



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Charlie Parker

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Second Session

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2010

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2010

Sixty-first General Assembly

Second Session

12:00 NOON

SPEAKER

Hon. Charlie Parker

DEPUTY SPEAKERS

Mr. Gordon Gosse, Mr. Leo Glavine, Mr. Alfie MacLeod

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. We'll start today's proceedings.

Before we go to the daily routine, I have a Speaker's Ruling that I would like to indulge your attention with for a moment.

SPEAKER'S RULING: Request to take ruling (11/08/10) under advisement (by Hon. Manning MacDonald [Hansard p. 3142, 11/08/10]) Explanation of former ruling.

On Monday I delivered a ruling explaining that it is not in order to ask a minister a question or to raise in debate matters falling under the administration of the Speaker. This was with respect to a question that the member for Dartmouth East had started to raise in Question Period on Thursday, November 4th. After I ruled, the member for Cape Breton South asked me to address a point he had raised, that the member for Dartmouth East had been delivering a preamble to his intended question and that I had stopped him before he had posed the full body of his question. The member for Cape Breton South questioned how I could do this without having heard the entire question that followed the preamble. I understand the member's frustration with the way the ruling unfolded and I think it's worth explaining my reasoning for stopping the question.

As members will know, the Chair prepares for a variety of possible situations that may occur during any sitting and prepares for procedural questions that may come up as a result. I had received a number of media inquiries about a personnel matter falling under the Speaker's administration and I expected the matters being pursued by the press might also be pursued here in the House. However, I'm also aware that questions about matters falling under my administration are not to be posed to ministers in the House during Question Period.

Now, as I explained in my ruling on Monday, that is one of the long-established practices governing the business here in our House. When I heard the preamble to the question raising just such a matter, I intervened to uphold that principle. Perhaps I was like an expectant father and I jumped into action more quickly than usual, but I felt it was appropriate to stop the question before it went too far. A preamble to a question, to the extent a preamble is permitted, is required to be directly relevant to the question that's being asked. Accordingly, when I heard the subject of the question, I felt it appropriate to take action because I'd heard a subject that is out of order.

I understand that many members may not have previously been familiar with the parliamentary practice I was seeking to enforce and that quick intervention on my part may have surprised some members. I trust that members will now know that there was a parliamentary practice and issue, and I certainly was not attempting to impose an arbitrary measure. Because of this, when dealing with some of the less-known principles that bind parliamentary practice in the future, I will be mindful to offer a more immediate explanation of the reasoning I am applying. I recognize that members would have been less surprised by my intervention on Thursday if I had allowed the entire question before ruling it out of order, and I hope they'll understand that my intent was to uphold basic parliamentary principles, not to stifle debate, even though that is how it may have been felt in the spur of the moment.

It is truly my intent to allow members as much latitude as possible in exercising their freedom of speech in this place within the bounds set by traditional parliamentary practice. I thank all honourable members for their attention today and their ongoing co-operation in the days to come. Thank you.

The honourable Minister of Health on an introduction.

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw attention to the east gallery, where we're joined today by Mr. Bill VanGorder, who is with CARP, the Canadian Association of Retired Persons. I would ask Mr. VanGorder to stand and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Health on an introduction.

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, also in our east gallery today we are joined by some members from the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation. They are Dr. Jean Gray, board chair; Krista Connell, the CEO; Ryan McCarthy, Director of Programs; and Nancy Carter, Director of Evaluation Services. I would ask members to give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: We welcome all our visitors here this afternoon and hope you enjoy the proceedings here in the Legislature.

We'll begin the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Health.

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the annual report of the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

The honourable Minister of Education.

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the annual report of the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission for 2009-10.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

[12:15 p.m.]

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Premier.

RESOLUTION NO. 2081

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas hundreds of thousands of Nova Scotians, men and women, bravely fought overseas and came home wounded, or didn't come home at all, in order to protect the freedoms and rights that we enjoy today as Canadian citizens; and

Whereas members of the Canadian Armed Forces continue to serve around the world, promoting peace and helping strengthen communities in war-torn, impoverished countries; and

Whereas every November 11th Canadians celebrate Remembrance Day by wearing a poppy and attending memorial services in recognition of sacrifices that our veterans made and those that our members of the Canadian Armed Forces continue to make;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the Legislature recognize the supreme sacrifice these men and women made for their country and take part in a moment of silence in honour of Remembrance Day, those fallen heroes, and all our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

[A moment of silence was observed.]

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 90 - Entitled an Act Respecting the Office of the Auditor General. (Hon. Graham Steele)

Bill No. 91 - Entitled an Act to Amalgamate the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron and The Saraguay Club. (Ms. Michele Raymond)

Bill No. 92 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 6 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Agriculture and Marketing Act. (Mr. Leo Glavine)

MR. SPEAKER: Ordered that these bills be read a second time on a future day.

NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Opposition House Leader.

RESOLUTION NO. 2082

HON. MANNING MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Leader of the Official Opposition, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas every year, on November 11th, we pause to honour the men and women who have served, and continue to serve, our country during times of war, conflict and peace; and

Whereas active service in wars and conflict touched, and continues to touch, the lives of Canadians of all ages, races and social classes as fathers, sons and daughters have died in the pursuit of freedom and peace, with the remainder forced to live their lives with the mental scars of war; and

Whereas during times when we take for granted our Canadian values and institutions, we must pause to remember those who serve our country in different lands as they did, and continue to do so, believing that their actions in the present made, and will make, a significant difference in the future;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House pause and pay tribute to those brave men and women who have served, and continue to serve, our country and acknowledge our responsibility to work for the peace they fought for, and continue to fight to achieve.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

RESOLUTION NO. 2083

MR. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas tomorrow at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, Canadians from coast to coast will pause to remember and commemorate the sacrifices of members of our Armed Forces - those who never returned to our shores and those who are away from us now, among others - serving our country and defending the rule of law; and

Whereas it be on the battlefields of Europe, the hills of Korea, or in the desert sands of Afghanistan or in other places of conflict and war around the world, Canadian servicemen and servicewomen have willingly undertaken unbelievable hardship to fight against injustice and terror and to promote freedom and democracy; and

Whereas Canada is a beacon of freedom to people all around the world, and we have the brave men and women of our Armed Forces to thank for forging that proud reputation;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly take time to teach future generations about Canada's heroes, to instill in our children and grandchildren a true appreciation of the traditions of peace and freedom we enjoy in our great country and, most importantly, to ensure the courage and sacrifice of Canadian servicemen and servicewomen is never forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Richmond.

RESOLUTION NO. 2084

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Remembrance Day will be celebrated throughout our country on November 11th; and

Whereas members of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 47 in St. Peter's will hold a number of events in memory of those who made the supreme sacrifice; and

Whereas after a ceremony at the St. Peter's Lions Hall, a wreath-laying ceremony will take place at St. Peter's Cenotaph followed by wreath-laying ceremonies at other local cenotaphs and ending with a Remembrance Day supper at Branch 47;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Branch 47 President Jack Hopkins, the executive, veterans and the entire membership for their continued efforts to celebrate Remembrance Day so that we may never forget the sacrifices made by so many to ensure our freedom.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Going into Question Period - again just a reminder - no electronic equipment on for either questioners or answerers, and I just ask that you direct your questions here through myself as Speaker.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS

MR. SPEAKER: The time now is 12:24 p.m. and the Oral Question Period will continue until 1:24 p.m.

The honourable member for Richmond.

JUSTICE - PRISONER RELEASE: ERRORS - JUSTIFY

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, on Friday the Justice Department allowed Vernon Martell to walk free after a court order to incarcerate him. This was not noticed by

the Justice Department until Monday afternoon. The department is quoted in today's ChronicleHerald as saying "Something wasn't done." This is the only explanation that the Justice Department could come up with.

Today the Justice Minister merely says it was a clerical error. Vernon Martell was released by this Justice Department on Friday and on Monday the department and the police apparently phoned up Mr. Martell to ask him to come back to the Burnside facility. My question to the Minister of Justice is, how can he justify these continued errors which are leading to the mistaken release of prisoners in Nova Scotia?

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I'm very happy to say that Mr. Martell is presently in Burnside where he is going to be residing for the next number of weeks. (Interruptions) Or at least until his time is up. There was an error made last Friday that was picked up by the corrections facility on late Monday afternoon and at that time the police were notified and police were in contact with Mr. Martell and he's presently incarcerated now.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, you could almost go back through Hansard Legislative TV from a year ago, two years ago and just replay the same questions, a different Minister of Justice but the same issue. We've been here before, pointed out these errors, they've taken place before and yet we were told this would not happen again, yet we have a Minister of Justice here who will not tell us exactly what went wrong that allowed this type of problem to happen. Nova Scotians are looking for confidence in their system.

The Minister of Justice has said to correct the problems of over-crowding at Burnside, he's going to put 100 new beds. Well, there are not 100 new beds. He's taking the temporary beds and he's bolting them to a wall. At the time, he has sent his Director of Corrections to the Burnside facility to make sure these problems did not occur again. My question to the Minister of Justice is, when will he be able to stand up in this House and say that his department and this government finally have control over justice matters in Nova Scotia?

MR. LANDRY: I'm very glad to answer that question, we have control. The fact is that there will be gaps, there will be errors made over time and they won't stop because this one happened this time. We have looked at the issue, we have addressed it with the employee, we've taken appropriate action. I'm very confident that this issue has been addressed but to bring up the past and say that the previous governments had ample errors - there are errors that will occur in the system. The real issue is here, are we doing something about it? We have addressed it, the individual is incarcerated, but this member, he takes a negative view on everything and hopefully sometime he'll have something positive to say within himself.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians who are sitting at home and hearing today, reading of the type of convictions that Mr. Martell has, knowing that his department allowed a clerical error to have him roam free, I don't think too many Nova Scotians would have anything positive to say to this Minister of Justice. Nor would they expect me to say anything positive in light of this matter. One of these times someone is going to get hurt, an innocent Nova Scotian is going to get hurt because of these errors. They cannot continue, we were told they would not continue, yet the minister tells us, expect it to happen again in the future.

We had been told that steps had been taken to ensure this would not happen again and that the problems at Burnside were under control. My question again to the minister is, when can Nova Scotians finally have confidence that our police, our prosecutors and our judges and that this government actually has the Department of Justice under control?

MR. LANDRY: They can have confidence, I have confidence and I believe in the system. Will there be errors made from time to time? That will occur. This incident did not occur at Burnside, it happened within the court system and that's where the error happened. We are aware of where it happened, we've addressed the issue and are very confident that this issue with the employees that are involved here won't be repeated. But I'm not confident, in dealing with the human element of society, that mistakes won't happen in the future. Each and every time we'll address it in a very timely, professional manner. That's what we've done and that's what we'll continue to do.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton North.

JUSTICE: PRISONER RELEASE - ANNOUNCEMENT

HON. CECIL CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, my first question through you is to the Minister of Justice. Why did the minister decide to wait until four minutes after the Legislature rose yesterday to announce the mistaken release of Mr. Martell? Was it the minister's feeble attempt to avoid facing the music in this place and to ensure the latest foul-up by this minister was not on the evening newscast? Why didn't the minister announce this mistake as soon as he found out?

[12:30 p.m.]

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, you have to look at the time line. We became aware of this issue late Monday evening and I asked to get the complete facts and details. I think as I look at the time line, I remember finishing Oral Question Period here yesterday, which of course was an hour and a half. The message had come in for me to review the press release some time before that, but, of course, in here you can't turn the electronics on and I didn't respond, so that is one part of that answer. Had I looked at it sooner, I would have been able to do that, but as the honourable member can recall from being in this position,

there are a number of things that come and you have to address them in sequence. When I first got that message, I authorized the press release and I'm very satisfied with that release.

MR. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, in January 2008 the topic of mistakenly-released prisoners was in the news and don't I know it. At the time one gentleman proclaimed loudly: Somebody sat on that information hoping the person in question could be recaptured without it becoming a news item. That's not the way to do business.

That gentleman was the honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect, the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. Oh how times change when a socialist regime is in charge.

In January 2008, a policy was put in place in the Department of Justice that ensured Nova Scotians would be alerted immediately if another inmate was mistakenly released. The policy said that any breach would be disclosed and that it would be communicated as soon as it was received. My question to the minister is, has this government changed the policy and if they have, why, or did this minister purposely delay letting Nova Scotians know, when they should have known?

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I take this matter very seriously and I believe in getting information and I believe that one doesn't just arbitrarily react on emotion or try to do things because we can grandstand before the camera or before the press, like some members of this House. I believe in transparency within the system and I am very committed to ensuring that clear messages go out to all Nova Scotians and that appropriate action is taken.

MR. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice may want to talk to the honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect because he would be one of the people to say that strong leaders don't blame staff, competent leaders take responsibility like a man. We are waiting for that minister to stand up and do the right thing in this Chamber. Being minister means the buck stops with him. It means taking responsibility for everything that happens in your department, good and bad. Will this minister announce today that he has evaded his responsibility in this incident and apologize to the people of Nova Scotia for once again putting his political interests ahead of the public interest?

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I can hear the tone and the emotion in the individual member for the past issues that brought some discomfort to him, but I want to assure all Nova Scotians that I am on top of this issue, I am concerned with these types of errors, but gaps will happen within the system. We will not take them lightly, we will deal with them in a very firm, positive manner and I take responsibility for the department and what happens there. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

JUSTICE: PRISONER RELEASE - PUBLIC INFORM

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, how ironic - in this House the Minister of Justice said, I firmly believe you do the crime, you do the time. Well, how hollow those words ring today. The Minister of Justice has acknowledged that his department learned of their mistake last Friday, on Monday afternoon. Nova Scotians are left wondering, after reading today of Mr. Martell's criminal history, why would they not have immediately been informed of the fact that he was supposed to be incarcerated and was, in fact, on the loose? Instead the Minister of Justice now tells us he was too busy in Oral Question Period to approve a press release informing Nova Scotians that this dangerous individual was on the loose and not incarcerated. Let me ask the Minister of Justice, why did you not put out your press release informing Nova Scotians of this error as soon as you became aware of it?

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member of the Opposition for stressing my point. I do believe, firmly, that if you do the crime you do the time. There's no question about that and this individual is incarcerated and will be doing the time. The individual was on a conditional discharge and he breached that. As a matter of the breach, he was called back into the court and that's where the error occurred.

On the issue that he raises about receiving messages and sending out information, I believe that you have to send out accurate information and not just a response to say that you're responding to something - get the facts straight, communicate clearly with all Nova Scotians and ensure that they have all the information, and that's what we did. It's in our process of timing, the fact that I am in the House and wasn't going to check my e-mails until afterwards, and that's the way it is. That's the system and I didn't send it out before then because we didn't have all the information at that point.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, as was suggested by the previous questioner, I really think the minister should speak to the Minister of Energy when he speaks about the competency in his department and the confidence he has in his staff. For the Minister of Justice to stand here and tell us that they learned on Monday afternoon that a dangerous individual had been mistakenly released and that it took over 24 hours before he could get the accurate information required, what an insult to the men and women who work in the Department of Justice, to make such a suggestion, and then to send out the press release right after Question Period, right after the evening news. The Minister of Justice faced the scrum outside and no one believed him, and I don't think any Nova Scotian will believe him.

The questions Nova Scotians had, not only why did it take so long, but had Mr. Martell actually returned to the correctional facility on Monday night, would Nova Scotians have ever learned of the error that took place?

MR. LANDRY: The answer to that question is yes, and I just want to clarify one point. Quite often I find with the Opposition, they use terms such as "dangerous individual". I would like to know what he's basing that on to make that reference?

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I believe it's over 20 offences, break and enter into people's property, a repeat criminal offender, and this minister doesn't consider him dangerous? Is that what the new standard is under the NDP Government, that you can commit crime, as long as you're just a repeat crime offender and no one is physically hurt, even though your property has been stolen, you're a victim of crime, it's not dangerous in the eyes of this minister?

We've reached a new level here under this NDP Government. No Nova Scotian would want Mr. Martell sitting at their kitchen table, let's get that straight, whether this minister considers him under the term dangerous or not. Yet this minister sat on this information for nothing more than purely political reasons. The press know it and Nova Scotians know it. Will the minister finally admit that the reason why it took so long was that he was trying to control the political fallout of yet another release under his watch?

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, boy, you can twist things. The dangerous offender, this individual was out on a conditional discharge by the court. This individual was on a conditional discharge and was in breach of that, those are the facts.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

ENERGY: FRACKING - MIN. APPROVAL

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, onshore drilling is becoming more economically attractive in various sites across Nova Scotia, particularly in areas like Lake Ainslie and Hants County, and many of these projects have been proposed involving fracking as a possibility which, as the minister would know, involves pumping water and proprietary chemicals deep into the ground to blast apart the rock. Now, many residents are understandably concerned. They've not been given information by the Department of Energy about how the department will protect Nova Scotians and several U.S. sites have seen large reserves of groundwater impacted by fracking operations. While the most advanced project is obviously up in Lake Ainslie and is not a certainty, PetroWorth has confirmed that fracking may be used as part of the development process there.

Mr. Speaker, does the Minister of Energy intend to allow fracking as part of the onshore gas development in Lake Ainslie and will he personally go to meet with residents there to hear their concerns?

HON. WILLIAM ESTABROOKS: Thank you to the member opposite for the question. Through the good graces of the MLA for Inverness, yesterday afternoon I had an opportunity to meet with residents - one particular resident, Thom Oommen, who was very helpful, along with the important copy of the Inverness Oran. If you want to know what is happening in that particular part of Nova Scotia, you read that valuable community paper. With Tom at that time was Angela Giles from the Council of Canadians. There was an opportunity for us, along with staff - Sandy MacMullin, in particular, was present - at which

time we had a very positive exchange in terms of particularly communicating with the residents locally, making sure they are aware of the issues.

There was a community meeting that was held in the Inverness area, very well attended. Sandy MacMullin was there from my staff. It is those open lines of communication that we're going to continue, whether it's with the Council of Canadians or with individual residents, such as Thom Oommen from Inverness. I want to thank the MLA for Inverness for setting up that meeting. It was very informative, I assure you.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I'm aware that the minister met with a couple of people yesterday, but I've been to Lake Ainslie a number of times and they are still wondering when the minister, not his staff, is actually going to come up and meet with them. I heard again from them this morning, wondering when the minister is going to go to Lake Ainslie personally and meet with a variety of residents up there, not just one or two.

The minister didn't answer whether he would be willing to approve fracking. There are many geologists and residents in Cape Breton and elsewhere who may be comfortable with fracking, in fact, yet they don't have the information. Many geologists in Nova Scotia have suggested one of the problems is the regulations that the Department of Energy has, which don't require full containment of wells. If the wells aren't properly constructed, you can have major issues.

When fracking has caused environmental damage in other areas, it has almost always been the result of one of two things: either surface spills or seepage up the sides of improperly-regulated and constructed wells.

Mr. Minister, will you commit to Nova Scotians that if the government decides to endorse fracking, you will require that wells are constructed to the highest possible standards and standards which will be constructed to prevent seepage?

MR. ESTABROOKS: Thank you to the member opposite. Based upon my reading habits, many people in this Legislature would be assured of the fact that I don't often read the New York Times, but I can assure you that a number of interesting articles have been brought to my attention from the New York Times, particularly when they deal with Pennsylvania and upstate New York. Concerns about wells and water, of course, remain at the top of those particular concerns.

In addition, I have had the opportunity to speak to New Brunswickers, part of the native province which I was originally from, particularly in the Sussex area. I am concerned, of course, with the issue that has been brought up, particularly in that part of the region, when we look at the concerns for waters and wells. In addition to that, of course, there is the Quebec situation. So when it comes to fracking I want the member opposite to know and I want Nova Scotians to know that the Department of Energy and the department that I am responsible for are certainly aware of some of the concerns about fracking. We're going to

very carefully monitor the situation. We're learning from other jurisdictions and I want the people from West Lake Ainslie to know that they, of course, live, work, and bring their kids up in a beautiful community that has to remain safe, with safe drinking water. That will continue to remain a priority for this government and this Energy Minister.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, the minister has certainly brought the idea that this is not "Answer Period" to new heights today. He hasn't answered whether he will personally go to Lake Ainslie to meet with the residents, he hasn't answered whether he will actually approve fracking or whether he will consider approving fracking, and he hasn't answered whether he will update the regulations to ensure that the wells are required to be built correctly. Given that, is the Minister of Energy prepared to take personal responsibility for any decision by the government to allow fracking?

MR. ESTABROOKS: Thank you to the member opposite. A number of questions, and I'm not going to attempt to answer them all. The concern that I want that member to know - and I think that members of this House know and members on this side of the House certainly know - as a Minister in this Cabinet and as a Minister of the Crown, I do take things personally. I will be the place, I will be the decider on the issue. It will arrive eventually on my desk. When that time comes, I'll personally stand by the decision.

[12:45 p.m.]

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

GOV'T (N.S.): SPENDING RATE - EXPLAIN

MR. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question this morning is to the Deputy Premier. Yesterday in Question Period the government made a great show of patting themselves on the back for their alleged new-found financial management skills. While they claim that they are serious about getting Nova Scotia's finances back in order, a look at the government's own estimates indicates a far different story. They talk about spending restraint but the fact is that the overall level of government expenditures are up over 6 per cent since they came to power, far exceeding the rate of inflation and population growth. My question is, if your government is so committed to reining in spending as you claim, why do you continue to increase the level of overall spending at this rate?

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's a great question but a lot of this is we're still cleaning up after those proverbial elephants that we had to pay off. Just recently we sent letters to all departments not to go on a spending spree, we've done that. I'll quote a great Nova Scotian when he says, we're going to make sure a penny saved is a penny saved.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I'll assume those elephants are white elephants knowing the history of this government to date. My second question to the Deputy Premier is this, in addition to the spending issue, the government has also said they want to reduce the size of the Civil Service. However, it has recently been reported that the 9.6 per cent of government jobs that were left unfilled by the previous government have now, in fact, been filled by the NDP, losing an opportunity for actual, real constraint by the government. My second question is, why does your government continue to pretend to act responsibly when the facts show the opposite?

MR. CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, I realize that the member was otherwise entertained in another job while that spending was going on by the other crowd. In reality, the numbers that he talked about were numbers that the former government had taken in and taken into the greater Civil Service. We are the ones working at downsizing the size of the Civil Service and it will be down by 1,000, thank you.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I may be new but I am still getting used to that down is up and more is less because that's what I hear from this government when they answer these questions. That is why Nova Scotians are so cynical about they hear from the government today. My final question is, at a time when public confidence in our political system is so low, why does the government continue to play these shell games with its own numbers when Nova Scotians deserve straight answers? It is another example of why we are going in the wrong direction.

MR. CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, I'll assure the Leader of the Third Party and all Nova Scotians that if there is anybody playing a shell game with numbers it's those folks. We're being forthright with Nova Scotians, we inherited a structural deficit that we're going to fix and Nova Scotia will be a better place for it.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Digby-Annapolis.

TCH: SIGNATURE RESORTS - STATUS

MR. HAROLD THERIAULT: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Heritage. The Digby Pines has been a beautiful resort for travellers for more than 80 years in western Nova Scotia. Now, along with the Keltic Lodge and Liscombe Lodge, their futures are in jeopardy. Employees and tourism operators alike are concerned at the reports they've been hearing that it may be sold. My question to the minister is, what is your department doing to ensure that Digby Pines, Liscombe Lodge and Keltic Lodge stay open and operational?

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I can say for the Signature Resorts that are in the possession of the Province of Nova Scotia is that when we came into government we recognized and we do appreciate, that there have been some years of neglect there. These resorts, admittedly so, and I don't think is any great secret, they are in need of great deal of

repairs. Actually, if the member opposite would like to meet me at any point in time, I would certainly go into greater detail. We are exploring some options with respect to the resorts. I'll say in this House that one of the options that we are calling for exploration on, I think if we didn't we would be, it would be ill-fated and so we are exploring a number of options. One of which is what's the value of those resorts on the open market? In order for us to make wise decisions, I think it's prudent on us to explore all the options before we make a decision.

MR. THERIAULT: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Economic and Rural Development. Western Nova Scotia has already been hit hard because the NDP Government's rash decision to cut the funding to the Cat ferry. If the area loses the Digby Pines, there's no telling what economic downfall will hit that region. We're losing jobs, we're losing economic development and we're losing Nova Scotians to other provinces. My question to the minister is, what is your department's plan for economic development if the Digby Pines is closed?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, we never answer questions on what if, what if. But I can tell you this, this government has been working with Team Southwest, working with a strategy about what the future looks like. I'm pleased to say that one of the things that we've learned in the last number of months, if not the last number of years, from working with Team Southwest is that we want to portray the area as a positive, not as a negative. We want to portray the southwestern region as a place, as a destination, which is something new and unique from previous governments.

MR. THERIAULT: Mr. Speaker, I'll go back to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Heritage. These three important tourist destinations all have reported losses for the first time in this past year alone since this government took power. The NDP Government's decision has weakened tourism and economic development in Nova Scotia. These three resorts are icons and tourism in all three could be lost if government does not act immediately to secure their future. My question to the minister is, will you commit to keeping these three crucial tourism destinations open in Nova Scotia?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, what we will commit to is making the best decisions for the citizens of this province. That decision will not be made until we have all the information, all the appropriate information, in front of us. We are doing due diligence. We are not going to act in haste, we are going to make decisions based on good business strategies.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

GOV'T. (N.S.) - BUSINESS: TAX RATES - EFFECTS

MR. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Recently the Fraser Institute released a report on labour market productivity in Nova Scotia. I know the Fraser Institute is a favourite of this government, that's why I chose them in particular for this question. Nova Scotia did not fare well at all in their report. Government may continue to be growing in our province but the report points out that private sector growth in Nova Scotia has become stagnant - another example of Nova Scotia being taken in the wrong direction. My question to the Deputy Premier, how do you expect Nova Scotia businesses to expand and employ people when you continue to make it harder for them to succeed by raising our tax burden to the highest in the country?

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is quite correct. The Fraser Institute isn't one of my favourite institutes of learning. Mr. Speaker, he's right on this, we have some productivity issues here. It was a mess we inherited and it's something we're going to correct and we're going to turn it around. We will go from stagnation to growth.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, we're seeing an example of real leadership in action with these answers so far today. In that same report, Nova Scotia ranked 56 out of 60 provinces and states in North America for our unemployment rate, which now is even higher, today, at 8.9 per cent. My question to the Deputy Premier is, when will the unemployment rate in Nova Scotia actually drop when businesses from here and abroad do not have any confidence that your government will ever lighten the burden that has been placed upon them in taxes and regulation?

MR. CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, we have lightened the burden in many ways and the reality is, companies like Daewoo are investing in Nova Scotia. It's companies like that which are going to bring our unemployment levels down and this province will grow, as I said earlier, and these are the issues that we inherited that we have to turn around.

MR. BAILLIE: These statistics don't just indicate that there is a problem for existing small business in Nova Scotia, but, in fact, they serve as a deterrent to future investment development in our business sector, further endangering our future prosperity. My final question to the Deputy Premier is, when will your government finally take the needs of small business seriously and start implementing policies that actually cause growth and success?

MR. CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, that's probably an area, again, that we agree on, the importance of small business in this province. We've helped them around taxation purposes and we will continue to work with that sector and grow it to make Nova Scotia strong, from Cape North to Yarmouth.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

**JUSTICE - CORRECTIONAL FACILITY: WEEKEND RELEASES
- PAC REQUESTS**

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, on October 20, 2010, the chair of the Public Accounts Committee, the honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park, wrote to the Deputy Minister of Justice. In her letter it states:

“It has recently come to the attention of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts that thousands of prisoners sentenced to jail time were being sent home from the Burnside correctional facility and that some of these criminals have been sexual offenders.

As this issue is now before the Public Accounts Committee, the committee is requesting a response to the following:

1. Which offenders benefitted from these temporary absences?
2. Of what types of crimes were they found guilty?
3. Did they re-offend while out of custody?

Please forward your response within the next two to three weeks . . .”

Mr. Speaker, today is the three-week mark. I’m wondering if the Minister of Justice could tell us why was that information not provided to the Public Accounts Committee this morning?

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I spoke with the member who raised the question with a colleague just a little while ago and said that matter would be addressed and information will be passed on to them.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, there seems to be a different standard in how quickly communication takes place in the Department of Justice because, although they became aware on Monday that they had mistakenly let an offender out, they only put out a press release on Tuesday evening. Although we raised the issue of temporary absences quite a few weeks ago, they’re still working on trying to get that information out, yet when Mr. Vernon Martell turned himself in to the Burnside facility this morning, a press release has already gone out indicating that has taken place.

It’s very clear that there seems to be different priorities within the Department of Justice as to how quickly they get information out. My question, again, when the Liberal caucus tried to file a Freedom of Information request regarding temporary absences, we received a reply with a bill for \$2,000, in order to get that information. I’m wondering, will the Minister of Justice explain why he has not given this issue a bigger priority in his department?

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, the information that's being sought there deals with over a 20-year period. I'm not surprised that it would take some time to gather that data, but we will follow up and see what the status is.

[1:00 p.m.]

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, it's my understanding that when asked earlier today, the Minister of Justice didn't know about the requests that had been made by the Public Accounts Committee. Again, I'm left to wonder exactly what control or influence he is exerting over the Department of Justice.

The Minister of Justice was here in the House when he heard the Premier, earlier this week, talking about the transparency of this government, and yet more and more we're seeing how they're acting like the previous administration in trying to get information to Nova Scotians. Nova Scotians were very concerned, knowing that people were being given temporary absences - up to 15 every weekend. Will the Minister of Justice again tell us, is this delay because they really have something to hide here?

MR. LANDRY: Thank you to the member for the question. As a government we said we were going to release the information. I don't know a lot about the history of this House, but I do know some. One of the things I am aware of is it's not quite frequent that that type of data has been provided before, but we're definitely going to do it, and I thank the member for his request.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

GOV'T. (N.S.) - SM. BUS. SURVEY: TAXES/REG. COSTS - EFFECTS

MR. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business - another favourite of the current government, I know - is the voice of small business in our province. They don't feel like the government is working with them, because they recently released their quarterly Small Business Survey, which gauges the sentiment of small-business owners across the province. The top concern of small business, identified by 65 per cent of respondents, is tax and regulatory costs in Nova Scotia - another example of this government taking our province in the wrong direction.

My question to the Deputy Premier is, how can the government claim that taxes like the HST and other regulatory costs are not a concern of the business community when the vast majority of them identified them as their number-one concern?

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Well, Mr. Speaker, in reply to the Leader of the Third Party, I want to say that that group also said that business confidence is up in this province and we're creating good jobs. Since June 2009 we've either retained or got 7,500 new jobs in this province, and we're moving forward with that and we will build on that.

MR. BAILLIE: Only an NDP Government would claim to have created or maintained jobs, because we all know it is the small businesses of the province that actually create and maintain those jobs. They are doing that despite the performance of this government, not because of it. So in a province where the taxes are the highest in the country and our debt continues to grow, where uncertainty reigns, which makes business investment more difficult, this is what the CFIB members are telling us. My question to the Deputy Premier is, why does your government continue to add to this uncertainty in the business community by refusing to address their concerns, the concerns of Nova Scotia's small businesses?

MR. CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, the only person who seems to think that we are not doing anything is the Leader of the Third Party. In issues like broadband, community development trusts, and productivity innovative vouchers, we've done many things in these areas. That's why we want to move forward. These folks want to drive us back to the past - the past that led us to the problems we face today.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, if the member opposite thinks that I am the only one who feels this way, then he and his government are clearly not listening. So my final question is, why does your government refuse to listen to the voices of small business in Nova Scotia?

MR. CORBETT: Well, we could probably do like the last time they had a majority in the House and that charade of the Red Tape Reduction Task Force - we all remember how well that was listened to.

We listen. We met recently with the small-business representatives and we're listening. We're not only listening, Mr. Speaker, we're taking actions of what they're doing. We're going to do something. We're not going to do a task force and let it gather dust on some desk, we're going to work on behalf of all Nova Scotians to build this economy.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove.

EDUC. MSVU: PARTNERING EFFORTS - ACKNOWLEDGE

MS. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, the O'Neill report made the following recommendation, No. 5g, "Explore the potential for merger or significant affiliation of Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU) with either Dalhousie or Saint Mary's, to mitigate declining enrolment risks at MSVU."

Dr. O'Neill talked about merger without acknowledging the partnerships MSVU already has in place. They have worked with NSCC, the New Brunswick Community College, and they have a joint Masters Program with Saint Mary's in addition to forging several partnerships abroad. They are making every effort to better serve their students and there was no acknowledgment of this work in the O'Neill report.

My question for the Minister of Education is, will you acknowledge MSVU's current efforts to partner and dismiss the idea of a merger with other Halifax post-secondary institutions?

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, I've had the opportunity to meet with the interim president of Mount Saint Vincent a couple of times since the release of the O'Neill report and also the chair of the board of governors. They have carefully explained some of the partnerships that the honourable member has described. As I explained to them, the government sees the O'Neill report as part of their information gathering stage before they develop a process to have further consultations and discussions with the major stakeholders in post-secondary education.

Certainly I think what the honourable member has left out of her initial question is the fact that Dr. O'Neill, I think much to the relief of many people, did say that major structural change at this point would not create cost savings and suggested that any mergers or affiliations, or amalgamations, or partnerships, should be done at the initiative of the universities themselves. So this is not a case where government is going to be demanding anything in terms of those partnerships and mergers.

MS. REGAN: Mr. Speaker, as the minister well knows, the O'Neill report did not get rid of the spectre of a merger. It simply said, oh well, let's delay that for five years, we're not going to talk about it for five years, but it's hanging over their heads at the smaller universities. To say that this report, this deeply flawed report, is part of the information gathering stage begs the question of why would you use it as information gathering if, in fact, this information is wrong or incomplete?

Mr. Speaker, it appears that Dr. O'Neill had his sight set on Mount Saint Vincent from the beginning. He seems to have concluded the institution will have declining enrolment and won't be able to balance its books. Well, in fact, that institution has had 15 consecutive balanced budgets. So my question to the minister is, why are we penalizing an institution that has lived within its means? Isn't that what your government is claiming it's trying to do?

MS. MORE: Mr. Speaker, one of the first steps that this government took after the O'Neill report was presented to the government was to meet with the major stakeholders, the student organizations, the presidents of the universities and some of the board of governor chairs through CONSUP, and also with faculty groups and other interested groups in the province. They had an opportunity to talk and to bring out some of the general themes, to do further analysis. They were offered an opportunity to correct the record if they felt that there was information in there that wasn't fair or didn't describe their particular situation in a way that would be helpful to government. We are collecting further information. You can be sure that any decisions made regarding post-secondary education in this province will be done in a very thoughtful and reasonable manner that will represent the interests of Nova Scotians.

MS. REGAN: Mr. Speaker, wouldn't it have been better if Dr. O'Neill had actually met with these groups more than once and actually got the full story from them, instead of putting in half-truths and misinformation in his report. We paid \$90,000 for this report and it's not accurate; in fact it's clear that Dr. O'Neill missed some key pieces of information when he examined Mount St. Vincent. But the Mount isn't the only one he erred on, he also suggested that NSCAD wasn't doing research - and I'm going to table a document now showing the research grants they've secured. My question to the minister is, will you take note of these inaccuracies and go on record as supporting these institutions as fully independent?

MS. MORE: Mr. Speaker, I just have to repeat that we are providing plenty of opportunity for the degree-granting institutions in this province to provide additional information, to take part in consultations and discussions. They are fully independent organizations and certainly their boards of governors will make decisions regarding what's in the best interests of their institutions, their history, their future and their students, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston.

**SNSMR - MONARCH/RIVENDALE ESTATES:
WATER SYSTEM- FUNDING**

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, the people of Monarch/Rivendale Estates in Beaver Bank have been bounced around for too long by this government and by their elected representative. It is clear from her responses to questions two weeks ago that the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations has no time for these homeowners. While they face unsafe water conditions and the possibility of having a bill of \$25,000 per household, will the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations tell the people of Monarch/Rivendale Estates what the member for Waverley-Fall River-Beaver Bank has done on their behalf to secure funding for this necessary project?

HON. RAMONA JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to start the answer of that question by saying that I did meet with some of the citizens and representatives of Monarch/Rivendale Estates and I have never stated I do not have enough time or time for any citizen in Nova Scotia.

I would like to say that I definitely understand the frustration and concern of anybody who is experiencing the lack of water in their residence. There are areas all across the province that are experiencing some of these concerns. Monarch/ Rivendale Estates, I can definitely understand their frustration, but there was a project in place that did allow them to get water to a certain point.

I am not pointing any fingers, but this is how government works in Nova Scotia, water is a municipal issue. They did not put it on their list of priorities, and so therefore when it came to the department we did not have it as a concern. We now recognize that they do have concerns and we have met with them and I have very clearly stated about our fundings. I understand their frustrations and we are already providing money to HRM.

MR. COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, these residents have been left out in the cold by the government and their representative. The minister also fell back on the old cliché that we'd like to help everyone if we possibly could. She can help these homeowners if she chooses to do so.

The minister pointed to the PCAP funding program, but the people of Monarch/Rivendale Estates aren't convinced that she explored all the funding options available - what other partnerships and options has this minister explored so these people can have safe drinking water?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, I would just like to clarify that unfortunately a number of the residents of Monarch/Rivendale Estates have a misunderstanding about how monies are allocated across the province. I know that I received many letters about all of the different - you know, the Building Canada Fund. They do fit under a PCAP if the municipality would wish to fund it. We are exhausted in our funding at this time, but I will say that I recognize their frustration. I will go back, and I will work with the department and we will have another look, but I will tell you I have exhausted all of the avenues but I will definitely give my commitment to taking another look.

[1:15 p.m.]

MR. COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, if the residents could recycle water the way the NDP recycle stories, the Monarch/Rivendale Estates Subdivision wouldn't need city water. But the story here is that these residents have been ignored by both the member for Waverley-Fall River-Beaver Bank and ignored by this government. How much longer are the people of Monarch/Rivendale Estates going to have to go without safe water? When will the NDP stop ignoring their concerns? My question to the minister is, will there be funding available in 2011 for people of Monarch/Rivendale Estates?

MS. JENNEX: I thank you for the question, but I also want to preface this answer in that this is a problem that we have inherited, this is not a problem that Monarch/Rivendale Estates just developed. This has been an ongoing problem. We did put some things in place at our last session, so this is not going to happen again, because there needs to be appropriate planning. However, my answer on funding for this - you would have to ask the municipality on their list because the funding goes through the municipality, back and forth that way. It's not my place to work directly through Monarch/Rivendale Estates, it would be through the municipality and what their priorities are. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

**COM. SERV.: MT. UNIACKE SENIORS' RESIDENCE
- WATER PROBLEMS**

MR. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Community Services. As the minister is so keenly aware, water and electricity, along with money to pay for both, are essential ingredients in life. However, at a seniors residence in Mount Uniacke they are doing without one of these ingredients more times than they should. At one point last week they did not have water for 14 hours. The problem has been ongoing for a very long time. The fundamental issue right now is the total lack of water available to this residence. Can the minister explain today what officials in her department are doing to alleviate the situation in Mount Uniacke?

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: I thank the honourable member for his question. What I would like to do is find out more about this particular situation. Our staff are always ready and available to help out. Sometimes the situation may involve another department, so to be able to explain to him what we can do, I need to find some more information about it. Thank you very much.

MR. PORTER: Mr. Speaker, originally the water source at this residence was being blamed as the problem, so the water source was changed so that water could be drawn from Murphy Lake, situated behind the seniors residence, but unfortunately the water is not drinkable. It is practically impossible to believe that as we approach 2011, water cannot be supplied on a consistent basis to a government facility. Does the minister see a solution to this difficulty?

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, thank you for the question. I would say that the solution is for me to be able to, as I said before, talk with the honourable member, gather some more information, find out where those responsibilities lie with the water supply and to see if there's a role that Community Services can play in terms of helping out the seniors with the situation. Thanks.

MR. PORTER: Mr. Speaker, I'll put my final supplementary to the Minister of Environment. The seniors have been more than patient, they have a lake right behind their residence, as I said, but no consistent running water. Presently they have equipment set up behind the residence, which somehow has to be protected and enclosed for the winter. The last excuse these folks need to hear is sorry, the waterlines are frozen. Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister, is there anything your department can do, expeditiously, now, to ensure a constant flow of water for these seniors, not only now but in the years ahead?

HON. JOHN MACDONELL: Mr. Speaker, the member would know I have a great interest in that facility. I'll pass his question on to Department of Environment staff to see what's possible with them. The issue around water in that facility has been ongoing for some

time. I think the Department of Community Services has been assuring them of drinking water, that they've been seeing that that facility gets. I'm a little surprised by the lack of water in this recent connection to Murphy Lake, but I'll pass his comments on to the Department of Environment and see if I can get some information back to him.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

ERD: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - ABANDONMENT

MR. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians have had to put up with this government's inaction on the economy for 17 months now. Life is more expensive, thanks to the NDP's HST hike and electricity tax. Young people are leaving the province in order to find work, unemployment is unacceptably high, yet this NDP Government thinks they can tax and spend their way to prosperity. My question to the Minister of Economic and Rural Development is, why has his government abandoned economic development for higher taxes and increased government spending?

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question. Part of that question has already been answered here today, but I'm going to elaborate a little bit, if I may.

Since we've been in government, since June, we've created or maintained over 7,400 jobs. That's through Economic and Rural Development and NSBI, and that's in every region of this country. I have to also comment that the previous government started an initiative called Broadband. Now, when we became government, the Broadband for Rural Nova Scotia initiative wasn't completed, but we're proud to say that under our watch, that is 100 per cent built. (Applause)

I think it's also important, when we talk about the economy and we talk about taxes and we talk about all these things that are job-related, we also have to consider about the Community Development Trust Fund. What this government has done with that money and invested in small- and medium-sized business is unparalleled in recent years as far as governments are concerned. I could go on at great lengths. He asked the question - I'm providing an answer, and the answer is not a short one. I could stand up for a long time to expand on . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, thank you. The honourable member for Kings West on your first supplementary.

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I'll say this government is going on wireless because they aren't plugged into Nova Scotians. Just in the last month alone, 8,600 jobs lost in the province. The unemployment rate is unacceptable at 9.8 per cent; full-time job losses in Nova Scotia have weighted down economic performance. While Canada has returned to its pre-recession employment level, Nova Scotia has dipped below. My question to the Minister

of Economic and Rural Development is, will the minister put in place a winter works program so that Nova Scotians can get back to work?

MR. PARIS: I'll continue where I left off because we've invested in over 23 - Mr. Speaker, this government, \$221 million. That's nothing to sneeze about. We've invested in Nova Scotians in every region of this province. For the last 20 years there's been no movement in Nova Scotia until we became government. (Applause)

The Productivity and Innovation Voucher Program, the number of companies that program has assisted throughout all regions of this province is unparalleled, again, in recent years. We have a track record. We continue to establish this track record . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The time allotted for the Oral Question Period has expired.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, may I be permitted an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Certainly.

MR. CORBETT: In the east gallery is a friend to many in this House, certainly a friend of mine. He's the son of a former councillor from the County of Halifax, former member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage, Kevin Deveaux. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. I move that the House do now rise to meet again on Monday from the hours of 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., to allow the members to get back and represent their ridings at the various ceremonies as it relates to Remembrance Day. I would like to say that I would hope that all Nova Scotians would take the opportunity tomorrow to attend where they can at a cenotaph in respect of the brave women and men who served us so proudly.

Mr. Speaker, I also wouldn't be remiss if everyone would be very careful getting home this week. We realize the floods and the natural disasters that have hit this province and clearly they'll be in our thoughts all weekend, and hopefully everyone will return here safely on Monday.

With that said, Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now rise.

MR. SPEAKER: The business for Monday?

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, the business will be Public Bills for Second Reading: Bill No. 83, Bill No. 85, Bill No. 87, Bill No. 88, and Bill No. 89.

Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now rise.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is to adjourn.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

We are adjourned until 7:00 p.m. on Monday. Have a good Remembrance Day weekend.

[The House rose at 1:26 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 2085**

By: Hon. Frank Corbett (Deputy Premier)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas James Peter Robertson was born in Albion Mines, Nova Scotia, in 1883 and at the age of 34 years, as a private in the 27th (City of Winnipeg) Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, was involved in the Battle of Passchendaele where on November 6, 1917, he led a successful charge on an enemy machine gun, ending the withering fire that had been falling on his platoon; and

Whereas on return to the protection of his own lines and realizing that two wounded soldiers had been left behind, Private Robertson dashed back out into no man's land and under enemy fire returned one soldier to safety but was killed instantly by a shell while returning with the second soldier; and

Whereas for his most conspicuous bravery and outstanding devotion to duty, Private Robertson was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross and was also honoured earlier today by the Minister of National Defence, Honourable Peter MacKay, when he announced that one of the Canadian Coast Guard mid-shore patrol vessels being built in Halifax will bear the name CCGS Private Robertson V.C.;

Therefore be it resolved that this House honour the outstanding bravery and courage shown by Private James Peter Robertson, V.C., and remember the sacrifices made by him and countless others in the name of freedom in two World Wars, Korea, and continuing today in Afghanistan - We will remember.

RESOLUTION NO. 2086

By: Ms. Becky Kent (Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas bullying in our schools across Nova Scotia continues to cause harm and pain to the children of our communities; and

Whereas the students and staff at Tallahassee Elementary School work every day to promote peace, respect, and kindness for one another through innovative and current anti-bullying programs; and

Whereas Tallahassee Elementary School will spend a full week dedicated to the fifth annual “Say No to Bullying” program and wear pink in support of a Nova Scotia-born phenomenon of standing up to bullying;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly commend students, staff, administration, and volunteers of Tallahassee Elementary School for the successful delivery of the fifth annual “Say No to Bullying” program and taking an important stand against bullying in their school and community.

RESOLUTION NO. 2087

By: Ms. Becky Kent (Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas bullying in our schools across Nova Scotia continues to cause harm and pain to the children of our communities; and

Whereas the students and staff at Ocean View Elementary School work every day to promote peace, respect, and kindness for one another through innovative and current anti-bullying programs; and

Whereas Ocean View Elementary School will spend a full week dedicated to the fifth annual “Say No to Bullying” program and wear pink in support of a Nova Scotia-born phenomenon of standing up to bullying;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly commend students, staff, administration, and volunteers of Ocean View Elementary School for the successful delivery of the fifth annual “Say No to Bullying” program and taking an important stand against bullying in their school and community.

RESOLUTION NO. 2088

By: Mr. Jamie Baillie (Cumberland South)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Private George Lawrence Price is traditionally recognized as being the last Commonwealth soldier killed during the First World War; and

Whereas Private Price was born December 15, 1892, in Falmouth, Hants County, raised on Church Street in Port Williams, was conscripted on October 15, 1917, and died two

minutes before the armistice ceasefire, while serving with “A” Company of the 28th Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force; and

Whereas George Price on November 11, 1918, was shot by a German sniper as he stepped out of a house into the street and in 1991, family members travelled to Belgium to see the unveiling of a new footbridge which was officially named the Price Bridge;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly today honour Nova Scotia native Private George Lawrence Price and pay respects to his living family member, George Barkhouse, of Kingsport, Kings County.

RESOLUTION NO. 2089

By: Mr. Jamie Baillie (Cumberland South)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas James Peter Robertson was born in Albion Mines, Nova Scotia, in 1883 and at the age of 34 years old, as a private in the 27th (City of Winnipeg) Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force was involved in the Battle of Passchendaele, where on November 6, 1917, he led a successful charge on an enemy machine gun, ending the withering fire that had been falling on his platoon; and

Whereas on return to the protection of his own lines and realizing that two wounded soldiers had been left behind, Private Robertson dashed back out into no man’s land and under enemy fire returned one soldier to safety but was killed instantly by a shell while returning with the second soldier; and

Whereas for his most conspicuous bravery and outstanding devotion to duty Private Robertson was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross and was also honoured earlier today by the Minister of National Defence, Honourable Peter MacKay, when he announced that one of the Canadian Coast Guard mid-shore patrol vessels being built in Halifax will bear the name of CCGS Private Robertson V.C.;

Therefore be it resolved that this House honour the outstanding bravery and courage shown by Private James Peter Robertson, V.C., and remember the sacrifices made by him and countless others in the name of freedom in two world wars, Korea, and continuing today in Afghanistan. We will remember.

RESOLUTION NO. 2090

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Rudolph Muise is a Surette's Island native who began volunteering with the Progressive Conservative Party as far back as 1953 as a poll agent; and

Whereas Rudolph Muise worked in all the elections held in the province since that time, in all sorts of capacities, from putting out signs, driving candidates, as well as poll clerk or poll agent, and is quite proud of his extensive collection of election memorabilia; and

Whereas over the years Rudolph has had the opportunity to meet some of Nova Scotia's Leaders, including Robert L. Stanfield, G.I. Smith, John Buchanan, John Hamm, and Rodney MacDonald, and although he is no longer a board member in the association, he always keeps up to date on current political activities provincially and federally;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Rudolph Muise on celebrating 55 years of volunteer work and thank him for his dedicated service to the Progressive Conservative Party of Nova Scotia.

RESOLUTION NO. 2091

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Exemplary Service Medal is part of a national recognition program for people who work in high-risk professions that enhance Canada's public safety through long and outstanding service; and

Whereas the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department is awarding five members of the department with provincial medals recognizing 25 years of continuous service to the community; and

Whereas Derrick Church has been a member of the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department for 25 years, responding to emergency calls and undertaking emergency training, providing fire prevention education to schools and nursery schools in the area, and fund raising for the department to purchase necessary equipment, all in support of his community;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Derrick Church for his 25 years of service to the Town of Lunenburg and surrounding communities through his commitment to the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 2092

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Exemplary Service Medal is part of a national recognition program for people who work in high-risk professions that enhance Canada's public safety through long and outstanding service; and

Whereas the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department is awarding five members of the department with provincial medals recognizing 25 years of continuous service to the community; and

Whereas Doug Tanner has been a member of the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department for 25 years, responding to emergency calls and undertaking emergency training, providing fire prevention education to schools and nursery schools in the area, and fundraising for the department to purchase necessary equipment, all in support of his community;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Doug Tanner for his 25 years of service to the Town of Lunenburg and surrounding communities through his commitment to the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 2093

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Exemplary Service Medal is part of a national recognition program for people who work in high-risk professions that enhance Canada's public safety through long and outstanding service; and

Whereas the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department is awarding five members of the department with provincial medals recognizing 25 years of continuous service to the community; and

Whereas Hewitt Hardiman has been a member of the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department for 25 years, responding to emergency calls and undertaking emergency training, providing fire prevention education to schools and nursery schools in the area, and fundraising for the department to purchase necessary equipment, all in support of his community;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Hewitt Hardiman for his 25 years of service to the Town of Lunenburg and surrounding communities through his commitment to the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 2094

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Exemplary Service Medal is part of a national recognition program for people who work in high-risk professions that enhance Canada's public safety through long and outstanding service; and

Whereas the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department is awarding five members of the department with provincial medals recognizing 25 years of continuous service to the community; and

Whereas Tony Feener has been a member of the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department for 25 years, responding to emergency calls and undertaking emergency training, providing fire prevention education to schools and nursery schools in the area, and fundraising for the department to purchase necessary equipment, all in support of his community;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Tony Feener for his 25 years of service to the Town of Lunenburg and surrounding communities through his commitment to the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 2095

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Exemplary Service Medal is part of a national recognition program for people who work in high-risk professions that enhance Canada's public safety through long and outstanding service; and

Whereas the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department is awarding five members of the department with provincial medals recognizing 25 years of continuous service to the community; and

Whereas Kevin Corkum has been a member of the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department for 25 years, responding to emergency calls and undertaking emergency training, providing fire prevention education to schools and nursery schools in the area, and fundraising for the department to purchase necessary equipment, all in support of his community;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Kevin Corkum for his 25 years of service to the Town of Lunenburg and surrounding communities through his commitment to the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department.