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**VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT OF
HOUSE COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS**

**COMMITTEE: STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY AFFAIRS AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**

Thursday, February 24, 2005

SUBJECT(S) BEFORE THE COMMITTEE:

Further Consideration of Motion No. 5 - Attracting New Immigrants to Prince Edward Island.

NOTE:

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS

PRESENT:

Wilfred Arsenault, Chair
Helen MacDonald
Eva Rodgerson
Hon. Jamie Ballem
Hon. Philip Brown
Richard Brown
Fred McCardle
Carolyn Bertram

GUESTS:

Part I - Tony Marshall
Part II - Dr. Kevin Arsenault
Part III - Thilak Tennekone

STAFF:

Marian Johnston, Committee Clerk

STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY AFFAIRS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Thursday, February 24, 2005
2:00 p.m.

Part 1 - Tony Marshall, Director General, CIC Atlantic Region

Wilfred Arsenault (PC) Chair: Good afternoon committee members and ladies and gentlemen from the audience. Committee members, we have an agenda in front of us. I'll give you a couple of seconds to have a look at it, in case you haven't had a chance. And if someone has something to add to the agenda, please do so at this time. If not I would ask that someone move the adoption of this agenda as presented.

Helen MacDonald (PC): So moved.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Thank you. All those in favour signify by saying, Aye.

Committee Members: Aye.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Adopted. Now the Item number two in the agenda calls for presentations so we're going to get right into it. The first presenter is Mr. Tony Marshall, Director General of the CIC Atlantic Region. I had the opportunity to meet Mr. Marshall about three or four minutes ago. I'll perhaps ask him immediately to - for him to give us a brief background of himself and then he can proceed to his presentation. We've agreed that we would allow a maximum of 30 minutes for the presentation, which obviously during that time frame would include a certain amount of time for questions from committee members. So without further delay, Mr. Marshall the floor is yours.

Tony Marshall: Thank you very much, Mr. Arsenault. I'm really happy to be here. I'm very happy that you invited me to present here today. I think this is a really good opportunity. Immigration in Atlantic Canada. I've been in the department for about eight years. In the last year there has been a significant change in the attitude of Atlantic Canadians in general and specifically in communities around immigration. I think it probably springs from a lot of the work that people are seeing around demographics and what's happening to our populations, the aging population in Atlantic Canada. The issue of possible shrinkage of our populations and also concerns about the future workforces that we would have

and so immigration has gone from being a fairly benign subject in Atlantic Canada not terribly political, one way or the other quite neutral, to a subject that is really on people's minds around the future and where our workforce of the future will come from and who will look after us in our retirement.

There's been quite a change in the department itself that has nothing to do at all with immigration issues per say and I want just to cover that off with you. Basically before December 12, 2003, I had about 120 employees working for me across the Atlantic Region, at airports, border crossings, and inland offices. On the 12th of December, 2003, Prime Minister Martin announced the creation of the Canada Border Services Agency and so since that time I have transferred half of my staff from CIC to the border agency. That's enforcement, intelligence officers and port of entry staff that you would meet when you're coming into Canada from overseas, through an airport or cross la and border. So now I have about 60 employees spread across the region which has given me quite a few challenges in terms of critical mass.

Even in Charlottetown here I'm affected by that because we've transferred a position here to the border agency and I have the same problems in New Brunswick where I have offices with two people in them. So there's an issue that I would - that might come up in our conversation around how we deliver our services with a much reduced organization. So I just put that on the table for you.

In terms of what happens in Atlantic Canada related to immigration, we basically - I basically have responsibility for a settlement program for both resettling and settling refugees and immigrants in Atlantic Canada. That program would deliver grants and contributions program of about \$4 million of which about 375,000 is delivered through our good partner here in town, the ANC, Kevin's organization, Kevin Arsenault's organization who is the settlement providing agency for us on the Island and we have about 12 organizations across Atlantic Canada who deliver our services for us. About 80 per cent of our \$4

million in funding goes to language training and that would be a major issue for us in terms of what our work is. So in terms of the programs we deliver, language would be certainly, English as a second language would be certainly a major part of our work and that is where our funding goes.

I'm going to sort of move through this and perhaps spend maybe another five or ten minutes or so talking to you about my world and what I see the challenges for us in PEI and what opportunities there are and then perhaps use the other 15 minutes to answer questions that you might have or ideas that you might have around that.

The first thing I would say, Mr. Arsenault, is we are delighted that you have created or have been in the creation of a population secretariat here. We think that's a fairly good idea. Immigration is not going to solve your population problems or challenges in PEI and it's better to look at from a much bigger view ie the issue of your school leaver or the issue of training of your population and the repatriation of Islanders who've gone away and might want to come back. So I guess I would say to you, I think population in total of which immigration may be a quarter or a part of that issue. So aging population, shrinkage of population, I guess the Department of Immigration's view is we can help in that, but we are not the full answer. I'll give you a sort of a view of that nationally.

In this decade, we will probably have about 600,000 school leavers coming out of our schools per year. We will bring in about 120,000 immigrants, skilled workers into the country. So if you're looking for your labour force of the future, you know, the large part of it still comes out of schooling systems. It doesn't come out of our immigration. Immigration probably deals with the incremental portion, but if you read the media, we're the answer to your prayers. I guess we are not, we are part of the answer and I think the education, the higher education, education of our youth is still the key piece around future human assets to our organizations.

In terms of looking at PEI as an immigrant receiving province, there's been quite a significant change in the last year. You have doubled the number of immigrants coming to PEI in the last 12 months. Traditionally, you've probably had somewhere around 100 to 150 immigrants coming

to Atlantic Canada or coming to PEI of which about a third are refugees. But this year, 2004, I think the number is 300, you've doubled your number, largely through your Provincial Nominee Program which seems to be getting off and working for you.

So the first thing I would say to you, Mr. Arsenault is not the matter necessarily of attracting immigrants to PEI. You can probably do that okay but it is retaining them it's the key. This is where we start ruling into the issues of the population of PEI, right. Basically Anglo-Celt, that's what it is. You have to bore down a long way into the number of people who have roots, ethnic roots in PEI before you get to outside western Europe. I think country number 12 or 13 is basically the Lebanon.

The other interesting thing about your immigration foreign born population, out of a population of 133,000 there are 4,000 foreign born people living here. The interesting thing about that is 3300 of them came here before 1991. So the large number of your foreign born have been here a long time. In the recent years, in the last - in the ten years between 1991 and 2001, we got about 800 people who were foreign born showing in the census. That would tell me, looking at your numbers over the years is that your losing about 60 per cent, don't - 60 per cent of your immigrants that are coming here are leaving. Just by taking the census data of 2001 and looking at the previous ten years what came in here. There may be in and out migration, but the net effect is that you are losing somewhere between 60 and 70 per cent of the immigrants who are coming here.

So the issues are not necessarily attraction. Although I think there's an issue there, we might want to talk about. The issue is really retention. What we know about immigrants in Canada in the last 20 years, is they're not doing well. They are not integrating well, it's taking them longer to catch up with Canadian born. Even though they are better educated than the Canadian born population and generally speaking have better skills coming from where they are coming from, but the issue of how they are integrating into our society is not working.

I think in the budget announcement yesterday, though I have no way of knowing where the money goes, certainly the federal government is attempting to address that and is recognizing that in the setting aside of \$300 million in Canada to

help with the settlement and skills development of immigrants. I don't know how much of that will come our way here, but certainly I am sure we will gain something from that process in Atlantic Canada.

So the first thing I would say to you is the challenge is - we don't have a recent immigrant diaspora in PEI. I guess if we did have one, it would probably be Asian or Lebanese. If there was any kind of foreign born population at some critical mass, that would be what it would be, but there is some good news here. So walking the streets of PEI are 4,000 people who weren't born here. Also walking the streets are about 300 international students who are actually living in our city here. Certainly the work of Holland College and UPEI has been very effective in that area, I think.

Certainly we got probably 20 nationalities of international students at our universities and the other group of people who would be here would be what we call temporary residents, people who would be here on a temporary visa, about 150 people. So you probably got near a 5,000 people out of your 133,000 who are foreign born. So that's say 4 or 5 per cent of the population right and that's not a bad start. It's not a completely white Anglo-Saxon or Anglo-Celt.

We have some history here from the Dutch community, post war and from various other communities through the years. It's interesting to note that in the statistic on - there are 220 people of Chinese origin who showed in the last census as living here. Now they may of been students or they may of been permanent Asians or southeast Asians, but certainly that's the case there. So there's what we've got. There are the issues.

It's very interesting to see if I went around the table here and I was a gambling man and I asked you who the top three countries of immigrations where last year to PEI. I don't think you'd get it right. Are you ready for this. Number one United States, number two Columbia, probably refugees, and number three the United Kingdom. So one of the things that we - you need to start looking at if you are going to get involved in immigration is get beyond the myth. Find out who comes here and who stays here and why. I guess the devil's in the detail, Mr. Arsenault, in a lot of this stuff. When you bore down into the information, Immigration patterns to Toronto are not the same as the

immigration patterns to PEI.

So those are issues. So if Americans from the United States are the number one - I think is 18 per cent of your immigration last year came from the United States. I'm saying to you well maybe there's a market that you need to tap and it's not Damascus or Manila. It may be closer to home and so there are probably opportunities to work on that.

The next piece in the two minutes that I kind of borrow here is, we met over here quite recently related to the Tsunami disaster and we met with the community here and we invited people from the community to a meeting here, I think two or three weeks ago, and I guess 30 people turned up from organizations in PEI of interest around what we deal with the immigration issue and out of that discussion and also the discussion with your director related to population, I think there's a very good opportunity to create some kind of immigration council or forum here, that operates fairly formally and has partnerships in the federal government, the provincial government, the municipalities, the private sector, the NGO community to talk about what you want to do and you have a golden opportunity because PEI is not terribly bureaucratic. I mean everybody pretty well knows everybody and so you can probably focus on that and use our partnerships.

We had a really interesting meeting with ACOA. ACOA has suddenly appeared on the radar screen and they have money which is very nice, but certainly ACOA is very interested - their rising high document talks about immigration and they now see immigration as a social and economic development issue for Atlantic Canada and so we've sat with them, we've sat with UPEI, we've sat with Holland College, we've sat with population folks here with your higher education people to talk about immigration and what we can do about immigration and where are the opportunities and there are opportunities. I think we need to roll our sleeves up, form some kind of organization which we would be very happy to be a partner of, but not get in the way of, to sit down and deal with the issues of how do we attract and retain immigrants to PEI, bearing in mind there are a number of opportunities.

I would say to you the most important thing that works for places like Manitoba and other places, you have got to engage the private sector. People

leave your community for one of two reasons and they are about even. When we asked immigrants why did you not stay, the reason is almost exactly even. I couldn't find a job to match my skills was one reason. The other reason was I didn't feel like I belonged and I was lonely. I lost my sense of community.

So there are those two issues around a capacity to welcome and be an open society who will celebrate immigrants and citizens of PEI and on the other side that there has to be a job opportunity. You can be the most welcoming society in the world, but if people do not have a means of growing in our society, they will leave for another opportunity. So I think those are the two things that I would say they're important. You have got to engage your private sector. They have got to be at the table. If they are not at the table, then government really runs out of gas after a certain length of time.

So I guess those are - there are other issues but those are the sort of things that I see that I think there's an opportunity to work closely together here and I think there's an opportunity to develop. But I also say to you don't forget, before you bring in more immigrants, why not look after the ones you've got so that they don't leave us, and that there are 800 people here in your system to 1,000 people who are there. Are we getting the best return? Are they getting the best return from their time here. So I hope that's useful.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Marshall, a very enlightening presentation. I'll take the order of questions from member. Eva has the first one who has asked for a question.

Eva Rodgeron (PC): We had a little background information here I've been reading and one thing it said, one of the most serious barriers is the lack of appropriate processes for recognizing international credentials and experience.

Tony Marshall: Absolutely. It's fairly critical. We had a meeting in Halifax last week with Dr. Fry, Hedy Fry, who's the Parliamentary Secretary Responsible for Credential Recognition Issues in our department and we had about 50 people there - nurses unions, truckers association, physicians and surgeons, dentists and engineers to talk about how we can get better recognition of people's

credentials and so we got this kind of tension between the associations of professionals and the need for them to recognize credentials.

I think it's an important issue. I've really felt that - I think we missed an opportunity about a year, two years ago to create an Atlantic services to recognize credentials. And I would say to you that would be where we should go. Whether that came through the Council of Maritime Premiers or where that would be, I'm not sure. But there's got to be some kind of vehicle here and in Atlantic Canada I think we should be able to do that.

Eva Rodgeron (PC): Okay so at the present time, there's no mechanism in place that is moving this forward at -

Tony Marshall: Other than a lot of forcing going on between the federal government and the provinces who have jurisdictions over professional associations and so I guess we're there and I think there is dialog going on with physicians and surgeons, certainly with the engineers around how we deal with intermediate recognition or certification of people's credentials so that then we can get into the workforce issues and if we can't do it all, at least we could do it by steps, and some partial recognition. Those kinds of things are what are on the table these days.

Eva Rodgeron (PC): Okay, thank you.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Any other questions for - Jamie.

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): When Immigration Canada now, do you get involved with recruiting or targeting countries to say that - you mentioned the US as an opportunity for us in this province. Do you get involved at your level of trying to encourage people to come to Canada?

Tony Marshall: No I don't have any jurisdiction overseas. I've got a fairly good network of - I know the program director or the program manager in Abu Dhabi. I know the guy in Santiago. I know them through just working together. I guess the key piece here is you got a Provincial Nominee Program - use it. I think sometimes in Atlantic Canada we're a little too passive. We look to other people for the way to do things. We're all looking at Manitoba because they brought in 8,000 people through their Provincial Nominee Program this

year.

Well there's nothing wrong with doing it your own way. There can be a PEI solution for the problem. I mean it's nice to use best practices and it's good to look at what other people do but I really think that sometimes you know we could do that just as well ourselves. So my answer to your question is if I had 300 international students who did four years of work here and - they say about 40 per cent of international students who graduate from our colleges want to stay. Well why not roll them over through the Provincial Nominee Program so they don't have to leave the country at all. If that's what you wanted to do.

I call it low hanging fruit. They're there, they know our culture. There's no problem with their credentials because they are Canadian and if they wanted to stay here that - we should be able to do that through your program and the feds could get out of the way. The only thing we need to be involved with if - would be related to would be health and security issues over seas. But I mean I don't think that's an issue and generally speaking, the Provincial Nominee Program gets - it's crazy but it's true, gets precedent over Citizenship and Immigration's own programs. If you come through the Provincial Nominee Program, you'll get here quicker. And so I think that's the opportunity.

You have the program, you may well have some opportunities to bring some people through that program. I guess the answer that I'm getting from my headquarters is get on with it.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Eva.

Eva Rodgerson (PC): When you talked earlier there about the workforce in order to - whether it's process claims or whatever is now down to half of what you had.

Tony Marshall: Yes.

Eva Rodgerson (PC): And most of them are working in this border agency. Do you see any move to increase your workforce or will that group that's gone always stay over here working on security at the borders or?

Tony Marshall: Yes, I don't see a change. I think it's actually aside from the fact that I've lost some

really good people. I think it's not a bad call. Immigration should be dealt with as immigration. Mixing it with Canadian security means your almost schizophrenic. On one day, I'm removing somebody who's here illegally and the next day, I'm welcoming a refugee. It's a really difficult situation. Whereas now, it's very much an Immigration Citizenship department and I think that's the other issue. Celebrate your immigrants.

You have quite a few immigrants here who are successful and are entrepreneurs. You need to promote and I guess there's a whole issue around the promotion of immigration and diversity as a positive force on PEI and not taking away people's jobs. You're always going to have that issue but it is surprisingly how much people have changed over the last four or five years and we don't hear that as the first clarion call, right. That really people are being to realize that maybe there is something to having a diversified workforce and having a diversified life and it doesn't always have to be the same.

Eva Rodgerson (PC): Would it be safe to say than that in the reduction of staff, is there people in the system due to things moving so slow have just given up and decided not to come here? Would that be a piece of it at all? Because -

Tony Marshall: I think the department is under a lot of pressure. We brought in 235,000 immigrants last year and we've got an inventory of about 800,000. So we can average across the world of three years before, after you make an application, before you would be landed or become a permanent resident. So Canada is kind of a victim of it's own attractiveness to immigrants from across the world. So we are reacting to an awful lot of people who are very interested in coming here and so it's a very difficult situation the department's in.

I think what you've seen in the budget is an effort to do something about that. Basically an allocation of \$100 million over five years will be basically, from what I can give you is if you, a way of increasing our capacity to land people and to process them quickly. I think that's what you are going to see. Certainly our new minister is very involved with that. We've got to get people here faster. You can't expect somebody to make an application and three years later get an interview, I mean, you wouldn't stand for that in the private

sector. And yet that's the situation that our department is in because we have an increasing number of people who want to come here.

Eva Rodgeron (PC): So the people want to come.

Tony Marshall: Yes.

Eva Rodgeron (PC): It's a slow process.

Tony Marshall: The people want to come. I guess you might be seeing change in that. In terms of number one - for the top four countries are for us are basically China, India, the Philippines and Pakistan, and the Philippines and Pakistan would be kind of - they would swing second or third or fourth. You will see probably India increase and China reduce as their middle class expands and the reasons for coming here are not the same thing.

Also watch for the impact of the Canadian dollar. It costs a lot more money to come here now, because of the changes in the Canadian dollar. So when you are making an economic decision in Beijing to come here and their jobs are more available in China, maybe you'd stay home.

So I think in the years ahead, even though China will continue to be the number one source country for immigration to Canada, it'll probably begin to drop off and India will probably expand.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: We're down to about three minutes left. We have three more questions coming, Jamie we'll let you start.

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): But I have six myself?

Eva Rodgeron (PC): This is very interesting.

Tony Marshall: Very unfortunate.

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): I'm just going to pick up on the last point. I won't ask the questions I was going to then.

Tony Marshall: We'll talk afterwards.

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): Yes, okay. When you say that you got a three year waiting

period, so you've got 800,000 people plus that are on the waiting list.

Tony Marshall: Yes.

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): Do you have an interaction between the Provincial Nominee Program to say: okay you can get here faster if you're through a Provincial Nominee Program than coming through us. Do you have the opportunity? Is it possible for you to say: Okay, PEI, maybe you're equipped to handle it quicker than we can, so we'll give you 500 names and let you go after them. Is that possible? How do we get access to that list of 800,000 if we have a provincial program we want to work?

Tony Marshall: Well, if you've got a provincial program, I guess the first thing that I would do is identify who you would want in terms of skills. I mean, you've got to have - is there a skills gap? Who do you want to bring? You can bring them. It's not a problem.

You can probably bring a lot more people than you're bringing just by dint of marketing yourselves a little more, but the issue really is what skills do you need and who's going to hire them and will they be welcome when they get here? Otherwise, what you will do is you'll churn with the association of newcomers. You'll churn there because they'll come here for six months and leave because of frustrations with whatever. So my view of it is get your house in order around what your needs are and then start moving out.

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): But if we're in a position that we have our house in order and we have identified the skill sets and the comment I was going to make earlier when you talk about the sense of belonging and lost sense of community, we've had a lot of success in this province of having Dutch immigrants who maintained their own community. There's the Dutch Canadian Association.

So that has to be part of what our strategy is going to be, to say: what segment of the population do we want? Is there going to be a community for someone from Pakistan to come to PEI? Or are they going to get here, look around and say: Well, okay. There's only four of us here altogether. I'm going to go to Toronto or Montreal.

If we get to the point that, well here's the skill set we require. Here's the sense of community that we think we can offer the best fit. Can we tap into it? You talked earlier about the low-hanging fruit. If we have a list of 800,000 people who want to come to Canada, then wouldn't that be the first place we should go as a province instead of all over the world trying to attract people?

Tony Marshall: Well, the reason why I just wanted to just sort of talk about the focus is if it was Dutch farmers or farmers from Argentina or whatever, that that would be identified. You're going to have to give your population secretariat some legs. You're not going to do it with two people. You're probably going to need five or six or maybe more - 10 people - to really do this because you're competing with other Canadian provinces and you're also competing with Italy, Germany, Japan. There's a whole issue of: Why would I come to Canada versus going to Wales?

The Brits are now working pretty hard, so there's two pieces. I think you're right. Focus on what it is your needs are. You create some kind of a capacity in PEI to go there and do the work that needs to be done on that because you're competing with so many other players, and I would focus on that.

I've always been surprised that we do no business in South America. Why? I don't understand why. Education systems are in Argentina. Chile's a very well-organized country. Central America can be a little dodgy, but we're not doing any business down there - and Canada, and I don't understand it.

So I mean, to me it's those kinds of focused things focused on a certain country that you need to do and rebuild your own capacity to do some of that selection. You're not going to do it with Elaine Noonan. You're going to need some more forces there.

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): I don't know. She's pretty capable.

Tony Marshall: Well, we need four of her.

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): Okay.

Tony Marshall: Well, maybe 10 other people. Three of her. Okay.

Wilfred Arsenault (PC) Chair: Okay. Well, Fred has declined his question.

Helen MacDonald (PC): Well, just on that. When we're talking about competing with other countries, we're not competing against ourselves, are we, as in provinces of Canada? If I'm an immigrant that comes into PEI and things don't work out, do I have an option to go to one of the other provinces?

Tony Marshall: Yeah.

Helen MacDonald (PC): You do have?

Tony Marshall: You've got the charter. As soon as you put a foot on our soil, the charter applies, whether it's a refugee claimant or whether it's somebody who's been here 100 years. They all have the same rights and ability, so if somebody wants to leave, they can leave.

You may want - in some programs - and that's another thing I would say. Your Provincial Nominee Program doesn't have to be a copy of everybody else's. If you wanted to have a relatives and brothers and sisters category in your program, you could do that.

There may be other processes that you might want to include in that. You may want to identify that we are going to be looking for farmers or whatever the issues would be and that would be choices that you would make as the government of PEI.

Helen MacDonald (PC): Right.

Wilfred Arsenault (PC) Chair: Folks, we have come to the end of this presentation. I did hear the bell. Mr. Marshall, I thank you very much for the presentation you've made. You've brought some very, very informative material for our benefit. Certainly you can count on your material getting serious consideration when our final report is tabulated. We thank you for traveling to Prince Edward Island all the way from Halifax and we do hope that your return trip home is safe and sound.

Tony Marshall: Thank you, Mr. Arsenault. My pleasure.

Wilfred Arsenault (PC) Chair: Thank you. The next presenter is Dr. Kevin Arsenault.

Part II - Dr. Kevin Arsenault, Prince Edward

Island Association for Newcomers to Canada

Wilfred Arsenault (PC) Chair: The next presenter is Dr. Kevin Arsenault. He's here representing the Newcomers Association. It's good to see you again, Kevin.

Dr. Kevin Arsenault: Hi, Wilfred.

Wilfred Arsenault (PC) Chair: And perhaps if you want to start off by giving us a brief - present yourself briefly as far as your background and so forth, and you can proceed with your presentation immediately after.

Dr. Kevin Arsenault: Thank you very much. In the interest of time, I did prepare something. I'm going to stick to the text as much as possible, something I tend not to do, but there are a number of issues that I want to make sure I don't miss touching on.

And as well, I mean there is so much information that I really want the committee to take a look at that I brought some copies of documentation, and in particular, I do want to circulate recent statistical charts showing some information, and I'll be referring to it in my presentation, so if you want to pass that around, and these I recently obtained from Citizenship and Immigration, and they pertain specifically to the data immigration landings for Prince Edward Island, so let me just begin.

I want to express my appreciation to the members of this legislative standing committee for inviting me to make a presentation here today. I'm here on behalf of the staff and the board of directors of the PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada.

Our association was incorporated in 1993, so we've been providing settlement services to immigrants and refugees on the Island for over 10 years and we are the only settlement agency on Prince Edward Island, other than Holland College, which is receiving federal funding to deliver the language instruction for Newcomers to Canada program, and perhaps I'll just clarify - Tony had mentioned that the provincial budget that comes down from Ottawa for settlement services is roughly \$375,000 based on last year, and he mentioned our association, but he didn't mention Holland College, and just to be clear, our association receives about \$173,000 of that \$375,000, and I will add as well that there is a significant portion of that we simply funnel into

expenses for newcomers such as hotel accommodations, food and allowances and that kind of thing, so don't get the impression too early that we're flushed with cash because, as you'll see as I proceed, that's certainly not the case.

Let me start by saying that the public advertisement in the newspapers inviting Islanders to present their views to this committee stated the following: We want to hear your views on how we can do a better job of retaining highly-skilled immigrants in our province.

I would suggest that we need to broaden the language to avoid the perception that PEI is only interested in welcoming immigrants who are highly skilled. The fact of the matter is that we are currently receiving - and we will continue to receive - immigrants and refugees from a wide variety of immigration classes, not all of whom are highly skilled. It is worth taking a moment to review the three main groups or categories of immigrants in the chart that I just sent around, and I obtained these, as I mentioned, from Citizenship and Immigration.

Now there's three spreadsheets. I have another one I'll pass around. I don't know if it's in - yeah, you can pass this one around as well there. The three of them are the number of immigrants landed on PEI in 2003 - and that's a calendar year - by country of last permanent residence and immigrant category, and the same for 2004, and then the third sheet that's just going around now is the number of immigrants to PEI for the calendar year 2004, listed by age, language and PEI community of residence.

So if you look at the first two charts, the legal-sized sheets, you will notice that there are three basic categories of immigrants coming to PEI: Economic class, family class and refugees. Now within the economic class category, there are streams coming as a result of federal CIC acceptance procedures, namely the business living care giver and skilled workers, and there are immigrants coming as a result of provincial acceptance procedures; that is through the Provincial Nominee Program. Within the provincial nominee program, there are three distinct streams of economic class immigrants: Investor class, entrepreneurs and skilled workers.

Now family class immigrants can be children,

parents, grandparents or spouses and partners. Refugees can be either conventional refugees, also referred to as government-assisted refugees or GARS, and there refugees that we receive as part of the federal humanitarian convention refugee program that basically they're destined here by Ottawa, or individuals who have gained refugee status after making a claim to the federal government and that's refugee claimants who land here for one reason or another and make a claim and are accepted as refugees.

You may recall, for example, four Cuban workers who left their boat in Summerside a couple of winters ago and have since been successful in gaining refugee status on the Island, and I'm happy to report that we've stayed in contact with these individuals and they're living on PEI still, and all four have been working and contributing to our economy from the very week they received work permits.

So we are presently receiving skilled workers from all three of these broadly defined groups of immigrants because we also have refugees who are very skilled, but we also are welcoming immigrants from each of these same categories who bring other gifts and assets.

Indeed, many economic class immigrants coming through the Provincial Nominee Program are not highly skilled workers. Perhaps the majority, but have lots of money which they are willing to invest in existing businesses on the Island or perhaps they are establishing new businesses.

Now understanding the wide spectrum of immigrant classes is important because just as each immigrant brings unique gifts and assets to our Island, each also brings particular needs which must be identified and addressed with understanding and sensitivity if we are to be successful in receiving immigrants in a way that makes them feel welcome and happy to stay and make PEI their home for the long term.

Now I would like to make a few additional comments on the Provincial Nominee Program. Clearly the key policy and institutional mechanism at PEI's disposal to achieve increased immigration is the Provincial Nominee Program, as Tony has mentioned.

PEI can currently nominate up to 200 people per

year, I believe, and if we are to follow the path of other provinces, I suspect this number will be increased significantly when the current five-year agreement comes up for a negotiation in 2006.

Keep in mind that 200 people means 200 principal applicants and that on average, principal applicants would likely bring an average of three to five family members, raising the total number of immigrants from this program to between 600 and 1,000 people.

There are many questions being raised about this program. For example, how many people who are nominated are skilled workers? How many are entrepreneurs and how many are investors? Now I don't have those numbers at my fingertips, but I would suggest that although we need economic class immigrants from all three of these streams, we especially need immigrants from the skilled worker class who are far more likely to take root in our communities, raise families and stay for the long haul.

Although it is my understanding that investor and entrepreneur class immigrants are currently penalized financially if they don't stay on PEI for a certain length of time, I also suspect that many - perhaps most - are wealthy enough to pay the fine and out-migrate to Toronto or some other Canadian destination.

So we may be getting an infusion of funds from these immigrants, but we are not likely really addressing the core challenge of increasing our population, nor are we getting the benefits of increased equalization payments from Ottawa each year for each immigrant who out-migrates from PEI.

Perhaps we should also consider how we can design the selection criteria of the Provincial Nominee Program to increase the likelihood that those immigrants we approved to come to PEI will, in fact, stay here and not simply use PEI as a doorway into another part of Canada.

We need to do research to discover what are the key retention factors in order to determine what particular changes should be made in our selection criteria. A member of the PEI Association for Newcomers Board of Directors came to PEI seven or eight years ago as part of that wave of immigrants that came from Croatia and Serbia and

the former Yugoslavia. PEI received over 100 people from that region and many Islanders and Island communities were very receptive and supportive.

A little less than half of those immigrants to the Island are still here today, and although it is only anecdotal information, our board member tells us - and he knows all the people - that of those who left, the people who left were living in large cities back home in their own countries and those who are still here were living in more rural areas. So perhaps we should take a serious look at targeting people for the Provincial Nominee Program with one selection criteria being - are they coming from a rural area or are they going to want to go back to the city that they missed?

We might also want to consider using the Provincial Nominee Program to achieve other social outcomes. For example, the PEI government has an equity employment policy, which supports and encourages inclusion and workplace diversity. However, having said that, I don't believe there are any established targets to guarantee a greater inclusion of visible minorities. The Provincial Nominee Program could establish a policy whereby a certain percentage of applicants each year would be visible minorities destined to become employed in the public service as skilled workers.

We must realize that we need to make conscious choices to overcome institutional racism. I'm quite sure, I should say, that no one made any conscious decision not to nominate a single person from any African country in either 2003 and 2004, but the fact remains - and you can see it in the charts - that not a single person out of the 155 people who came to PEI through the provincial program during 2003 or 2004 is from Africa.

I would like to draw your attention to another handout I am making available, and it's a transcript of a keynote address delivered by Tom Denton, who's from Manitoba, to the Atlantic Settlement Conference held in Fredericton in March 2004 titled "Are You Ready For Regionalization?"

I should perhaps also note that PEI is hosting the next Atlantic Settlement Conference later this year at the Charlottetown Hotel October 26 to 28. Now this annual conference is sponsored by the Atlantic Regional Association of Immigrant Serving

Agencies - acronym ARAISA - at which the PEI Association For Newcomers is a member agency.

Tom Denton has been a central figure in Manitoba's amazingly successful attempts to attract and retain new immigrants, and many other provinces are now looking to replicate Manitoba's success. It doesn't mean necessarily that we have to replicate everything they do. I agree with Tony. We should tailor-make our solution, but there are some key insights I think are worth - and best practices that certainly I'd like this committee to be aware of.

Tom offers key insights on the requirements to emulate those results. As he notes, three or four years ago, Manitoba was doing well to get in the order of 4,000 immigrants a year. Last year - that was 2003 - Manitoba received 6,500. We're targeting 10,000 a year and expect to get there soon. He goes on to say Manitoba's focus is on its Provincial Nominee Program, but it's on bringing in the workers, the people, the families the province needs. Its focus is a subset of the skilled worker class, and it's a subset with a difference.

You probably know how it works. Whereas the federal rules require that you score 67 points, Manitoba requires 55 points. We also expect you to have a genuine job offer and relatives in the province. Focusing on the job offer and making sure there were relatives there predisposed people to stick, and they did - 85 per cent to 90 per cent of them.

He then goes on to say: But Manitoba did something else. They staffed the immigration function and they gave it a reasonable budget. Today, there are 43 working there - and I believe that's since increased another 10 or so - with about a \$9 million budget and roughly only half comes from Ottawa. When I hear provincial PNP function staff with one or two people, I know immediately that the province isn't serious about immigration, so we need more immigrants to make PEI their permanent home.

We have all heard the stats on birthrates and demographic trends, and we have painted gloomy pictures of the dire consequences to our economic security and social infrastructure sometime down the not-too-distant road if we fail to get more immigrants. The key question I pose to this committee today is not whether we need more

immigrants, but rather like Tom asked in his address, do we really want more immigrants?

I know for certain that we will be successful in this long-term endeavor only if we can now, or sometime soon, take steps to show tangible proof to immigrants that we do indeed want them. Needing them is not sufficient. The difference between needing and wanting is encapsulated in the word, welcoming.

Now the other point Tom makes in his address, which I believe is especially relevant to our Island situation, is the imperative to be more welcoming and appreciative of human diversity. I would suggest that there's a lot of work to do on PEI before we can say we have overcome prejudice and broaden our minds and hearts to not simply tolerate, but to actually appreciate those who are different from us and thereby truly desire to build multi-cultural communities.

Some promising signs of progress in this area exist, but there needs to be an ongoing dedicated effort on the provincial government's part to address the systemic need within our schools and within our general population, and again, as Tom notes in his address, remember, it's not enough just to attract immigrants. You have to retain them - or at least a reasonable percentage of them - for your trouble.

If you doubt my emphasis on the need for community consensus in the attracting phase, surely there can be no doubt of the importance of community support for the welcoming, integrating, and hence retaining, phase. That's what settlement services are all about. That's what's opening up to newcomers - being a welcoming community, avoiding clannishness, helping them integrate - are all about. Have you got that attitude already?

I would put the same question to this committee and to all of us. Do we have a welcoming attitude on PEI? For the most part, I would say yes. I truly believe the vast majority of Islanders are indeed open to becoming more welcoming of immigrants, and the earlier mentioned response to the call for receiving people from Croatia and Serbia is testament to that.

On the other hand, as Tom points out in his talk, in 2003, PEI did not have a single privately

sponsored refugee, and in the absence of media coverage on some tragedy where we are called to respond, how organized and consistent is our open attitude to newcomers?

I suspect that for every 50 people who may be open and welcoming to immigrants in principle, but are not organized to actually be in contact with immigrants and express it or to offer tangible assistance to newcomers, it would just take one insensitive or racist person to convince immigrants that they are not welcome, and this has been my experience at the Association for Newcomers.

And just let me share a couple of stories which indicate that we have a long way to go, I believe, before we can boast that we have the kind of organized welcoming attitudes in communities that we will need to significantly improve our immigration attraction and retention rates.

Now brace yourselves because you probably won't like hearing what I'm about to say any more than I enjoy telling it. I want to protect the identity of the individuals I'll be talking about, so I'll leave out names and any other identifying information.

Our front line settlement worker assists refugees in finding apartments. On a regular basis - I would average once a month - she's told over the phone that an apartment is available. She brings the client, who happens to be dark-skinned, to see the apartment just a few minutes later and is told that the apartment has been taken.

A couple of years ago, a black single mother with several young children got past that first stage and actually got into an apartment. She had young children and the agreement with the landlord was that rent included heat. After a couple of months, the landlord decided the woman was using too much oil and refused to refill the tank.

Now this happened in the week between Christmas and New Year's and our office was closed and we didn't find out about it immediately and not until the woman and young children went several days with no heat. All the pipes froze in the house. The water in the kitchen sink was ice. The children were huddled in blankets, literally freezing, when we finally were notified and responded, of course. And on top of that, the landlord insulted her to her face, refused to return her \$500 damage deposit.

I took him to court on her behalf. I was successful in getting a judgment, which I filed with the court, and about a year and a half later, I actually received the money. The lawyer for him called saying that he had some business that was being interrupted by the judgment and wanted to settle and suggested that he settle with half of the amount, and I told him full amount plus interest or forget it, and once he heard the story, he quickly paid up.

But that woman is no longer on Prince Edward Island and although academic searching for reasons why someone from her home country might not be tempted to suggest that it's because there's no ethnic enclave or similar cultural community, we know at the association for newcomers that she was happy here. She would have stayed except for this experience.

Another individual, more recently, suffering post-traumatic stress disorder and general confusion about a radical new culture and environment, found herself really disoriented. We referred her to counseling and we had an interpreter because she still hadn't acquired English, and I found this out through our interpreter that once she told a very sensitive and heart-wrenching story about what she had been through - maybe the first step in the healing process - the counselor set down his pen, looked her in the eye and said: Well, why did you bother coming here? Why didn't you stay where you were? She immediately got up and we had to - I wasn't there, but she was pursued down the street bawling her eyes out, totally devastated. That woman's no longer on Prince Edward Island.

I wouldn't want to tell you how many similar stories that I could recount, but I do hope that you trust that these are, in fact, incidents that are happening, and also on a quite regular basis, clients tell us that they've been told by people working on the front lines of the Department of Health and Social Services: We can't offer you those services, but they are available in other provinces like Ontario, adding that they could arrange a bus ticket for them to leave if they wanted to.

So we need more resources to provide concrete settlement services to immigrants. The federal government continues to indicate the increased importance it places on settlement services in order to assist provincial governments in their

efforts to attract and retain more immigrants, but the funding is just not coming to PEI.

Despite the fact that PEI is receiving many more immigrants to PEI, more than a doubling of landings in one year - from 153 in 2003 to 310 in 2004 - and despite the fact that there's a proportional increase in demand on our settlement agency's programs and services, I have just had confirmed for me this morning that Citizenship and Immigration Canada will not be providing any increase in funding whatsoever for any of the four programs funded by CIC.

I'll not get into the details of what those programs are about, but I would encourage you to review that information, which can be found on our website, which is just www.peianc.com. For the purpose of illustrating my point, however, I will say a bit about one of the most rewarding and successful CIC-funded programs at the association for newcomers - our host program.

Now this program offers a direct way for Islanders to get involved in the settlement of newcomers as volunteers. Island-born residents volunteer to be matched with recent immigrants and refugees in a friendship program. We currently have 24 active matches with immigrant individuals and families, and the potential for more matches is limited only by the fact that we receive just a few thousand dollars to sponsor social events and activities and can only fund a part-time host program coordinator 22 hours a week to set up and monitor the matches, whereas a year ago, we would normally get 50 or 60 people for our quarterly host social events, our last one had 108 people.

I want to stress these are the ways in which Islanders get to meet and know newcomers. These are the occasions where friendships are born, where concrete assistance and advice is given and where decisions to stay on Prince Edward Island are made.

Now the funding proposal which I submitted to CIC asks for an increase from \$30,000 to roughly \$52,000 to bring about a part-time position to a full-time position and to provide a modest increase in program and budget. I expected more money to be available because I know that the allocation to provinces is based on a national settlement and allocation formula and I was led to believe over the years that once our numbers increased, that the

money would increase.

The amount of money to be designated to each province - to my dismay, I learned that this calculation is based on a three-year rolling average for the three years leading up to, but not including, 2004.

That average is 163, not the actual number which we are trying to serve - 310 - and it has been suggested to our association by CIC officials that we may need to limit our host program services to refugees on account of insufficient resources, notwithstanding the fact that program terms and conditions were set up to provide those services to all classes of immigrants under the terms of the host program.

So we're in a real quandary and our board of directors simply decided that we're not going to restrict our - we have many immigrants who are coming to our door wanting to participate in that program and need to participate in that program and we don't ask them if they come from provincial nominee or if they come through conventional refugee because if they need a friend and they're having a hard time, we match them with a friend. But we may have to cut back significantly on our programming, maybe two events a year instead of four. We should be doing six anyway.

So you can imagine my dismay to read in the paper this morning that one of the highlights in yesterday's federal budget was \$398 million to help immigrants settle knowing that PEI will not see a dime more money this year at least and this year is no more than last year and last year was inadequate and also knowing that \$7000 of the amount that's allocated to Prince Edward Island doesn't get to PEI but it actually goes to do audits of these same under-funded programs.

So I don't want to conclude my presentation on this discouraging note because, personally, today I am feeling discouraged because it may be one of these situations where I have to impose a 7 per cent rollback of my staff's wages or lay off wages or cut hours and I don't have to tell you what kind of consequences a rollback of wages takes, especially when the workload increases. So I'm confident something can be done to address this situation. I'm very encouraged that things will get better actually and I believe that they're likely to get better sooner rather than later.

The PEI Government has already made a decisive move in establishing this committee indicating what I believe is a sincere desire to address the many challenges we face to attract and retain more immigrants. We need to take, realize that there is a strength in having humility and we must not be reluctant to admit honestly that we have much to learn and much work to do, both in terms of federal/provincial co-operation regarding who has primary jurisdiction for different pieces of the federal/provincial joint responsibility for immigration nor should we deny or downplay the degree of prejudice and racism that still exists in our population and institutions which must be overcome if our long-term immigration and social development objectives are to be achieved.

And finally, the province has taken another major step in recently establishing the population secretariat which I understand is currently in the process of acquiring resources and establishing terms of reference and a work plan for the future. Another significant sign of encouragement is a newly formed, multi-sectoral immigration committee co-chaired by Elaine Noonan, the Executive Director of the Population Secretariat, and John Barrett, Operations Manager for PEI with Citizenship and Immigration based in Fredericton.

I would strongly encourage this committee to recommend to the government to give Elaine the resources and the leeway she'll need to do, as Tom Denton states so eloquently, accomplish the objectives which have already been established by our government.

Finally, I had mentioned earlier, I'm leaving you with the results of a recent study undertaken by the director of a settlement agency in British Columbia, which offers a report card of how the federal and provincial governments are doing on a province-by-province basis with respect to settlement services to immigrants. Please keep in mind that the data on these charts does not factor in the significant increases in 2004 for PEI and perhaps some other provinces but does give a good overview of just how much more it needs to be done. And with that, I thank you very much for this opportunity to present.

Wilfred Arsenault (PC)(Chair): Thank you very much, Kevin, another quality presentation. Folks, we're on the road here.

Dr. Kevin Arsenault: I probably used up more

than my time but . . .

Wilfred Arsenault (PC)(Chair): Well, we, perhaps maybe we'll entertain . . . we already have four people wanting questions here so maybe, unfortunately, we'll have to limit that to these four people and I would beg that perhaps these questions be as brief as possible. First one to ask to be recognized was Philip, followed by Richard and then, I believe, it was Eva, and then Carolyn. Philip, just go ahead.

Hon. Philip Brown (PC): Thank you, Mr. Arsenault, and Mr. Arsenault, thank you for your presentation. And I guess I wouldn't want to say that we have to be careful in light of your presentation, and the preceding one to a somewhat similar degree, but not to the same degree maybe.

I certainly know from doing work similar that you do now in a past the challenge always to run an organization with limited resources and the need for that but I think the previous presenter made, probably a very valuable point, in that we have to engage the community at large and we have to very much engage the private sector because if it becomes your issue against another presenter and another committee and we can get clouded with what's the most important issue as government, what we should be funding. And I hope that this doesn't digress to that point because this, like every person that lives on our Island benefits us all and the more diversity, the more energy, the more culture, the more life that brings, that that person brings it to our whole community. And I commend Newcomers Society in the work that you do and hope that every day's not discouraging like this one may be but there's always different days.

But I think it is a very important point though that we have to engage the private sector in - and I get kind of discouraged when we talk about immigration that we're just trying to provide people for the planet, if you will, because I don't think that's really what it's all about. I, unfortunately, that seems to be preoccupying the sense of urgency towards immigration today and many people who claim to have success, claim to have been able to provide people to work in certain sectors.

I think in Canada immigration has always been key to our population strategy. From the very origins of this country, immigrations populated the Canadian

country and will continue to do and maybe we entered into a small time relative to our history, a small time in the Baby Boom era of post-second World War where the natural generation of people was exceeded the obvious need for immigration.

But whether it be the French people, the English people, the Ukrainian people, the many people who settled our country. I mean we're all immigrants, it's just a matter of when we got here and so I think now we seem to be centering on some sort of urgency in terms of the declining birth rate, which we all know about, and it's been talked about and it's important to talk about it. But I'd just like to hear your comments on that because I know like relative to your organization, if you have to carry the ball load, you'll never have enough resources.

Dr. Kevin Arsenault: Well, I guess my point is, you know, we need leadership. We need mechanisms whereby we can engage Islanders. And an example of the host program couldn't be a better example of value for money because we're connecting immigrants to people and more than anything else, that's what's going to keep them here. If we want immigrants to stay here, then let's not starve the best working programs and, you know, the old saying - Don't bite the hand that feeds you. But I'd rather die of starvation than to be barely staying alive on a diet that is killing me slowly and, quite frankly, the stress levels and like we have an opportunity here. Let's seize it.

But by pretending that there isn't a problem with, on the one hand hearing daily announcements from government officials that immigration is so, so important and no more important piece is settlement; and at the same time, having a rolling average of three years that are history that have nothing to do with the reality of the numbers that are coming and expect agencies like ours to do twice as much work for half the money that we would be getting if we were public servants with all the stress and conditions and contracts that are, quite frankly, unacceptable to anyone. No one in the private sector situation would accept a tendered contract with the terms that we have to so I think the time has come to sit down and take a look at these things. And as I ended on a positive note, I believe there is a forum there to do that but I'm not going to sugar coat the reality of what we're facing.

And I'll tell you right now it would be quite a shock if people really knew what was going on in terms of

the big picture and I think we need to be honest about this, Philip, and I mean to hear about, you know, the history of immigration and how important it is. Like I don't know how that fits into what we're trying to do here, to be honest. I think right now like we need to address the task at hand and that is that the government has a commitment to bring and keep many more immigrants to enrich our social and our economic life and let's get busy doing that is, I guess, my answer to you.

Hon. Philip Brown (PC): Just a quick comment on it. I think why it's important is for us to understand. Those of us who are settled here for awhile have to understand this is always part of who we are and I think it's part of what you're saying in terms of being an opening and welcoming community that just because my family's been here for five generations, I don't belong any more to Canada than the person that arrives tomorrow.

Dr. Kevin Arsenault: Well, I would agree with that.

Hon. Philip Brown (PC): That's why our understanding should be always open to it.

Wilfred Arsenault (PC)(Chair): Richard.

Richard Brown (L): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your presentation. My district is pretty diverse and a lot of new immigrants that come to PEI come to my district or a lot of them stay in the district and I think it's great, for one. I think it's great, the diversity of my district especially.

A couple of weeks ago, I attended Culturama over at the Rec Centre. It was great. It was great to see the diversity of cultures and diversity of people there and it was great to see the blending that was occurring, you know, between Islanders and the newcomers and a lot of people. And I think, it disappoints me when you do say that about the renting and stuff like that because I've experienced that. You know, I've seen that kind of stuff and it saddens me that we still have some sort of bias or prejudice on PEI here. I thought we got beyond that.

There are people that think, you know, we have a 14 per cent unemployment rate. Why are we bringing new people to PEI? I disagree with that.

I think it's great to have a new culture. We don't also just need the nominee program or the rich immigrants because somebody that is not necessarily rich still has a lot to offer.

And it saddens me when you say, and I've heard this before that - and I want it checked out, Mr. Chairman, once we get our resource - that what is social assistance policy here? I've heard that, you know, we'll give you a bus ticket to go somewhere else. And if that's happening, I want to know it. I want to know if it is policy and I want that policy changed because we cannot be saying on one side of the table saying we want immigrants and we want to help people and we want to increase our population on PEI and on the other side of the table saying: Well, here is a bus ticket for somewhere else. We'll only take the rich. We won't take anyone else. We're not a good community if we do that.

So, you know, I want that checked out, Mr. Chairman, because I've heard it too many times and if it is policy, I think that should be a recommendation of this committee because if we're really going to show leadership here, that's the way we show it. We stop that kind of stuff that's going on and because I can tell the rest of the committee that culture is great no matter where it's from. The mixing of it is beautiful. If you'd saw it down on Friday night over there. It was a great event. People were talking to each other, great food from all across the world. Just from my perspective, it's great. I don't think we have to be all white Anglos or whatever we want to be on PEI. I think once people realize it and if they ever, more Islanders should come to some of these events like multi-cultural day and that and just see it because they will see it's a lot better than what we have now.

So I want that checked out because I heard it too many times and I think we should vigorously go after people, the government, that when there's discrimination of that effect happening because I think human rights does extend to Canadians but these are new Canadian and maybe they may not be registered as Canadians yet but it should extend to them also for a period of time. Thank you.

Wilfred Arsenault (PC): Next, was it Eva or Helen? I lost sight. Was it Eva?

Eva Rodgeron (PC): I've got a question.

Wilfred Arsenault (PC): Okay. Go ahead, Eva, followed by Carolyn.

Eva Rodgeron (PC): Mine is kind of a followup to what Richard said there. What types of services do we not provide here that's provided in other provinces? Do you have anything on that?

Dr. Kevin Arsenault: Yeah. In terms of what is clearly a provincial jurisdiction, perhaps the most telling is English as a second language tutoring program within the public school system and I think there is information in that inter-provincial or if there's not, I could provide the committee with a chart that shows what the different provinces are currently 'cause, as you know, public education is a provincial jurisdiction.

On Prince Edward Island it's really a dismal 60 hours total. In some of the provinces, it's whole years. Now there was a bit of - we have an immigrant student liaison program, which is in four school in Charlottetown, and we've been trying to encourage, you know, more - not just - We don't do ESL but Myra Thorkelson, the diversity consultant with the province actually put on a course in Colonel Gray, I believe, but that was a one time thing where students actually got credit.

And I think there were something like 28 international immigrant students that took that course and it was a wonderful experience and it should be a pilot.

But if you take a look at Gar Andrews' report from his - a couple of years back there, he did a reform or I looked . . . there were invitations to the general public and other parties to give suggestions on funding and programming changes within the education system and one of the recommendations that he made is that rather than, as some of our population diminishes in the schools, to move some of the teachers into that role of itinerant immigrant student ESL teachers and that's a big gap. That's one.

We've had families leave because they knew that their children could get much higher levels of English as second language through training. You can just imagine if a family comes from a country and their child was an A student and they're here for a year and a half and they're failing. They're not going to stay because parents live for their

children and if they have to move and uproot and relocate, they're doing it for their children. And when they see that kind of result and it's only because of a barrier, an English barrier, they make decisions to leave. I'd say like every situation has its own unique circumstances.

In New Brunswick, for example, because Human Resources and Development Canada has devolved to the provincial level, my colleagues in the settlement agencies have managed to negotiate with the provincial government to have some targeted wage subsidy programs so that employers are given an incentive to give newcomers a chance, and once they see just how dedicated and how skilled they are - I mean, you don't want to generalize - but in many instances, they keep them on, full-time employees. We don't have that right here. I mean, there is targeted funding for some groups, but not newcomers, and without having EI eligibility, many other programs available through HRDC just can't be accessed by immigrants, so they go to where they can access those programs to get labour market entry.

Those are two prominent ones. I mean, there are other ones. There's a study, actually, on our website that can be downloaded in PDF format and it's called *Opportunities For Collaboration*, and there's a section of that report that was done by John Eldon Greene that actually looks at gaps in settlement services to newcomers, but also some of the barriers to retention and inclusion.

Wilfred Arsenault (PC) Chair: Thank you. I'll have to move on to the final question. Carolyn, please.

Carolyn Bertram (L): My question that I have revolves around the ESL program, and I've had a few calls from different people and one particular one was just a couple of weeks ago and it was a lady who adopted a child from China and a lot of times, the children being adopted are toddlers or newborns or what have you, and this child was older and school-age and it was her understanding that child would be provided up to eight years with ESL. She believed that there was a national standard for ESL across the board, so that's not there?

Dr. Kevin Arsenault: No, there's no national standard whatsoever. It's entirely a provincial jurisdiction, and she must have been disappointed

to find out 60 hours was the max.

Carolyn Bertram (L): Well, she's really disappointed because she'd just be - you know, there is a language barrier there and I know when I taught in Halifax, there was so much more support there for - obviously, they have more cultural population in Halifax, I'm sure, like Toronto or Ontario have even greater, but certainly if we're attracting - and I know in our own school, Dutch families, for instance - they're bringing school-aged children with them. We have to insure that their language has to be developed and sometimes it's the mother, too, that's at home, too. Maybe it's the father that's going out to work initially when they come to a new land and those supports have to be there because if not, how are they going to succeed in our society?

Dr. Kevin Arsenault: Well, a former employment I had was living in Toronto. I was the director of the Jesuit Centre for Social Faith and Justice, and we had a refugee rights program and I got to know a little bit of the situation, and I'd say there's a real need right now and I guess I'll end on this comment for the provincial government - I know it's not always the easiest to work with our four Island MPs . . .

Richard Brown (L): Oh, it's tremendously easy. They gave billions.

Dr. Kevin Arsenault: . . . on some issues, - it's getting easier - but on this issue that's so squarely joint, man, there needs to be a real concerted effort to address our need because a lot of the models, a lot of the formulas with settlement and immigration and qualification and recognition, they're designed for Ontario and the bigger centers and economies of scale just don't work here and we end up really losing out big time and we need to start getting some targeted programming and funding for our specific needs in a whole range of areas. But definitely for example, I don't know, but I think we'd be a lot better off if we had, as a province - we're one of 10 provinces - I think we'd be better off if we have one person in charge of our own Citizenship and Immigration office. I mean, and this is not a personal thing. This is totally an institutional thing, but to have to be run from Fredericton or Halifax or Manitoba or British Columbia or Iceland is not the ideal situation here for immigration to move forward as we try to work at developing a real partnership. But, you know, I

am under the understanding that our current operations manager from, as I mentioned in the report, is going to co-chair this new committee, which is wonderful news because I think that was a real question. Are we even going to have a senior CIC person on that committee, which is a collaborative committee to move forward on all of this? So anyhow.

Wilfred Arsenault (PC) Chair: Well, thank you very much, Kevin.

Dr. Kevin Arsenault: You're welcome.

Wilfred Arsenault (PC) Chair: I appreciate the wonderful presentation that you've brought forward, and you can count on your presentation getting very serious consideration. Thank you.

Dr. Kevin Arsenault: Thank you very much.

Part III - Tilak Tennekone, Diversity Consultant, Provincial Government

Wilfred Arsenault (PC) Chair: Next, we have a presenter. His name is Thilak Tennekone. He's diversity consultant for the provincial government, so Thilak, would you come forward? And I do hope I pronounced your name correctly. You can perhaps identify yourself, a brief background on yourself and proceed to your presentation.

Thilak Tennekone: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, committee members. My name is Thilak Tennekone. I work with the PEI Public Service Commission as a diversity and policy consultant. I, myself, as an immigrant came to PEI in 1992, directly from Sri Lanka to PEI. Today, I am going to share with you some important factors and some information on government diversity and employment equity policy.

First of all, diversity and equity policy is an internal policy. It is also an employment related policy. So our mission is to insure that Prince Edward Island's public service is able to attract and retain people with talent and a commitment to providing quality service to the community of PEI.

This policy was adapted in 2002. That was about two and a half years ago. The government commitment was to effectively retain and attract qualified individuals based on their competition ability. At that time, given the current events, the

provincial government committee had to work to incorporate principles of diversity and inclusion when we designed programs, policies and especially implement strategies. We also want to create and provide a quality service that are inclusive, innovative and flexible in meeting our committee needs.

We have been talking about creating a public work force to value and welcome diversity. If we have a welcoming workplace with values and acknowledges individual differences, we wouldn't have harassment or discrimination. And we really want to monitor and report the results, insuring that accountability of all parties, stakeholders and especially various government departments and agencies.

In 1998, the *Civil Service Act* was amended to say that the Public Service Commission's mandate is to foster the development of a public service that is representative of our diverse population. I would like to comment regarding the current environment. We know that there's an increasing recognition of rights of minority groups. Kevin Arsenault was talking about immigrant communities. We have other minority groups like aboriginal people. We have people who self-identify themselves as people with disabilities. We know impending retirements of the - baby boomers are retiring in five to 10 years. Our aging workforce and our declining birth rate have created an opportunity to diversify our public sector workforce and we did a number of consultations with public sector workforce and various community groups. Two or three years ago, I did a province wide consultation meeting with aboriginal groups, women's groups, multi-cultural communities, immigrants and organizations representing people with disabilities. Everybody has - there's a big voice. We do have various legislations, acts and policies. They all support this type of initiative.

I want to talk a little bit about the benefits of diversity and employment equity strategies. First of all, PEI diversity and equity policy would support having a public service which offers the opportunity for population growth through immigration. We will have opportunity to hire, attract and retain immigrants. It builds on the commitment of government employment or equal employment practices. It is a social responsible action. Everybody has a right to employment,

promotion, advancement and to contribute. We would have opportunities to have a knowledge-based economy, flexible workplaces and even home-based work opportunities.

Diversity and employment equity strategies would allow us to have proactive and inclusive human resource management and strategy planning.

What is diversity and employment equity? Based on federal employment equity legislation, employment equity refers to the strategies, plans and policies we put in place to correct discrimination employment practices. Basically we talk about four major groups. Number one - Aboriginal people, number two - people with disabilities, number three - visible minorities, mostly immigrant communities and number four - women in leadership and management as well as women in many non traditional occupations.

Diversity is a variation of culture and social identities among us existing especially in the workplace. When we come to workplace diversity it is about varying, acknowledging and respecting of any of the differences such as age, culture, ethnicity, social economic status, gender, first language, thinking style, sexual orientation and so on.

This is our diversity policy statement. We are committed to providing a positive work environment which recognizes, respects and accommodates diversity of individuals. So this policy will foster the development of a public service that is representative of our Island population. Our purpose is to support an innovative and inclusive workforce which at all levels, front level, middle management level and even senior management level, is representative of our diverse population we serve. Our policy recognizes, respect and accommodates diversity of individuals as a basic human right.

The policy goal is to define the roles and responsibilities of each and every government organization. Objectives to meet our goal - this is the key issue to raise awareness and understanding of the value of diversity. At the same time, we have to identify and change the policies and practices that have adverse affect on designated group members. I'm going to tell you who these designated group members are.

We certainly have increased opportunities for qualified members from this designated groups. We have to fully utilize the various range of skills. Designated groups, from our experience and from what we learned from the other jurisdictions: Aboriginal people, people with disabilities, members of visible minorities - this is where my focus will be at when talking about immigrants and immigration issues - and women in leadership and men and women in non traditional occupations.

Public Service Commission maintains an inventory of qualified individuals from various - from these designated groups. One of my duties is to register them with our inventory and to refer them to various government organizations and departments. Since 2002 we have 374 people registered with the Public Service Commission inventory. There are 86 people from immigrant communities or visible minority communities. We have 24 registered people from Aboriginal communities and the rest is from the largest target group which is people with disabilities.

I want to talk a little bit about level of education attainment of immigrant members of visible minority members. I have five people who have PhD's, doctorate of education, three males and two females. I have six individuals who have masters levels education. There are 33 immigrants of visible minority members who have at least Bachelors level of education looking for public service employment. Twenty seven members have technical or trade certificates, electricians, information technology technician and so on. Fifteen people have at least Grade 12 completion.

There are members who speaks languages such as English, French, Italian, Spanish, Japanese, Chinese, Punjabi and several other languages. All of these people have registered in re entry looking for employment opportunities within the public sector. Their work experience, majorities looking for science technology, information technology, and trade sector opportunities. We have trained individuals looking for employment within the hospitality industry, management positions, finance, administrative, program planning and other traditional types of work.

Diversity and employment equity talks about accountability. The Public Service Commission has to play a major role. Departments, we have suffered from public union as (Indistinct) we have

diversity advice committee. The Public Service Commission's main role is to provide leadership in the coordination and implementation of this policy within the government. We have developed educational programs and provide opportunity for education and training. We have to work with the union to raise understanding and awareness of diversity in the workplace.

We provide planning advice and support to all other government organizations. We have reviewed policies and procedures; identified areas if they have a systemic discrimination effect on these minority groups. We have to design and implement a monitoring system to see the diversity progress. We certainly work with community organizations to promote the understanding and value of diversity so my immediate contact is with immigrant communities, Kevin Arsenault's organization, aboriginal communities, women's group and Council of the Disabled, Canadian Mental Health Association, Tremploy and a couple of other organizations.

We established initiatives, special measures and support program to help assist in their job search and to encourage them to apply to the provincial government group. Communication strategies, diversity, promotional strategies, to develop corporate diversity plans with other departments and we have to report annually to our minister on the progress of diversity and employment equity initiatives.

We expect departments to have diversity objectives within their strategy planning and their chart plan. They have to establish and maintain diversity strategies, how many members they hired during the last six months or during the last year. How many diversity awareness programs they have conducted or how many special occasions they have celebrated. The departments have to design and implement their own diversity programs and they have also have to review and identify or even amend any department policy or procedures that have adverse affect on the minority group.

We know that departments have to report annually to the CEO of the Public Service Commission. The union has been very supportive. They have organized numbers of diversity awareness sessions and union has been representing our diversity advice to the committee. Our advice to the committee basically oversees the progress of

this strategy, advise the committee and assist and advise the Public Service Commission on the diversity and employment equity policy.

I would like to make a couple of recommendations. I know it is a very challenging task during the last two or three years I have been working with various government organizations. It is very crucial, it is very important that we or the department have to have diversity principles established into their chart planning and strategy planning process. We have to have diversity objectives and establish diversity as an ongoing process. Departments have to develop incentive measures to attract more diversity members, including immigrants.

From my own experience, I know a number of my clients who have PhD's, Masters level education have complained and mentioned a number of times the foreign credentials is a big issue. Kevin Arsenault and Tony Marshall were saying. I have veterinarians, children education specialists, microbiologist who have their credentials from foreign countries. They are traveling here to get their foreign credentials equal to Canadian credentials as well as Canadian experience and even language barriers.

It is very important that we establish mentorship program to allow immigrants and visible minority communities to get more opportunities for internship and job shadowing opportunities within the public sector, within our department. The summer employment program was a big success.

During the last two or three years, I had a chance to contact a number of international immigrants, international students, immigrant students from community colleges, Holland College and Compu College and so on. It was great at the end of the term. I personally talked to these students and they said: Thilak, that was a great opportunity for us to have to work with government departments. These people are graduating from UPEI or Holland College. They have to come back to the workforce and they have to contribute.

We have to develop on going training on culture diversity and sensitive training on culture sensitivity. And I know it is very important for us to have opportunities to be partner with federal government. I have 400 names in my inventory. The federal government, as far as I know, federal

government doesn't have such a program right now. So it is important that we partner with federal government sometime to share this information. They need minority group members, they need immigrant communities. So we have to have partnership programs with the federal government and federal departments.

Within the provincial government, how do you establish collective efforts. We know that employment development agency have their own program, seasonal hiring centre, so if we get together and make collaborative effort to make more job opportunities for visible minority members and immigrant communities I think that would be very effective. We certainly have to maintain working relationship and positive dialogue with academic institutions to identify and attract more immigrants to our workforce. So that is my presentation. If you have any questions or comments, please do.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Thank you very much, Thilak. We do have some time for a few questions. This is the last presentation of today and we do have other business to attend to after the presentation. The first person with a question is Fred, you are on.

Fred McCardle (PC): Why are you emphasizing in the public sector? You say you got a list of people who want public jobs. Everyone of us have got long lists of people who want public sector jobs. Why are you focusing on the public sector?

Thilak Teenekone: Most people want to work with public sector. We are the largest employer and some of the immigrants or even visible minority members have worked in public sector in their own countries before they immigrated to Canada. The other thing is more secure jobs or their personal interest they really want to work with the provincial government or any of the departments or any of the agencies.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Philip, you're next.

Honourable Philip Brown (PC): Thank you, Thilak, I appreciated your presentation. I noticed, and I know it's not specific to our discussion here on immigration, but you included Aboriginal people within your diversity program and I have the largest Aboriginal community in my district. I understand the challenges just within our own

community of accepting that the diversity of a culture that has been here before us. It's an ongoing challenge, I believe is going well but it is a work in progress I'll also say.

I do, considering that you came here in 1992 and it was pointed out by a previous presenter, one of the challenges on PEI being a relatively small community is that while we say everyone knows everyone, it is true not everyone knows everyone because when you move into the community you don't know everyone and it seems to be important to know someone in order to advance. It must be a challenge to gain employment within the private or the public sector feeling like an outsider regardless of minority status or whatever. Do you have any comments on that?

Thilak Teenekone: Yes. Going back to the exact point you mentioned, when I came to PEI in 1992, I was the only Sri Lankan to this province. It was very challenging. When you integrate into a new society, when you adjust into a new community, the only strength I had was one of my friends from PEI. That was the reason I came to PEI. It was a long journey to me. Nobody was there to speak my own language and nobody - I didn't have any place to go and buy my own ingredients, I didn't have any place to go and - I am a Buddhist, there's wasn't a Buddhist temple there. There's not a Buddhist temple is still there. So it was very hard. It was very challenging as well. But I tried to manage everything and I, myself was very positive and I was encouraged and I had to go back to university and I had to do all kinds of volunteer work and I had to make friends and that is why I like PEI.

Today we have five or six families but it is still a small community. I know one of the major factors that people - when immigrants come to this province, number one is employment and number two would be having their own communities. In my case, even though I didn't have anybody here, I didn't want to leave the province because I had a friend and that was a big, big support to me.

Honourable Philip Brown (PC): Just one other quick comment. You pointed out the recognition of foreign credentials. The previous two people have said that too and we hear that, especially we hear it in the medical profession, but we hear it all over. Is Canada particularly behind in this or what is the situation there, because it seems to be something

that we have to address. I mean there was a - the Prime Minister had a town hall meeting on CBC and that was a question that he received is the recognition of credentials of immigrants whether they have medical degrees or whatever. Why are we hesitant to recognize that?

Thilak Teenekone: From my experience and my understanding it is the big issue I know that. There are a number of them. (Indistinct) my clients have the same challenge. A veterinarian from East India, a microbiologist from Ukraine, a child literacy specialist from Sri Lanka, they all have PhD's but the challenge is how to get the equivalency here. I think Kevin Arsenault will agree with me. The federal government, the Federal Public Service Commission has some measures. They have some designated institutions to get Canadian equivalency.

My client, a number of my clients have been through the process but it is not an easy thing in terms of the costs and timing and when immigrants come to PEI from (Indistinct) to begin their life, they have families, they have kids that have to go to school. They themselves sometimes have to study English and all kinds of things to adjust or to fit into this new society.

A number of nurses who worked previously in their own countries just (Indistinct) they didn't want to come here because licensing bodies, we have nurses union, we have - to get the nurses license you have to go through the whole process. So that is, actually the people have so many other things as well. So they are struggling and they are challenging to get the Canadian equivalency.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Eva has a question.

Eva Rodgeron (PC): Yes I was just wondering when you - on your graph there it seems people with disabilities seem to be way up there.

Thilak Teenekone: Yes.

Eva Rodgeron (PC): What would you say is the biggest factor in them being able to, is there . . .

Thilak Teenekone: Through my research I have found that there are 15 to 18,000 Islanders, self identified themselves as people with disabilities. Our policy definition is very broad. We accept anybody who is saying that I am mentally disabled

or I am physical disabled, I have learning disabilities or I have another type of disability. I have a number of clients who have arthritis, serious allergies or even people who had heart surgeries. That is a disability.

Eva Rodgerson (PC): So percentage wise, would there be more applicants with disabilities versus maybe Aboriginals.

Thilak Teenekone: Yes.

Eva Rodgerson (PC): Yes.

Thilak Teenekone: Percentage wise the highest number, the highest rate I have from people with disabilities.

Eva Rodgerson (PC): Would be the highest number -

Thilak Teenekone: They would be the highest number.

Eva Rodgerson (PC): So it's hard to see the percentages of people hired based on how many have applied.

Thilak Teenekone: Yes, that's a very good question actually. To get that exact numbers we have to implement workforce survey. So my support or my department is planning a survey within next two or three weeks you will be seeing that we are going to mail a survey questionnaire to each and every single employee to respond. That way we will know the number of immigrants, number of people who have disabilities, number of Aboriginal people who are working with the system.

Eva Rodgerson (PC): Okay thank you.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Thank you very much. Since there are no more, no one has identified any further questions. Thilak, thank you very much for the presentation.

Thilak Teenekone: Thank you for having me.

Wilfred Arsenault (PC) (Chair): I was very much enlightened by your presentation. I'm sure everyone of our committee has learned something from what you had to present to us today. So

thank you very much and at this point we are going to continue with the next item on the agenda and that involves new business.

Now as we discussed at a previous meeting and I think perhaps the last meeting we had discussed the possibility of providing a research assistant and having someone to help us with the writing of our final report, and the person that we have talked about at our last meeting was the last presenter, Thilak and we understand that he has been approached and has made himself available if the committee wishes that we need such a person to do such a job. We have a mover.

Thilak Teenekone: Thank you very much.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: We have a seconder.

Richard Brown (L): We don't need her.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: We don't need a seconder.

Richard Brown (L): Ask the Clerk, Ronnie's got her reading the rules every night.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: The Clerk is very pleased that Thilak has come onboard because as you're probably aware, the Clerk's job is very busy at this point with all the other committees that are at task. So all those in favour signify by saying "Aye"

Committee Members: Aye.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: It's a done deal.

APPLAUSE.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Welcome, Thilak.

Thilak Teenekone: Thank you very much.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Obviously we will be working with you very closely in the near future with this committee. Item number B, or item B on the agenda is 3B that is - is Consideration Of A Proposal from Dr. Godfrey Baldacchino and is that pronounced correctly?

Marian Johnston (Clerk Assistant): Baldacchino,

if you like Mr. Chair, I could probably address that.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Would you please.

Marian Johnston (Clerk Assistant): Yes Dr. Baldacchino is, obviously, he's an immigrant to Prince Edward Island. He has one of the research chairs at the University of Prince Edward Island, at the Institute of Island Studies and he sent this letter to the committee. He's proposing that he lead a study to do a survey that would look at the reasons why immigrants have come and stayed on Prince Edward Island.

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): Do you have some extra copies of those because (Indistinct) .

Marian Johnston (Clerk Assistant): So he's proposing that he conduct this survey and I'm bringing this letter to the committee so that you can decide if indeed you would like to learn more and perhaps make the decision that you would like to have this survey conducted and the information come back to the committee.

So if I might suggest a course of action it would be to invite Dr. Baldacchino in himself to talk directly to the committee and perhaps that could happen at the next meeting.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Perhaps a brief presentation.

Committee Members: Yes.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Ten minutes or so.

Marian Johnston (Clerk Assistant): And than the committee could decide what they want to do.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Do we have consensus on this?

Committee Members: Yes.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Thank you very much. The next item before I move onto the next item I should say yes, it is in the next item. We have a list of the groups or individuals that are interested in making a presentation. I might add that we've already received written presentations and I believe the Clerk will be sharing those with the committee.

Marian Johnston (Clerk Assistant): But not today, Mr. Chairman. One just came in today. But I will be - at the next meeting I'll have everything ready.

Richard Brown (L): How many have you got?

Marian Johnston (Clerk Assistant): Three written presentations on file right now.

Honourable Philip Brown (PC): And how many people - 15.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Thirteen.

Richard Brown (L): (Indistinct) .

Honourable Philip Brown (PC): Yes, heard that on the radio this morning anyway.

Marian Johnston (Clerk Assistant): Do you want me just to contact him and perhaps set up a date for the next meeting and we could get started on this.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Yes. The Clerk is going to start contacting these groups and individuals and I think what we should do is grab a hold of this list and go through the presentations as quickly as possible because, as Richard has pointed out we have other committees here and one in particular, we are so bogged down we are going to be here for awhile. I'm not sure how we're going to deal with this, but I'm not chairing it. So as far as this committee is concerned I think we should . . . the Clerk has agreed to contact him so I think we should . . .

Marian Johnston (Clerk Assistant): It's attached to your agenda.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: What's responsible to give the presenters for a time allocation?

Richard Brown (L): Fifteen minutes.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Okay.

Marian Johnston (Clerk Assistant): Fifteen minutes.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Fifteen minutes. Now some may have presentations or longer but

the onus will be on the presenters to summarize as appropriate.

Richard Brown (L): The onus is on the Chair to cut them off.

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): So if we were able to schedule three an hour, Mr. Chair, that's you know 15 minutes and then -

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Is that including the question periods to the presenters?

Committee Members: Yes.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Okay. I'm sorry.

Richard Brown (L): I agree with Jamie. Three in an hour.

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): That gives you a few minutes to . . . 15 minutes and then we have a few minutes.

Wilfred Arsenault (PC)Chair: Five minutes for questions, 15 for the presentation.

Richard Brown (L): Public Accounts Chairman (indistinct)

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): Can we follow some, like the House of Commons rules where there's no preamble. You have to ask your question and then just get it over with. Then we'd have five questions in five minutes.

Marian Johnston (Clerk Assistant): The committee is master of it's own procedure, so.

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): Okay.

Marian Johnston (Clerk Assistant): It will be up to the committee.

Honourable Philip Brown (PC): You want to impose speaking limits.

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): Yes.

Richard Brown (L): Oh well.

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): If you cut with the preamble we'd get out of here quicker.

Richard Brown (L): You've got to stop reading the report, the guy just (indistinct).

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): I'm not going to get your support Tuesday, am I?

Richard Brown (L): Is that you're on your leadership?

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: So in that case, without going too far astray here, we will . . .

Honourable Philip Brown (PC): Be good to be back on subject, Mr. Chair.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: We'll ask the Clerk to contact these people and we'll have . . . okay if we have three an hour, we'll split this into two meetings. Is that . . .

Marian Johnston (Clerk Assistant): Yes, that works.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: That would make it . . .

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): We have 14 altogether counting Dr. Baldacchino who is going to be coming in, I assume, at the next meeting.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: That's right. We would have six the next meeting and seven the following.

Marian Johnston (Clerk Assistant): Sounds good.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Okay.

Marian Johnston (Committee Clerk): Thank you.

Richard Brown (L): The Clerk will inform them that they have 15 minutes.

Marian Johnston (Clerk Assistant): Yes.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Absolutely, yes. It's great if they know ahead of time.

Marian Johnston (Clerk Assistant): Yes.

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): Mr. Chair, in

terms of the timing of the meetings. When you go down through this list here, Blake Doyle can't present by mid March; Century 21 wants ten days notice; Holland College can't present between the 8th and 12th; Patricia Deaz does not want to present prior to mid March.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: There's also the Federation of Labour which doesn't want to present until April.

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): Yes. Is this something that - do we want to - I'm going to be away for most of the month of March. It doesn't matter what you folks - how we schedule it.

Honourable Philip Brown (PC): It's got to be some place warm. (Indistinct)

Wilfred Arsenault(Chair) (PC): We won't go there either.

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC) : Are you having a leadership in March already. I thought you weren't having it until fall.

Richard Brown (L): I didn't say anything.

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): In light of, again with the Agriculture Committee and all it's, is this something that we should do right away or should we wait until April when there's, when all the presenters can present.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: What is the wish of the committee.

Honourable Philip Brown (PC): The House will be opened.

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): Yes. I mean it's up to you. I'm just offering that up.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: I don't have a problem with that.

Richard Brown (L): Okay I'll go along with you.

Eva Rodgeron (PC): (Indistinct)

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Any objections.

Richard Brown (L): Well we'll have a report for

this session.

Marian Johnston (Clerk Assistant): Yes.

Richard Brown (L): Wilfred says if we do it in April or whatever. Whenever you guys.

Honourable Jamie Ballem (PC): We could, Eva just suggested that if a bunch are available right away, can you do some right away. There's always going to be times that some of us can't make it and you just get someone to fill in for you.

Eva Rodgeron (PC): If we pick off three more.

Marian Johnston (Clerk Assistant): We could have Dr. Baldacchino in and some of the private citizens who are available right now. And than take a break. And put in an interim report.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Works for me. That being the case we'll ask the Clerk to make the contacts and we will call a meeting when we can have appropriate time slots for these people.

Marian Johnston (Clerk Assistant): Yes.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: That being said members- we've exhausted the content of the agenda so I will take a motion for adjournment.

Honourable Philip Brown (PC): And we will be advised by the Clerk when the next meeting is.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: That's correct.

Marian Johnston (Clerk Assistant): I'll work with you Mr. Chairman.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Thank you. We have a motion for adjournment.

Marian Johnston (Clerk Assistant): We're adjourned.

Wilfred Arsenault(PC) Chair: Great. Thank you.

Marian Johnston (Clerk Assistant): Thank you.