taking place. I make no apologies for anything that we have done. To this point they've all been covered off very clearly through the tender process, through Treasury Board, and then vetted through Executive Council.

Thank you very much.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

A question to the minister of finance. Did you hire any other IT specialists outside of this province to come and work on this file also?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Sheridan: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

If the hon. member has been following we have a full transformation taking place. There are five directors now overseeing the different portions of our IT system inside of government. One of the things that we struggled with with the old format was that there were three different directors, and all three worked in silos of their own. We needed a CEO, a COO, of the transformation to take place, so that we could have them all working in that fashion. Very important that we would do that.

Out of that five directors we have had two new directors hired from outside sources. They are going to be great pieces of this puzzle for us as we move forward. We have one opening still to be filled and we're excited by the prospects of what that might be.

Thank you very much.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Madam Speaker, the minister has skated all around the question.

I guess the question was very simple: Did you hire any other IT specialists? It's my understanding that you hired one Jean Yves Poirier, and he gets \$150 an hour, that's \$1,200 a day. He flies in here on Tuesday and he flies out on Friday. You pay all the expenses on top, so that's \$1,200 a day. How long has he been employed with this province?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Sheridan: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Jean Yves Poirier is an expert out of Montreal for our infrastructure piece and that is the one directorship that we have not been able to fill yet. As I've said, these kinds of positions do not fall off trees. Jean Yves Poirier is an expert out of Montreal that we're very fortunate to be able to bring forward.

As to what the actual dollar value is, I can bring that to the House. I don't know what that is as to how much he is paid. He comes forward and does this work for us -

Mr. Bagnall: Twelve hundred bucks a day.

Mr. Sheridan: - that the dollars couldn't be put toward a better use.

Mr. Bagnall: Can't believe it, \$1,200 a day.

Premier Ghiz: Well, do you want the computers to fail?

Mr. Sheridan: Madam Speaker, so when we brought forward Jean Yves Poirier -

Premier Ghiz: You messed it up. You saw what happened with e-Health.

Mr. Sheridan: - when we found this individual in Montreal to be able to come forward and do the job -

Premier Ghiz: Because you cut everything.

Mr. Sheridan: - until we can find an individual in this area - we have been searching, Madam Speaker, we haven't been able to find a replacement yet.

He has been with us for probably about a

four month period and the work that he has done is just getting kudos from across all government. We're very proud of the investments we've made in the ITSS.

Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters. Final question.

Mr. M. Currie: Final question. Madam Speaker, the final question then would be to the minister of innovation.

I'm wondering, minister, if you would share with us today your opinion with the minister of finance that he does not believe that there's the expertise in the IT industry in this province to implement a \$47,000 study in this province. Do you agree with your minister that there's nobody in this province that can implement those services? And he has to go outside the province and pay \$900 a day and \$1,200 a day for IT people. Do you agree with that?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced -

Mr. M. Currie: You're responsible for (Indistinct). I didn't ask you.

Mr. Sheridan: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Sheridan: As the hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters is very well aware, we have tremendous IT people here in the province. We have tremendous IT people working for us inside of government. Inside of ITSS we have tremendously talented individuals. But the problem with it is that we need certain pieces of expertise and they are over the moon inside of ITSS with the leadership that's been brought forward.

When we talk about Allan MacDonald, the respect that has been brought forward inside this division, because of his bringing forward, has been fantastic. When we bring in someone like a Jean Yves Poirier from Montreal, the overwhelming respect for this gentleman has been outstanding and has provided great leadership right throughout that division.

The type of people that we have here on PEI with IT is fantastic, and all of the work that the hon. minister of innovation has brought forward in his time, it has been wonderful. But there are two or three positions -

Speaker: Thanks minister, we're -

Mr. Sheridan: - that we have to fill -

Speaker: - we're out of time.

An Hon. Member: Great job.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sheridan: - with great positions.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sheridan: No reason to cut us off, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Speaker: Statements by -

Mr. Bagnall: Challenging your (Indistinct)
-
challenging (Indistinct).

Statements by Ministers

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Tourism and Culture.

Tourism Workshops

Mr. Vessey: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to announce that successful workshops, held last month, provided sound financial advice to different sectors of the tourism industry.

It is important to offer workshops to the tourism industry that reinforce how important this subject matter is for business. The tourism industry is one of the largest industries and one that has great potential for further growth.

Operating a business requires a lot of hard work and being properly equipped with useful information helps to improve a business's potential. The workshop provided a good understanding to participants of what "Revenue Management" is and how important it is when applying it to your business.

The presenter, Phil Robart from E-Zee Revenue Management, expanded on five core components of revenue management - knowledge database, forecasting, optimization, control and communication. Robart indicated that in the age of social media, it is important to develop strategies that increase demand for the industry, so the core concepts of revenue management can be applied with even greater financial results.

Robart also stated that he was pleasantly and thoroughly impressed with the professional attitudes and the effort that was evidently in practice across the Prince Edward Island tourism industry. The workshops were held in three locations - Georgetown Inn, Howard Johnson Dutch Inn, Slemon Park - and very well attended by tourism members.

My department continues to work with industry for industry. It is important that we continue to make available to the tourism

industry speakers of Mr. Robart's calibre on topics of critical relevance to the Island tourism operators.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Quickstart Global

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I rise today to welcome yet another company to the Island business community.

Quickstart Global has selected Prince Edward Island as its Atlantic Canadian headquarters and will be opening a new centre in Charlottetown.

The business process management company will act as a gateway for international companies expanding to North America. Quickstart Global offers a service called In-House Anywhere. This program presents a stable, neutral foundation for clients to set up and operate on around the world.

The company will provide local office space, infrastructure and communications technology, as well as human resources and legal services for international clients interested in establishing a business presence in North America.

The Government of Prince Edward Island is committed to advancing economic development across the province. We are actively seeking out new opportunities to strengthen our economy and create jobs.

As Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning, I'm thrilled that yet another internationally recognized company has

selected Prince Edward Island as a place to do business.

Quickstart Global joins a long list of companies that see the benefits of doing business in our province. Prince Edward Island enjoys a positive business environment, a competitive tax structure, first-class strategic infrastructure, office space and communications technology, a dedicated, loyal and highly skilled workforce. This is complemented by educational opportunities available at UPEI, Holland College, and Collège Acadie.

The chairman of Quickstart Global, Kaushal Chokshi, said Prince Edward Island is ideally suited for companies in need of a convenient time zone in the North American market. PEI is located between San Francisco and London. Another selling feature was the Island's landscape and quality of life.

Quickstart Global PEI will initially focus on emerging industries such as software and video game development along with e-health and business services. These growth industries are outlined in the Government of Prince Edward Island's innovation and economic development strategy, *Island Prosperity: A Focus for Change*.

I wish to thank the staff at Innovation PEI for their continued efforts in promoting Prince Edward Island as a business location.

Convincing international companies to expand during a global economic downturn is challenging, but we continue to see new economic and employment opportunities developing across the province.

I would like also to thank the chairman of Quickstart Global for expanding the company's international operations to Prince Edward Island.

We believe that Quickstart Global's PEI centre will lead to new business and employment opportunities for Islanders. We look forward to hearing more from Quickstart Global in the months and years ahead.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

Dump and Run at UPEI

Mr. MacKinley: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I gives me great pleasure to rise in the House here today because between April 10th and 23rd students at UPEI will have an opportunity to participate in an excellent event aimed at reducing the amount of waste generated by students at the end of the year.

The 2nd annual Dump and Run event targets students in residence and off-campus accommodations at Brown's Court. The organizers of events encourage those students to bring unused or unwanted household items to a location at the university. Then, on April 24th, many of the items will go on sale. The items left unsold will be offered to local non-profit groups or they will be recycled.

As minister responsible for Island Waste Management Corporation, I'm very impressed with the incentives shown by members of the UPEI Environmental Society. Their efforts to reduce and divert waste are to be well thanked by the people of the Province of Prince Edward Island. There were many years where the amount of waste generated at Brown's Court and at UPEI at the end of the year created quite an eyesore, and quite a lot of extra work and

quite a waste.

But beyond that, many items that could be reused or recycled ended up in our waste stream, too, and the landfill sites. Hopefully this event will lower the amount of waste destined for our landfill sites, and that hopefully it will raise a little money for the UPEI Environmental Society as well.

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I encourage every Member of the Legislative Assembly immediately to get out there and buy something.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment, Energy and Forestry.

Pesticide usage and information sessions

Mr. Brown: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

After extensive consultations with Islanders, government has introduced changes to the *Pesticides Control Act* and regulations. These changes ban the sale and use of many concentrated domestic lawn care pesticides.

The new legislation is designed to promote consumer safety by reducing the potential for misuse of these products. Homeowners will no longer be able to purchase or apply more than 240 pesticides that are on the list of banned products.

This new legislation was developed in response to concerns expressed by many Islanders about the impact of lawn care pesticides on their health and their environment. We listened to their concerns and we responded with changes.

The issue also came before a legislative committee. We heard from many people, including the opposition, and I would like to thank everyone for their involvement in

shaping this new legislation.

As we move forward with these new regulations, it is important to note that this is a work in progress and changes may be needed in the future. This weekend Islanders will have an opportunity to attend presentations on how to care for their lawn without using pesticides.

Working with the PEI Environmental Health Coalition, our department is sponsoring public information sessions as well, with Mr. Paul Tukey, a respected lawn care professional from Maine. The sessions are being held in Summerside tonight, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Loyalist Lakeview Resort, tomorrow 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Farm Centre, and at Kaylee Hall, Poole's Corner, Monday 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. I encourage people to attend one of these sessions to learn how to maintain an attractive lawn without the use of harmful pesticides.

These new regulations reflect government's commitment to building healthy families and healthy communities across our one Island community.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Community Stakeholder Forum

Ms. Bertram: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Yesterday at the Murchison Centre, almost 100 people gathered for the annual Community Stakeholder Forum on the Prevention, Education and Early Intervention of Youth Substance Abuse, hosted by the Department of Health and Wellness. The forum was held to gather community input on past and future

community and media-based prevention, education and early intervention activities. Community stakeholders from across the province were invited to participate through invitations and advertisements in Island newspapers.

The PEI Youth Substance Use and Addiction Strategy continues to build a variety of collaborative initiatives to support youth, families and community. A key component is to continue developing collaborative activities at the community level to support youth and families dealing with youth substance abuse issues.

It is important that we effectively communicate the risks and consequences of substance abuse and engage communities, youth and parents in that work.

Yesterday's forum included an anti-bullying presentation from Bluefield High School students, an update on our Strength Program - the province's new youth day treatment program for youth and families - and a best practices presentation on community-based prevention, education, and early intervention activities. Guest speakers were Dr. Bill Morrison from the University of New Brunswick and Maurice Leblanc, who have authored a Health Canada best practice guide in relation to community-based activities.

Our provincial Strength Program was launched in January. The provincial program is eight weeks in duration and provides supervised housing for those in need of that service while in the program. It provides a wide range of services, including: individual counselling, family and parental support, an education curriculum, gambling addiction support, group treatment, life skills development, and an individualized case process tailored to support positive change for program participants.

At this time I would also like to just recognize my colleague who used to be in this portfolio, and just recognize him for his work on this file in the department, and also our previous (Indistinct) their dedication to this, and the investment that has been made by our government.

The Department of Health and Wellness has a full-time coordinator to work with communities across the Island to develop collaborative action plans to support young people at risk. Our government is committed to developing supports for Island youth and families who struggle with substance abuse and addiction.

The PEI Youth Substance Use and Addiction Strategy continues to build a variety of collaborative initiatives to support youth, families and community. A key component is to continue developing those activities at the community level to support the next generation.

In closing, it is important that we effectively communicate the risks and consequences. Yesterday's stakeholder forum event was a great success with very positive feedback from many Islanders who participated.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development and Attorney General.

2010 Regional Conference on Learning Disabilities

Mr. D. Currie: Madam Speaker, I rise today to inform the House about a very important conference that is happening in Charlottetown today and tomorrow.

The Learning Disabilities Association of

PEI is holding their 2010 Regional Conference on Learning Disabilities over the next couple of days. A learning disability is a neurological disorder that can range from mild to severe. One in 10 people has a learning disability and most individuals are identified in the school system.

As the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development and Attorney General, as a former teacher and a principal, I understand how important it is to provide individuals with learning disabilities the supports they need to succeed.

To ensure these supports and services are there, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has committed to the Learning Disability Strategy. This is a multi-year action plan which focuses on a coordinated provincial approach, early identification and early intervention, increased professional capacity, increased public and family awareness and knowledge.

It is imperative to work collaboratively with community partners like the Learning Disabilities Association of Prince Edward Island to help the individuals who need it the most. The conference that has been organized over the next two days will provide the delegates with important information on a number of issues facing those with learning disabilities.

I understand there are more than 90 delegates attending over the next two days. They will be hearing from Dr. Steven Feifer, a renowned speaker in the United States and Canada in the field of Learning Disabilities. Today his focus will be on reviewing Reading Disorders and Sub-types of Dyslexia. Tomorrow, Dr. Feifer will be holding a half-day session on Neuropsychology of Mathematics Disorders.

I am pleased to stand in the House today to recognize the important work that the Learning Disabilities Association of Prince Edward Island does for individuals with learning disabilities and those teachers who work with our children all across Prince Edward Island, and to wish them well in their conference.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Presenting and Receiving Petitions

Tabling of Documents

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Community Services, Seniors and Labour.

Ms. Sherry: Madam Speaker, by Command of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor, I beg leave to table the Annual Report for the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women for the period ending 31 March, 2009 and I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning, that the said document be now received and do lie on the table.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Ms. Bertram: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

There has been a lot of media attention in regards to the Electronic Health Records process in the province, and there has been discussion on this floor today regarding IT services. I think it involves perhaps our department as well, in terms of being transparent.

I would just like to table, seconded by my hon. colleague the hon. Minister of Environment, Energy and Forestry, the contracts that were given as part of this

between the years from 2005-2006, previous administration, and 2007-2008 for public disclosure.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Reports by Committees

Introduction of Government Bills

Government Motions

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Sheridan: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I move, seconded by the hon. Government House Leader, that Motion No. 49 be now read.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk: Motion No. 49.

It's moved by the hon. Premier, seconded by the hon. Member from Summerside-St. Eleanors, the following motion:

WHEREAS the First World War lasted more than four years, between 1914-1918, leaving a legacy of death and destruction;

AND WHEREAS when the war broke out in 1914, Canada's population was less than eight million people;

AND WHEREAS more than 650,000 Canadian and Newfoundland men and women served during the First World War;

AND WHEREAS we must remember the wartime sacrifice and achievements of our First World War service men and women, and the considerable cost of human life.

More than 170,000 were injured and more than 68,000 lost their lives in the cause of peace and freedom, while countless others shared the suffering and hardship of war;

AND WHEREAS it was for freedom that these young Canadians fought and died as they helped win the struggle against tyranny and oppression which threatened to engulf our world;

AND WHEREAS these brave Canadians brought honour and new respect to their country;

AND WHEREAS the Armistice of November 11, 1918 brought relief to the whole world;

AND WHEREAS the horrible struggle with its death, destruction and misery was at last halted. Sixty-five million men from 30 nations were involved in the Great War. At least 10 million of them were killed and 29 million more were wounded, captured or listed as missing. Never before had there been such a conflict;

AND WHEREAS we are forever indebted to those who served for our country during the First World War and we must pay tribute to them by remembering their contributions to Canada;

AND WHEREAS on February 18, 2010, John "Jack" Babcock, Canada's last known First World War veteran passed away at the age of 109;

AND WHEREAS with this historical passing it's believed that there are no longer any Canadians alive today who served during this significant time in our history;

AND WHEREAS this event marks the end of an era in Canada's military history;

AND WHEREAS when once asked what

lessons this generation should take from the First World War, Mr. Babcock had a simple reply: "I think it would be nice if all the different people in the world could get along together so we weren't having wars. I don't suppose that'll ever happen though."

AND WHEREAS a number of significant ceremonies of remembrance will be held on Friday, April 9th, in locations across Canada and in our allied nations of France and England;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Prince Edward Island will hold a commemorative ceremony honouring all of Canada's First World War service men and women to pay tribute to their achievements and contributions;

AND WHEREAS the ceremony will be held on Vimy Ridge Day, Friday, April 9, 2010 in Charlottetown at the cenotaph war memorial - a symbol of the sacrifices of all Canadians who have served Canada in times of war in the cause of peace and freedom;

AND WHEREAS throughout the year Canadians will celebrate, honour, and remember the contributions and sacrifices of our veterans;

AND WHEREAS Remembrance Day is held every year on November 11th to commemorate all Canadians who have served their country in times of war, military conflict and peace;

AND WHEREAS Friday, April 9th, marks the commemorative day honouring all Canadian and Newfoundland World War service men and women who served during the First World War;

AND WHEREAS today Canadian military service men and women and their families continue to make sacrifices while contributing to international peace and

security in Afghanistan and around the world;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this Legislative Assembly and all Islanders join in remembrance of the victory that came at so great a price years ago, and with the passing of Canada's last known First World War veteran, that we recognize the end of an era on this April 9th, the 93rd anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge.

Speaker: Hon. Premier, to open debate on the motion.

Premier Ghiz: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It is with a profound sense of gratitude that I move this motion marking the end of an era with the passing of Canada's last First World War Veteran. This past February 18th, John Jack Babcock passed away at the age of 109. World War I, also known as the Great War, was a gruelling event that featured trench warfare, major battles to claim small amounts of territory, the use of mustard gas as a weapon, and the introduction of airplanes into war.

The magnitude of the carnage of the Great War is that in total at least 10 million people were killed and a further 29 million people were wounded, captured or listed as missing. The economic and social impact of this terrible destruction was to be felt in the 30 participating countries for many decades following the Armistice on November 11th, 1919.

Canada's World War I losses were immense considering our small population at that time of about 7.2 million people. Approximately 65,000 Canadian soldiers lost their lives and a further 150,000 were injured. Prince Edward Islanders from both town and country volunteered to serve in regiments like the 105th Prince Edward Island Highlanders and the Prince Edward Island

Light Horse. Islanders can be proud indeed of the contribution and sacrifices of their forefathers in the Great War, both in terms of soldiers enlisted and assisting with the war effort here at home.

World War I represented a coming of age for Canada as a nation. The brave and successful Canadian efforts in such battles as Vimy Ridge and Passchendaele, gained Canada recognition and respect throughout the world. Following the war, after much lobbying by Canada and others, the Statute of Westminster was passed by the British Parliament recognizing the full independence of Canada. In the future, decisions to go to war would have to be approved by the Canadian Parliament. It can be truly claimed that the Canada's World War I veterans through their sacrifices led the way in making Canada a truly independent nation.

Today, April 9th, represents the 89th Anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge. It is only fitting that on this day we commemorate the end of an era in recognition of the passing of Canada's last great war veteran, John Babcock.

I ask the Legislature to join with me now in supporting this motion and I also ask all members of the Legislature to please rise for a moment of silence in recognizing this historic event.

[There was a moment of silence]

Speaker: The hon. Member from Summerside-St. Eleanors to second the motion.

Mr. Greenan: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It's indeed an honour to be asked to second the motion that is on the floor today that was brought forward by our Premier.

Our country came of age because of the First World War, and as this was supposed to be the war to end all wars, we all know that that is not the case. Ten million people died as a result of the four years of carnage in our world, and today marks the 93rd anniversary of the Battle at Vimy Ridge, in which we saw over 11,000 casualties of Canadians.

It is very difficult for us who were not alive during that era, but certainly through history and through our school system have learned a great deal about the Great War, and today that history is kept alive by the school system here in Prince Edward Island. We have very close relationships with our legions, different schools on Remembrance Day coordinate programs, and one particular program that's been started in Summerside between Three Oaks Senior High School and the local legion is a commemorative program in which the lives of veterans, past veterans, living veterans, are dramatized on Remembrance Day. So we're keeping alive these unfortunate incidents that happen in our world.

With the death of Mr. Babcock in February of this year we ended an era, the last known survivor of the First World War. Today we will commemorate that era here in Charlottetown, and I ask others in the Legislature to support this motion.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The hon. Member from Kellys Cross-Cumberland.

Ms. Docherty: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The death of anyone also brings a variety of emotions to those who know that person, and many times even to those who don't. So in the case of the death of John Babcock, as

has been mentioned, our last known veteran, I'm sure there were a lot of emotions happening around that occasion, and will be happening today when we think of him.

We have emotions. We have sadness, of course, that his family and friends would experience, saying their final goodby. We have the indebtedness from Canadians for his service on behalf of what he gave for Canada in World War I. We have a sense of loss to that connection to World War I. No longer do we have a Canadian that we can ask questions of about what actually happened. Of course, there's the appreciation for everything that John and the 650,000 Canadians did, and for what they did for Canada and how it shaped the country that we now know and live in.

Today we are honoring all of Canada's First World War service men and women for their achievements and their contributions. The ceremony is titled End of an Era. Of course, it is indeed the end for Canada, but unfortunately it is not the end of wars. As we watch what is happening in Afghanistan, Canadians continue to proudly represent their country.

Of course, as a mother of a regular member of the Canadian Navy, I am so proud of what Jordan has chosen to do, but of course very worried at the same time. I can only assume that John Babcock's mother felt the same way when at that very young age of 15 he chose to proudly support Canada and Canada's effort in that war.

So, on behalf of all parents of military servicemen and women, I encourage you, please support today's military action. Even if some of you may not support the war itself, do not let the efforts of John Babcock, or Jordan Docherty, be for nothing.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

We're very happy to support this motion.

Today we're celebrating the life of Jack Babcock. On February 18th, 2010, John Jack became known as the last First World War veteran who passed away at 109. Jack, as the previous speaker had mentioned, was 15½ years of age, a farm boy. When I read that, I have two great-granduncles, I guess, that both were in the First World War. They both, too, signed up at a young age. They were not - I think the required age was actually 17 perhaps, or 18, but they were younger than that. It often reminds me of what the world must have been like at that particular time in PEI. No Internet, no cell phone, large families, and often not having enough food and not having enough work to go around. So many of the young people decided that they would join a service with the notion that they would have an opportunity to have pay.

You can imagine what it must have been like when a lot of their equipment didn't work, a lot of their training certainly wasn't the type of training today, and then that trip overseas to go to a place that they had only heard about, and probably in a romantic way rather than a real way. The end result for one of my granduncles was actually one of the people that died because of the mustard gas. The other came home and locked himself in a small house, ate himself almost to death because he couldn't deal with the kinds of memories that he had, and at the particular time he was well over 400 pounds. The story in our family was that they actually had to cut part of a doorway out to bring him out of the house.

It's the personal cost that often we don't get to hear when we read the history stories, but like the previous speaker, where her son is actually in Afghanistan as well, it's the people one by one that really have the courage that go and continue to stick up for Canadians and for worldwide issues, especially democracy. We must remember the wartime sacrifice and achievement of our First World War service, both men and women, and the considerable cost to human life. More than 170,000 people were injured and more than 68,000 people lost their lives. Many of these people were part of our Island communities. The wartime sacrifices and achievements of these young men and women will forever be in our heart and on our mind. Though they are gone, they will never be forgotten. Jack's memory continues to live on.

As we stand here commemorating Jack, I cannot help but be thankful for the international triumph of Canadian troops worldwide. Vimy Ridge is one of our most unifying moments in history. Canadians will never forget that moment in history where we became an international force to be reckoned with. In April 1917 all four Canadian divisions fought together on the same battlefield. Canadian valour and bravery brought about a fantastic victory, not only for Canadians but for the entire Allied forces.

Canada continues to be a helping force in many countries today. Our men and women are deployed overseas. They are great ambassadors for Canada. I'm proud to be here today and have the privilege to stand in the Legislature. It's because of people like Jack that we're hopefully able to contribute in a different way to serve our country. I'm proud and grateful to all Canadians who have served in times of war in the cause for peace and freedom.

In closing, I'd encourage anybody who has

the opportunity - there was a war veteran from the Second World War, George Palmer from St. Peter's Bay, and his grandson have written a book about that experience, and it's a really good book. I'd encourage everybody to get a copy of it and read it.

We are happy to support this motion.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from West Royalty-Springvale.

Mr. Dumville: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I, too, would like to support this motion as a son of a lady who lost a brother in the First World War, a brother in the Second World War, and a brother-in-law in the Second World War. Roland Boulter was 27 years old when my mother got the phone call that her brother passed on. It's a day that we have to be thankful for all great Canadians who fought in all wars and conflicts and are continuing at peacekeeping duties today.

I'm especially proud of Canada's role in the First World War and Vimy Ridge and the memorial that's in France today to honour all those members. But I think that what strikes me the most about the First World War was how dirty and messy a war it really was. It was trench warfare, and I think trench warfare is the most inhumane type of warfare. I can't imagine psychologically and physically our young people in trenches that were cold and damp and wet with rats and the enemy almost within eyesight, and they were in the same condition, and that no-man's-land in between where machine guns cut them down the following day or night, and the bravery that it must have taken to climb over those ramparts, being so far away from home.

So it'll be an honour to be at the cenotaph today for the ceremony at 1:00 p.m., and during the ceremonies I'll be thinking of the bravery of our Canadians in this type of war, trench warfare, the most hideous type of war. I hope there's never a conflict like this again. I think World War I is famous for how hideous the conditions were for our brave people.

With that, it's my honour to stand in this House and support this motion today.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Vernon River-Stratford.

Mr. McIsaac: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

As the son of a veteran of the Second World War, and son-in-law of Dutch-Canadian immigrants who lived through the Second World War, and actually lost some of their own siblings in prisoner of war camps and stuff, I heard plenty of stories about what went on. I really want to stand to support this motion with regards to the passing and the end of an era.

I think it's important to look back and just have a little look at how serious the First World War really was and how Canada kind of came of age. I've just got some notes here, doing a little history on it. On August 4th, 1914, Britain declared war on Germany. Canada, as a member of the British empire, was automatically at war and its citizens from all across the land responded quickly.

A month after war broke out, 32,665 volunteers arrived at the new camp at Valcartier, Quebec, in 100 special trains.

Thus began the growth of the colony's peacetime army from a pre-war force of 3,110 regular and 74,213 part-time militia members. By the end of the war, Canada would have 619,636 service people in uniform, including more than 3,000 Nursing Sisters. The tiny peacetime force would grow nearly tenfold. It was a huge army for a population of less than 8 million people.

Four long years of war would transform Canada from a colony to a nation at a cost of nearly a quarter of a million casualties, one in four of them fatal.

Canada's major military contribution to what was called the Great War, the war to end to end all wars, was the 100,000-strong Canadian Corps. Its members were stationed on the Western Front, that jagged chain of trenches dug into the mud and clay of France, stretching 966 kilometres from the Belgian coast to the border of Switzerland.

The citizen soldiers of Canada adapted with innovative methods that were designed to stem the terrible tide of casualties. Their modern approaches earned them a remarkable reputation in France. In the First World War 70 Canadians won the highest award for valour, the Victoria Cross. Many more would receive other decorations for gallantry.

In this largely static war of attrition, the Canadian Corps came to be valued as one of the most effective military formations on the Western Front, for they were masters of the grim and hazardous techniques of offensive warfare. Their first full-scale demonstration of this came in April of 1917 at Vimy Ridge, which they captured with superb planning and preparation, resulting in casualty levels far below the norm. Vimy was the pinnacle of Canadian military achievement in the First World War.

At 5:30 a.m., April 9, 1917, Easter Monday,

the creeping artillery barrage began to move steadily towards the Germans. Behind it advanced 20,000 soldiers of the first attacking wave of the four Canadian divisions. Each soldier carried at least 32 kilograms of equipment on his back. There was some hand-to-hand fighting, but the greatest resistance and heavy Canadian losses came from the strongly emplaced machine guns in the German intermediate line. Overcoming this resistance, three of the four divisions captured their part of Vimy Ridge by midday, right on schedule.

The Canadian achievement in capturing Vimy Ridge owed its success to sound and meticulous planning and thorough preparation, all of which was aimed at minimizing casualties. But it was the splendid fighting qualities and devotion to duty of Canadian officers and soldiers on the battlefield that were decisive.

At Vimy, the Canadian Corps had captured more ground, more prisoners and more guns than any previous British offensive in two-and-a-half years of war. It was one of the most complete and decisive engagements of the Great War and the greatest Allied victory up to that time. The Canadians had demonstrated they were one of the outstanding formations on the Western Front and masters of offensive warfare.

Though the victory at Vimy came swiftly, it did not come without cost. There were 3,598 dead out of 10,602 Canadian casualties.

The Canadian success at Vimy marked a profound turning-point for the Allies. A year-and-a-half later, the Great War was over.

More than 68,000 Canadians died in action during the First World War; 11,285 were posted missing, presumed dead; many others did come home and helped build our country to where it is today, considered one of the

greatest places in the world to live.

With the passing of our last living veteran from World War I, it is only right that we pause and recognize those who built our country and our freedom and the end of an era.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Sherwood.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

“I think it would be nice if all the different in the world could get along together so we weren’t having wars. I don’t suppose that’ll ever happen though”. Words from Jack Babcock sometimes before he died earlier this year.

You would think that some 90-plus years ago, by today, we would have - if you would like to compare it to a cure for one of the worst diseases in the world, you would think 90-something years later we would have that. But unfortunately, as mentioned by many in the House today, war-torn areas of the world are still going today. Afghanistan is very much real.

In my family, I personally didn’t have any members that were in either of the wars, but like all Islanders proudly attend Remembrance Day services on the Island, but more specifically in the last several years as a member representing Atlantic Baptist nursing home I’ve had the privilege of attending their memorial service.

There is nothing that has ever made me feel so small as to when the bugler will call the Last Post and render it on the bugle and these senior veterans are doing everything they can to get to their feet. There is nothing that ever made me feel so small but yet so proud. I know there’s nothing that’ll bring a

tear faster to the eye of any human being than attending any of these memorial services.

So I think today it’s very fitting that we celebrate this end of an era with the passing of Mr. Babcock and think fully of all those men and women who laid their lives on the lines on all the wars. I’m very proud to stand today and support this resolution and I’m very honoured to be able to attend this event.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Ms. Bertram: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I certainly appreciate all the comments that have been said thus far on this motion and would like to add my voice to it as well in support of such a very important motion, very important to our history as Canadians, very important to our history as Islanders living in such a peaceful country and recognizing our foremothers and forefathers that fought the great war, some that came home and some that stayed, but either way, they fought for a great freedom.

This past summer I had the opportunity, along with the hon. Member from Evangeline-Miscouche, when we attending the Saint-Aubin-sur-Mer, which was more in the region of the Second World War, in the Normandy region. We were able to take a day and go to Vimy Ridge and to take the time and visit such a very special place. It seemed like a very special place the day we went, very peaceful and quiet, the countryside of eastern France, very close to the Belgian border.

Before we did that we came through a town

called Raillencourt, probably about 20 minutes outside of Vimy. During my life we always were told of the story of my great uncle Walden Bertram who had fought in the First World War, but knew nothing, really, of him. He died very young and he died at the very end of the First World War in the region of Vimy in 1918 in September. Just a few months until it was over, but he lost his life. He was in the Canadian gun corps and he was a corporal. But having the opportunity - and we received the information from veterans affairs of where he was buried. It's just amazing the way the cemeteries are kept in France. It was the Commonwealth that's buried there. It's not just Canadians. But to go and visit that, and I know I can speak from the hon. member from Miscouche, and he had family also that was in the Normandy region in the Second World War and I know he'll probably speak to that.

But it's just so heartfelt when you visit the resting place of a family member that fought in the Great War, and really you didn't know much about that person, but at the same time spending that morning gave the opportunity to feel and appreciate the freedom that they gave us. Yet such a young life, and the lives of all those that were interred in that cemetery, and many other cemeteries across France.

We went to Raillencourt, we drove further, and there are just so many sites in that area of France that is memorialized because of the Great War. Many memorial spots that you can travel to and there is lots of places to stop and read placards and have a better understanding.

But taking that drive in, the long drive in, to the Vimy sites, the Vimy memorial, was just unbelievable. It's a road lined on either side with maple trees. You almost have a sense of peace as you enter. You turn right and that takes you to the magnitude of the Vimy

memorial. It's incredible. I think as Canadians - I know there was a large investment made when that was restored a few years ago.

You see it on television but you don't know the magnitude of the size until you actually are there. You see the battlegrounds where the trenches were, places that you cannot walk because there probably still could be mines that still exist there. But to see the names, that is what is the most - probably the most difficult part of going. Because those are the names of the lost, bodies that were never found. Thousands and thousands and thousands of names. It's a very moving experience to see that and it's very touching. People just walk the site. Everybody does different things in terms of how emotionally they feel when they visit such as site.

But I guess what is valuable is that it is keeping the memory alive of our Canadians that fought, whether they came home or whether they lost their lives. There are many students from Canada - and we had the opportunity to meet a few Islanders that were actually working at the sites when we were there. Two young people, one from Summerside area and one from the Charlottetown area that were working the day we were there. That is giving them an even greater appreciation.

Certainly want to recognize the federal government for the ongoing commitment with that student program because it allows those youth to value the past and to share and then to come back home with their experiences. But I think having an experience - and I know there is a lot of schools that have done trips, that have done history classes, and then have taken their students. I just think what an experience for our students to see that and to have a better understanding of what happened to be physically there. Because we never want this to happen. So many of the generations to

come are becoming further and further removed from the Great War, the First World War.

Just like today, we're honouring the final veteran, Mr. Babcock, that we are becoming further removed. But the ongoing commitment of our federal government, our provincial governments, our legions, to our young people and to keep the memories alive, because the stories continue in the families. I was lucky enough to have a great-grandfather that returned from both the Great War and the Second World War, but it's the ones that are lost that memories need to continue as well because they died at such a young age, and such a contribution that they made to Canada, to our country for freedom.

I think it's very important that in this resolution today, as a Legislature and as a province, that we are recognizing this end of an era. Yes, it's an end, but the memories will never end. They must continue and we must value the contribution that our veterans have played in the establishment of our country and the freedom that we now enjoy today.

Like many of the members have said, a world war still exists and the values that our veterans fought for in the First and Second World Wars must continue. We certainly celebrate those young people that are in our armed forces, those family members in this House that have the experiences of that as well. Because we do not want Canada - we want the freedom that we have today.

But I would be remiss if I did not in this resolution thank - that because of those that were lost in France and in other countries in Europe during the great World War - and I speak for those countries and I speak for France because that was the country that we had first-hand account - they are doing such a wonderful - they're memorializing our

veterans and they are helping with the care of the cemeteries in rural France. They are also celebrating a contribution of Canadians and that will never leave their minds. It seems to be continued to be shared with their young people there as well. I know the hon. member from Miscouche would say the same things, that we will continue to be thanked and appreciated as Canadians when we were in the Normandy region, because they continue to say: Canadians helped free us and give us our freedom.

So not only us as Canadians, but the French, whether it was Belgium, whatever country it was that Canadians played a great role. In Vimy Ridge, that battle was just one of the great contributions that our country made, that our veterans made.

In closing, Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. Premier for bringing this resolution forward today.

I thank every veteran that has come before us that contributed to the freedom of our country, whether it was in the Great War, whether it was in World War II or our Canadian armed forces peacekeepers today. Because we want our freedom that we enjoy in Canada and we will never forget their memory. Their memory will continue to live on.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Deputy Premier.

Mr. Webster: Madam Speaker, I, too, would like to rise and support this motion.

Recognition of the end of an era is something that we need not ever forget in this country. It's very difficult for me to comprehend an event like a war, whether

it's World War I or World War II. But within our family, on my mother's side, I did have two uncles that fought in the war and survived and lived and came back and spent their life farming as well.

As a young boy I found it somewhat intriguing to actually ask them what they did and what the event was actually like. One of the individuals that passed away within the past four years was a truck driver. He hauled the bridges so that they could pass over the rivers and so on. His most scary event was one day a bullet went through the - in one door of the truck, right through and just missed his chest and out the other side. He said that was pretty scary. He survived, of course.

The second individual who is still living, and he actually lives in Cornwall here, his first name is Earl. I used to question him from time to time what really went on in this war, and it was the Second World War. He was on the front lines. Canada would be trying to advance the lines, if you like, through a particular area. He didn't overly like to talk about it a whole lot.

One day he decided - I persisted and asked some questions and he said: I was 19 years old, I was trained, I was sent in there. We were in a field, we were laying in the grass, and we knew the enemy was coming. They were advancing slightly. All of a sudden the order came: Fire. I said: How could you pull the trigger? How could you pull the trigger and kill somebody else's son? He said: We had to do it. He justified that and he said: You never really knew how many you killed or if you killed one or hit none or whatever. We were all in the line and we had to do that horrific bit. It really stuck with me. I couldn't go out and shoot a goose. So that's where I'd be.

How our trained soldiers really did some great things, but some horrific things. I'm

sure they all had their struggles and challenges. I really think we need to remember those events and remember the price they paid and the price they lived with after they came home and did those acts that give us the freedom that this great country has. It's hard to comprehend. I'll never really understand how you would get to that point, but lots did and he did. He hated to talk about it but occasionally he would.

A process like we carry out here on a daily event when the House is setting is resolving issues with discussion, dialogue, rather than conflict and blowing up busloads of people and those kinds of events that we see throughout the world. I'm just proud to be a Canadian, and I'm proud of what our soldiers really did for us over the many years and the price they paid. We, as Canadians, need to encourage dialogue throughout the planet and live in peace as much as possible. That's the best way to solve any conflict issues that are out there.

The soldiers that have made that commitment, made that ultimate sacrifice, need to be recognized and we need to keep those views alive as our country goes forward.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It gives me privilege to rise to this very important resolution, history changing resolution. Vimy Ridge was well renowned in the war as being one of the most strategic battles that was ever fought. Infantry Battalion 105 was broken up so that Island members could fight there and we had representation from the Island at Vimy

Ridge. You know what? Sixty-five Islanders died in the battle at Vimy Ridge.

As you know, Vimy Ridge was a strategic stronghold of the Germans. When the Germans occupied that ridge they built many tunnels. They had tunnels and trenches and everything all through it, where they made it almost invincible to get there. The British and the French tried to do invasions there in 1914 and 1915 but were not successful, and lost many - very heavy casualties there.

Canadian soldiers were brought in and they did mock wars before they went there. They did months and months of training on an area that they built with the trenches and everything to prepare for this battle. What happened is they - and that's how their planning and their strategic planning - that we were able to take Vimy Ridge at the time.

It's devastating the amount of casualties that we did lose. But we - the Canadian soldiers - and in a war any country in the world was proud to fight with the Canadian soldiers, because they had the reputation of being the top. They were the top soldiers and the top military people at that time. We were a powerhouse as far as our individual people and the war at that time.

Vimy Ridge battle started, as was mentioned earlier, at 5:30 in the morning on an Easter Monday, April the 9th. We had the first wave - 20,000 raced up the hill. As I say, we suffered major losses, but we did succeed and we did take over the hill and made the Germans retreat. That was very significant in the war at that time.

Germans were forced to back off three, four kilometres, and we had 4,000 German prisoners who were taken at that particular battle also. That was the largest - at that time - that was ever taken in a battle, amount of

prisoners that were ever taken in the war. That was from our Canadian battle.

There were Canadians in that battle that received the Victoria Cross, our country's highest medal for military valour, and they were Private William Milne, Lance-Sergeant Ellis Sifton, Captain Thain MacDowell, and Private John Pattison. That is the highest recognition that can be given to any individual. Out of those four only one was a survivor after the war, and that was MacDowell. Survived the war, the rest did not make it. Approximately 30,000 Canadians fought at Vimy Ridge, and you know, we lost 11,000 casualties. Eleven thousand dead at that (Indistinct).

It is great to recognize that the casualties, the people, John Babcock, who lived to the age of 109 years, to remember this day is what we should do. We should be proud to celebrate this day, because we live in a society, in a country that's free, and if World War I and II hadn't have gone as it had, we could be under dictatorship, and we could be altogether different - a way of life and how we operate today on a day-to-day basis.

In getting close to the end on my comments, I have two boys in the military also, and I have a - and they're both career military boys. Men, I should say now. My oldest boy now is in his 20th year and he's been to three peacekeeping places. I'm telling you that although it's not right in full battle when they're in peacekeeping, it could be almost any day, I guess, when they're there. He's had guns pointed at his head, and held as a prisoner for three hours by guerillas, not knowing what was going to happen. He's gone through the holocaust in Rwanda where it was probably one of the hardest things that can be done. The devastation in unreal. He was in Ethiopia, Eritrea, at that uprising. So when your kids away it's very difficult on you, especially when you know

anything could happen at any time.

So when we celebrate situations like this it gets kind of emotional. Anyway, I will be attending the ceremony today, and I take great pride in being there.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Tourism and Culture.

Mr. Vessey: Madam Speaker, it's indeed an honour to rise today and support this motion to pay tribute to Canada's veterans, in particular, to recognize the immense sacrifice our veterans have made for all Canadians.

Canada's last known First World War veteran, Mr. John Babcock, passed away in February 2010 at the age of 109. Mr. Babcock was the link to what was called the Great War. His passing serves as a reminder to all of us of the price of freedom.

We owe a great deal to our veterans. Over the years these men and women have fought hard to maintain our independence. I'm honoured to pay tribute to Mr. Babcock, our veterans and current members of Canadian Forces. While we mourn Mr. Babcock's passing, it also serves as a reminder of how proud we all should be to be Canadians.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Alberton-Roseville.

Mr. Murphy: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Imagine being 19-years-old, some even younger - as young as 14-years-old - wading

through knee-deep mud and water in a trench in a foreign country. Bullets passing over your head, explosions all around. Your friends falling injured and dead beside you. It must have been horrific. Thank God they had the courage to stay there and fight and carry on with the fight for freedom for us, the freedom that we enjoy today in this great country.

The soldiers paid a great price for our freedom. Their families back home also had to make sacrifices. As the Member from Montague-Kilmuir said there, it certainly causes a lot of stress on the family to have a loved one in a situation over there. Imagine being a mum and having a child or a loved one or a husband over fighting in those conditions.

It was supposed to be the war to end all wars, but as we all know there was another world war shortly after that, some 20 years I guess, after. Canada's still involved in war over in Afghanistan.

We live in the country that offers the most freedom of any country in the world. We live in the best country in the world. Canada is the envy of the world. It is important that we not forget the great sacrifices that were made to make Canada what it is today.

I certainly support this great motion, and thank our Premier and Member from Summerside-St. Eleanors for bringing it to the floor of the Legislature. I'd also like to thank our soldiers that - our last one, Mr. Babcock just passed on, and all our soldiers and veterans from other wars, World War II, and the Korean war. I'd also like to mention our soldiers that are over fighting for our freedom today over in Afghanistan. I certainly support this motion and lest we forget.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Ms. Dunsford: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I do have part of my comments to support this motion in French.

Merci Madame la présidente.

Malgré les décennies qui se sont écoulées depuis la bataille de la crête de Vimy, les efforts colossaux des Canadiens qui ont participé à cette bataille décisive de la Première Guerre mondiale demeurent gravés à jamais dans la mémoire collective du pays.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The decades since the battle of Vimy Ridge have slipped by, but the legacy of the Canadians who accomplished so much in that pivotal First World War battle lives on, and this is directly from some literature from Veterans Affairs Canada.

I think everyone who stood in support of this motion so far in the House has so wonderfully talked about how important it is about the memory living on. It's why we remember, because we make that effort to make sure. As children we all remember being in school and just that one time of year where it's so important to remember, we were often reminded to remember throughout the year. I urge all members to mark several days to take the time to remember. We do have many opportunities to do that. We all have memories and stories of relatives or friends who fought, or were related to those who did, and when we think of them to remember the sacrifices given, the importance of being able to carry on that legacy, the important legacy of those who fought, to our young people.

I think it goes without saying that we are dedicated to that. War never did go away, and as the hon. Minister of Agriculture and Deputy Premier stated, we are learning and we have to continue to learn to resolve conflicts in other ways. All we can do now is to support and encourage everyone in the world to find those answers.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Merci Madame la présidente.

Speaker: *Merci.*

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Community Services, Seniors and Labour.

Ms. Sherry: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I, too, would like to would like to rise this afternoon and support this very important motion brought to the floor of the House by the hon. Premier and the hon. Member from Summerside-St. Eleanors.

I've been sitting here listening and reflecting on the words and the stories of my colleagues in the room with such reverence and humbleness as they talked about what the end of an era means to each one of them. I couldn't help but reflect on the fact that one of the most important elements is the original storyteller to any story.

As we know, we've all been in situations in lives where somebody's with you and you're talking about a certain situation and you'll pass the floor to them and say: You tell it, you were there, you do a better job than I do of telling the story. Lest we forget are the words that came to my mind as I listened, and may we never forget to tell those stories of the veterans now that their voices, our last one, our last Canadian, is gone.

Lest we forget, we must never forget to tell those stories of our veterans. There were many lives that were lost in those battles, but there were also people who returned that life was never the same for them again. Their spirits were broken. Their visions of perfection were destroyed. They were traumatized by the things they experienced on those fronts, things that their words can never really make real for us as free, independent, good living Canadians.

I think that when the Member from Charlottetown-Sherwood spoke about feeling small on the day we go to remember our veterans at the cenotaph - and we've all been there and come home, perhaps stood for an hour in the pouring rain. You know, you get in the car after an hour in the pouring rain, you turn the heater on, you talk about how cold you are. You go home, you run into your nice warm home, hang your wet coat and hat up and let them dry, proceed to the coffee maker, make a warm cup of coffee and talk about the importance of what we just witnessed. But we had the benefit of coming home and getting warm. When you're standing there in the pouring rain, thinking about somebody's young child standing in a trench up to his waist in water with death and rats, just terrible conditions, afraid, wondering if they're ever going to see their mom again, wondering if they're ever going to see any of their loved ones again, it's a long way away from just getting a little wet for an hour in the pouring rain.

So I urge all of us, lest we forget, lest we never forget to try to tell those stories and keep them alive. We do have a job to do, with our own children and our grandchildren coming after us. We need to make sure that the real humanness of those stories are not lost.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Gallant: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I, too, rise today in support of this motion. As we all know, on every November 11th we stand proud and sad for the men and women who we are so ever indebted to. We must never forget the sacrifices our veterans made so we can enjoy our way of life today. I am proud to rise in honour of our last First World War veteran, John Babcock, on this occasion of an end of an era.

As the hon. Minister of Health and Wellness mentioned, I had the pleasure to go to France this summer with her and a contingent from the Evangeline area. It was a very emotional trip. When we went to Vimy Ridge, as she said, it was such a long drive in and such a - just emotional place to be. The biggest regret was that we didn't give ourselves enough time. Once you stood there and you read all the names, you just didn't want to stop. When you think of how many people - have to say it for lack of a better word - lied about their age to join, to fight for the cause, it's quite a phenomenal thing to do. We can ever forget the sacrifice they made.

I had the honour to go to an uncle's gravesite that no one in my family had ever gone to, and it was quite emotional. I never met him, and I was very thankful for the sacrifice that he made. As some members have mentioned in the House, you can only imagine the sadness of moms and dads when they got the word that one of their loved ones hadn't made it. We must never forget the sacrifices they made, and it's great to see such a wonderful job that we do in our schools and with our youth and the veterans that are still with us today to go into the schools.

One thing that I really got a different

perspective on that I never, I guess, really thought a lot of was when we actually saw the people in France, how they kept thanking us and telling us stories. Yes, we've all known stories of loved ones, uncles, great-uncles that went, that came back, some that didn't come back. They actually lived the war. One of the first ceremonies we went to, there was a 92-year-old, I believe, lady in a wheelchair, and she had lost her leg when they came to save Saint-Aubin and her house was bombed. Her whole family was lost, except for her. She was found by Canadian soldiers. Her life was saved. She lost the leg.

There was another story this couple was telling us, and they had myself and my wife crying. They were talking to a Canadian soldier, and he just said: Do you suppose there's any enemies left? Before they could answer he was shot by a sniper. These people lived this every day. One lady said when the waves are high out on the shore at Saint-Aubin, she could still see the ships and the soldiers coming sometimes, and it just never goes away for them. It's so important that we never forget. Lest we forget.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: I'm going to give the floor to the hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock for recognition.

Ms. Dunsford: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

There's been some people arrive recently in the gallery, Derek Lawther and his son Stuart Lawther. There's been some other children here today, too, because I guess it is a PD day. So, welcome to Stuart. Just so that you know, Stuart, what we're talking about right now is we're marking a time just a few weeks ago when the last

remaining survivor of World War I died, Mr. Babcock. Today we're going to have a ceremony about that after the House closes. Everyone here is now speaking to that. Just wanted you to know what was going on. Thanks for coming.

Thanks (Indistinct).

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Tyne Valley-Linkletter.

Ms. Biggar: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I rise in support of this motion, and to share in the heartfelt stories and commemorative words that our members of the Legislature here are giving today. Just to also note that every community, I think, across Prince Edward Island during that time certainly has a story that's connected with World War I and II, and continues to be connected with conflicts across our province. Islanders, their family members, have made great sacrifices and have dedicated themselves to committing themselves to democracy in the world and in our country.

Our province here of Prince Edward Island has given greatly to that cause, and will continue, I know, to commemorate World War I and what it did for our country, and for us that have the privilege of standing here today to be able to commemorate that important time of our history.

So I just want to add my support and thank all our veterans that are serving and have served and will serve.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Are there any other members who would like to speak before I go to the mover to close debate?

The hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River.

Mr. McGeoghegan: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I, too, would like to rise to support this motion and to say that I'm proud to be Canadian, and for what all the soldiers have done for us. I, too, had a grand-uncle in the First World War that got killed by the name of Patrick Evans at the age of 17 years old, and another great-uncle by the name of Jack Evans in the Second World War who also passed away.

Both of my grandfathers served in the Second World War, and my grandfather who I was named after, he started in the artillery until they got to France. The artillery got bogged down in the mud and then they had to join the front lines in the infantry, where he stayed for the last two years of the war.

Anyway, without their sacrifice and the major debt that we owe them, we wouldn't have peace in our country today so that our kids can go in our backyards and play without being endangered. We owe all of that to them. It's a pleasure to support this motion.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition for recognition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I would like to welcome our visitors to Prince Edward Island from Victoria, British Columbia. I hope your granddaughter's feeling better. I understand she's been a little sick. Even at this time of the year it's

great we have some tourists to the province.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development and Attorney General.

Mr. D. Currie: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I rise, too, today, in great honour, to support this motion, and thank our Premier for bringing this forward, and to acknowledge the great sacrifices given to allow us to live in this great province in this great country.

This motion brings to light the end of an era, of the passing of the last surviving veteran of the Great War, John Babcock. I'd like to share a story. A year ago we lost a family member, and that was my aunt. As we were putting closure to her life and getting things in order, we stumbled across some letters, and some letters that were written by my great-uncles, which were brothers of my grandmother, and her name was Jane MacKenzie. The family grew up in French River, Prince Edward Island. We had an opportunity to sit back and to reflect on a volume of letters that were handwritten by my great-uncles during the war. Very powerful documents to read as they shared their experiences and their fear and their anxiety about what they were living in and what they were preparing for as they were going into battle.

So we've saved those documents and I've shared those with my children. As a former educator - always took and will continue to support the work that's done in schools across Prince Edward Island to educate all of our children of the importance of the sacrifices and the ultimate price that individuals made during the wars.

When you look back at 18- and 19-year-olds leaving this province, we must remember that they were brothers and they were sons and they were grandsons and they were friends of Islanders that were here in the province. If you look at the loss and the death, over 60,000 soldiers paid the ultimate price.

I think it's a great honour for me today to stand in honour of this motion and with my colleagues in the Legislative Assembly, as we remember, and continue to carry the torch as we move forward in our communities, and in our province, and in our country.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I also rise today to support his motion. I had a grandfather that was in the First World War. He left Elmsdale Corner at an early age of life to go to Summerside and join the war. He was very fortunate to survive and come back.

I never did have the opportunity to probably sit down with him and share some of the stories, but I know from talking to my dad that he did relate to some of it. It certainly wasn't very nice. I'm very proud of what they have achieved, and hope that at some point and time, as Mr. Babcock has indicated, that our world and our country will provide and have peace. That's not going to come, I guess, in the very near future, but I do support this motion. I think it's very fitting, and I look forward to the ceremonies held out here today.

Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you.

Are there any other members who would like to speak before I go to the mover to close debate?

The hon. Minister of Environment, Energy and Forestry.

Mr. Brown: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'll be supporting the resolution. I think it's very important that any time we can remember the veterans of the wars it's an honour. I hope, although it says the end of an era, it is definitely not the end of the memories, because these memories are recorded and they're - I want to also thank the staff at DVA, they do a tremendous job in helping our veterans. They work day in and day out to support our veterans, and it's important that we do support our veterans throughout their life, especially the ones that come back injured.

My father was in World War II. We were brought up at a very young, early age, all the Brown family - he was an avid legionnaire and Remembrance Day was a very important day for him. He'd have us all up very early in the morning and he'd make sure we'd be at the cenotaph and make sure that we remembered the fallen comrades of the war.

Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Any other members like to speak to the motion?

The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you very much,

Madam Speaker.

It's a pleasure to rise, too, in support of this great motion put forward by the hon. Premier. The losses and the suffering and the dedication, and what our veterans have meant to this country, has been very well-documented over the years.

I also have a sister and a brother-in-law who are now serving in the Canadian armed forces and who both served six-month terms in Afghanistan. So I kind of echo the sentiments of the Member from Kellys Cross-Cumberland. I know what it's like to have family members overseas in areas of conflict.

It's very important - we see it every year - Remembrance Day. As we gather at legions across the province for ceremonies, it's very important that as Islanders and as Canadians we never lose sight of the great sacrifice that was made by the veterans in this country. I believe, as the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development and Attorney General mentioned, we have to continue to put a human face on the sacrifice. Because these veterans that gave their lives and served their country, they're fathers and brothers and women as well as sisters and mothers. Tremendous sacrifice. The greatest sacrifice I think that a human being could make would be to give their life to serve their country.

It's the end of an era, sure. I mean, we've lost our last remaining veterans, who passed away. But I think it's safe to say that really it's not lost on us as Islanders, this Legislative Assembly, or as Canadians as a whole. That we need to continue to be thankful for the freedoms that we enjoy today, because of the sacrifices of those from the past.

Again, just want to add a few comments to this great motion put forward by the

Premier.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Are there any other members who would like to speak to the motion before I go to the mover to close debate?

The hon. Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Sheridan: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I think the important part of these type of days for us as Islanders and as Canadian is that it puts every day, like, into perspective and it really draws attention to how good we have it now. Listening to a number of the speakers here this afternoon, and I'm always impressed with our Vernon River-Stratford member that always brings forward a very passionate talk on whatever the motion may be, and he moves us all to think a little deeper on what it's all about.

In the First World War my mom had five uncles that went overseas and two of them came home, Gordon and Lloyd. I got to know them as little guys and I remember Gordon had his right trigger finger blown off. That's the only injury that he had coming back. But burying three brothers over there would be pretty tough, and I can't imagine what it would be like having a mother and father having five boys overseas and worrying about their demise.

It sure puts it in perspective as to the things that we complain about here in a normal, everyday life in the greatest country in the world, the greatest province of that country. We have it very nice here. All you have to do is talk to some people, as the Member from Vernon River-Stratford spoke about. He has relatives of Dutch descent. You just

have to talk to anyone from those countries that were liberated by Canadians to know how proud we can all feel for the courage that went forward from Canadians as a whole and Islanders in particular.

It's just amazing to think of a 19-year-old slogging through the mud, as my compatriot spoke about a little bit earlier. You want to worry about your own children being away at university and being a little bit homesick. You never think about toting around 32 kilograms of ammunition on your back and trying to climb Vimy Ridge. It certainly puts all of their worries into perspective as well.

So I think about it as my mom used to say when we'd go to Remembrance Day services when we were small and complain about the weather - and it was always dirty on November 11th as you can well remember as kids as well - and she'd say: Think about doing this for three years straight. That always put it in perspective for us and we took in great (Indistinct) in listening to that. We've never missed one of these days.

Madam Speaker, these days put it all in perspective for us and I think it's a wonderful motion and one that makes us all think.

Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Kellys Cross-Cumberland for clarification.

Ms. Docherty: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I just feel it necessary to make sure everybody, not only in the House but those listening, understand that yes, Jordan is a regular member of the Navy but he is not yet in Afghanistan. Unfortunately, he has signed up to go but he's not there yet. So I don't want people to assume that that's where he

is.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Premier to close debate on the motion.

Premier Ghiz: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I'm very touched by the unanimous support for this very important motion. Obviously there's a lot of personal stories in relation to the wars of the past and different family connections and recognizing that democracy that we enjoy today is because of the sacrifices of the past.

I think it's important to realize as a province, and as a country also, just how fortunate we are in relation to where these wars have taken place. We have lived, really, for the last 100, 200 years on a warless, almost, continent. A lot of these wars have taken place overseas. This is about Canadians going out and fighting for other freedoms. I think that's what we're doing today.

I agree 100% with the Member from Kellys Cross-Cumberland when she said: Even if you are not in support of the war in Afghanistan, support the soldiers 100%. I totally agree with that. It's vitally important that we realize that these men and women have made a choice. They believe in what they're doing and I support them wholeheartedly, and I think it's wonderful that we still do have - and I know that obviously the Member from Kellys Cross-Cumberland has some reservations, but she is extremely proud. I think she should be extremely proud.

We're very fortunate that we have individuals today, like also the Member from Montague-Kilmuir and the hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced

Learning with family members who chose to participate in our Canadian military. Because whether we like it or not, there still are conflicts in the world. We do hope for a utopia that will exist some day, but until that day arrives we do need to make sure that we are supporting our military. I think that by realizing what happened in our past so that we can enjoy our future, it will allow us to support our military that much more.

Madam Speaker, it's my pleasure to move this motion today.

Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Hon. members, you've heard the debate on the motion. Are you ready for the question?

All in favour of the motion signify by saying 'yea.'

Some Hon. Members: Yea!

Speaker: Contrary minded?

Motion's carried and it is unanimous.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Sheridan: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Premier, that Motion No. 18 be now read.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk: Motion No. 18.

The hon. Minister of Agriculture moves, seconded by the hon. Member from Vernon River-Stratford, the following motion:

WHEREAS the beef and hog industry in this region of Canada is a vital and invaluable part of a diversified agricultural economy;

AND WHEREAS beef and hog producers have faced unprecedented difficulties as a result of low prices and high input costs;

AND WHEREAS the current state of the red meat industry in this region threatens its future prospects;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Prince Edward Island has committed a significant level of financial resources in support of the beef and hog producers;

AND WHEREAS an industry-led Maritime Feed Grains and Red Meat Working Group has been established to develop a red meat strategy for the Atlantic region;

AND WHEREAS the Atlantic region is not self-sufficient in red meat production, and the loss of this industry would leave the region increasingly dependent on imports;

AND WHEREAS national programs designed to address the needs of the red meat industry do not reflect the unique regional needs of Atlantic Canada;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Government of Canada be requested to develop flexible regional programs that would respond to the needs and opportunities of the red meat industry in Atlantic Canada in cooperation with the industry and with provincial governments.

Speaker: I'll now go to the hon. Minister of Agriculture to open the debate on the motion.

Mr. Webster: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

As the House needs to be aware, this motion

was tabled back on November 12th, 2009. Certainly, it is still very valid today. The red meat sector which, when I speak of red meat, include bulk beef and pork, is very vital to Prince Edward Island and, for that matter, Atlantic Canada. It does face the challenges that exist across Canada completely in North America on pricing. Pricing is the issue.

Our hog industry production is high quality hogs. This particular week hogs have been shipped to Russia as breeding stock. Their shipment's gone or maybe there's two gone. There's more to go. It's a sign of the quality that we have. It's second to none.

Certainly, we as a government realize the integration that's out there that exists with regards to a multi-sector agriculture community which is what happens in the hog industry. What happens in the beef industry affects the potato industry, the grain industry. All our industries are interrelated and the loss of any of those industries is an extreme concern to us.

We know within the hog industry in Canada there needs to be a downsizing of the industry. That's the collective opinion of both the federal government and the Atlantic region. The federal government came through with some programs that would reduce the number of hog production that are produced within a 12-month period from about 32 million to 25 million.

The market can only accept approximately 25 million hogs and we're producing 32. Thus, that's why we're receiving the low price. We, provincially, are carrying on several programs in support of with regards to funding to sustain the size of those two industries where we have them now. We know they've downsized some, we don't want them to slip any more.

Last fall I had a conversation with Minister

Ritz from Ottawa suggesting that he has a large pool of money and we prefer not to have a made-in-Canada strategy for our red meat sector. We wanted a Maritime strategy. We know that we do have MOUs signed between New Brunswick and Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. We work together, we are stronger as an Atlantic region. We met him Ottawa and we said: Look, please don't make a federal agreement that applies to BC, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, where the major hog production actually is. Let's allow us to develop a made-in-Atlantic Canada policy for the red meat sector, particularly hogs.

We did get agreement at that meeting that he would support that kind of an approach. That gives us more political balance, if you like, when we're there as an Atlantic region saying: This program fits us better and the minister - we do have a good working relationship with that minister and he supported that, basically. We've had several meetings, two or three meetings at least, with the Atlantic region at the moment in preliminary discussions surrounding what this strategy might look like and how we might partake in some of those dollars to actually benefit and sustain our industries.

PEI's production at the moment is still about 100,000 hogs per annum. So it's still a significant amount. They are finding their ways into the marketplace, even though Maple Leaf have said they're closing the plant in Berwick, Nova Scotia. There are two other small plants there that want to expand, so they're going to pick up the slack, plus the Quebec plant as well. So we do have a home for our 100,000 that we have. We're assured of that. We're trying to find sustainability.

Over and above that, we have an agreement - and we just arrived at that agreement in principle within the last two to three weeks - that we are soliciting MRSB, I believe it is,

to do a study on the actual hog industry in Prince Edward Island and how we might develop that strategy. Now we'll need to tie this with whatever happens within the Atlantic region. But the hog board here on PEI is basically saying they very much support that, and we're excited about that. We did have some money on the table for funding for their program and we're taking a piece of that money and we're going to do this study and they're in full support of that.

It's extremely important to have an Atlantic content in where we go from here. With regards to the beef plant, as we speak there is new equipment going in there now. It should be operational by the 15th of April, which is going to help the financial viability of the beef plant.

The other issue that we've done with the red meat sector as well is the PEI Federation of Agriculture carry a hold, I guess if you'd call it that, advanced payments out there for the pork industry in particular that are classified under severe economic hardship funding, and we asked for an extension of one year. They asked us to ask the federal minister for an extension of that. So that's in the works. That's moving on. I think that's all I have, Madam Speaker, on that.

It's all a work in progress. We're hopeful that we can sustain the sectors that we have in those pieces of those sectors, and we fully realize that the integration piece of this is extremely important. We also know that change is inevitable. The volume of acres of barley that we produce is probably shrinking a bit because there is less demand. We're moving over and growing more beans. We're trying to have and maintain that diversity in agriculture that's necessary for the success of agriculture.

With that, I'll close my remarks, and thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Vernon River-Stratford to second the motion.

Mr. McIsaac: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'm really pleased to stand and second this motion. It's pretty self-explanatory there. I know most of the agriculture community understands what needs to be done because there is a problem out there. I want to congratulate the minister, too, on the work he's doing. I know he's well respected in the agriculture community for the programs that he's putting in place, and I look forward of course to the MRSB study as soon as it comes to place.

Just a couple of comments. I'm not doing a report from the standing committee on agriculture, that will come later. But just want to note that at the standing committee we've heard on this issue from the PEI Federation of Agriculture, from the NFU, from the young farmers of PEI, even from individual farmers who had - we've had Allan Glover from Guernsey Cove come in to talk about the red meat industry and the need for a new strategy.

One of the interesting things that came out of that, again not a report, but just some common comments, is that there does need to be changes from the present programs. We do need stable pricing of some sort out there for the commodities. A lot of them, of course, would like get a supply management system like is in dairy and in eggs and chicken and turkey. That happened almost 40 years ago and because of the trade rules now that's not going to happen.

But the other one big thing I keep hearing out there is that farmers do not want to survive on grants, subsidies, bailouts. There is not a farmer that I know wants to survive on that. They really want to get their return

for their commodity, for their production from the marketplace. That's what we need to work on.

In the Maritimes we only produce about 15 to 20% of the red meats that we consume, and I find that almost shocking. Although we only produce 15 to 20% of the red meats we consume, we have trouble selling that or even getting a proper return for it.

Comparing our size here, there is one farmer from what I understand, on what they call a feed lot alley just north of Lethbridge, Alberta, who produces about the same amount of red meat in the beef industry that we produce in the Maritimes. But when he has an animal ready to go to market it goes. Here we may have 50 head to ship and we ship a couple a week or whatever and if the price is down we may hold them till next week. Hopefully the price is up.

Out in his operation it's massive. He has cattle coming in one end and going out the other, and when those cattle are ready to go, they go. If there doesn't look like a market it doesn't matter, he has to ship them east whatever, find a wholesaler, dump them on the market. That's the sad part and that's what we're competing against. We have to fix that, like the minister said. Maritime strategy maybe is what we need.

The other thing is we need to be able to feed ourselves. We need to be able to rotate our crops. We need cattle and hogs in order to do both of those. If we want a good crop rotation and we want to guarantee that we can feed ourselves down the road, we have to do something serious about it. Forty years has passed since the farmers in the dairy industry received supply management and for those forty years it's been pretty stable. Thirty-eight years since they received supply management for eggs. But over those 40 years most of the other commodities have struggled with low prices. Sometimes it's

good years, but too many years of those were low price.

It's serious. I think the only way this is going to be resolved is going to be good getting together of the consumers. We need consumers to come on side to help us with this. Look where you're getting your food from. Of course, we need the farmers to come on side, and work together on this. We need government both federally and provincially to work on this as well. But we need all of us working together on this.

I just want to point out, it's not all red meat stats, but this is some of the Canadian import stats, some of the stats that Canada imports. Just listen to this. In 40 years red meat imports have gone up 600%, 600%. We import more than 53% of our vegetables and almost all of our fruit. In a 15-year period our imports increased 160% while our population rose only 15%. In 2004 Alberta imported more than \$170 million worth of fresh vegetables. Their exports were 400,000. Ontario imports more than 400 billion worth of produce more than it exports. We bring in cucumbers, tomatoes, that sort of thing, not just exotic fruit. For every apple we export, we import five. In 2007 Nova Scotia produced half as many blueberries as it did four years earlier.

If this continues we may lose the ability to produce many of the foods that we eat, and we're seriously looking at that in the Maritimes, that's for sure. This impacts our environment, our economy, and our neighbourhood. Local farms get less money than many foreign farms. Fresh food can take days or even weeks to get to us, and it loses nutrition along the way. Local food can be available in hours. The minister talked about a Maritime strategy, and I think he's bang on.

I'm really pleased to second this motion, but I think all levels, consumers, farmers,

government federally and provincially, have to get together on this and work with our minister and work with the government, see if we can't come up to a proper solution to the situation.

Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Do you have unanimous consent?

Premier Ghiz: Yes.

Speaker: Hon. members, the hour has been called, and the reason for that is so that you can all get out to the cenotaph for the ceremony.

Are we all in agreement with that?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader for adjournment.

Mr. Gallant: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I move, seconded by the hon. Member from Summerside-St. Eleanors, that this House adjourn until Tuesday at 2:00 p.m.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The Legislature adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, at 2:00 p.m.