

There's lots of history related to les Anglais et les Français here on PEI, and it's important that they know the trials and the tribulations that different peoples faced throughout time, and it's not to say one culture (Indistinct). There were wars in different times against the English and the French, and we can learn so much through history. But I always read the poem by Henry Longfellow, the Gabriel-Evangeline poem, and it's a wonderful poem to really tell the true story of what the Acadians went through, and their loved ones. Where Gabriel and Evangeline, they're to be married, and Gabriel is put on a ship with his father. They're separated and then (Indistinct) adulthood and then to old age, Gabriel and Evangeline find each other, and Gabriel is on his deathbed, and Evangeline finds him.

That's really a story to be told because that happened to many families. Many of them went to Louisiana or back to France when they were deported, but for those families or those individuals that had the courage that they stayed, they hid in the woods and from the British, and that is why today, we still have those names like Arsenault, like Gallant and Doiron, and there's a story to be told. It's very important that it's told on Prince Edward Island, and a resolution such as this supports recognizing a culture, a language, that is very integral to PEI and to the future of Prince Edward Island, and I thank the hon. members for bringing it forward, and I will support it.

Merci, Monsieur le président.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Community and Cultural Affairs.

Mr. MacFadyen: Mr. Speaker, as Minister Responsible for Acadian and Francophone Affairs here in the province, I'm honoured to rise in the House to respond to this important resolution recognizing the 250th anniversary of the deportation of the Acadians.

This commemoration is filled with both sadness and hope as we look back on the deportation as one of the most tragic events in Acadian history and look forward to the bright future that lies ahead for the

descendants of the very first French settlers in North America.

These early settlers were infused with courage, perseverance and pride. They came to what is known as the Maritimes and over time, after many hardships, they built a self-sustaining and prosperous colony that made the area a frequent target of conflict between the English and the French. Those who settled here on the Island forged strong ties with the Mi'kmaq. Together, they played a significant role in the development of Prince Edward Island. Thinking in today's terms, the uprooting of the Acadian people would not have been tolerated. There would have been an international outcry at the unequivocal nature of the deportation order. No one would have stood by as an entire people and their way of life was being eradicated.

We cannot begin to imagine the suffering the families endured as they were separated, never to meet again. In this House of debate, we pause today and reflect on the deportation, a horrific event during which thousands of Acadian men, women and children were forcefully expelled from the only home and the only country they ever knew.

Now, back in the year 2000 our government introduced the *French Language Services Act*, and I think the commitment of the people of Prince Edward Island to the Acadian and Francophone community based on this legislation speaks volumes for the province. I know that as minister we have worked in conjunction with the Canadian Heritage Minister - Minister Frulla - in the last government, and we have been able to secure funding that will help the Acadian communities throughout the province.

They have a vision planned for the six communities across the province. We have an advisory committee in this province that works in consultation with the community. We have coordinators in all the government departments that work in promoting the *French Language Services Act*, and we want to insure the people in the Acadian and Francophone community that our government is committed to the outline that's in the resolution.

I believe when I look at the be it therefore

clauses in regards to: "Therefore be it resolved that the members of this Assembly, and indeed all Islanders, join together this year in commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the Great Upheaval.

"And therefore be it further resolved that the government of Prince Edward Island remain committed to promoting and preserving the rich historical and cultural heritage of the Acadians."

I believe that the Acadian and Francophone community understands the direction that government is going, and they know that we do support their direction, and I'm honoured to stand in the Legislature as Minister Responsible for Acadian and Francophone Affairs to support this resolution.

Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Public Works.

Ms. Shea: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

L'événement le plus (Indistinct) de l'histoire des Acadiens et Acadiennes est sûrement l'expulsion massive des habitants des terres qu'ils occupaient et qui forment aujourd'hui la Nouvelle-Écosse, le Nouveau-Brunswick et l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard.

Ce Grand dérangement fut (Indistinct) tragique d'une longue période autour de laquelle les Acadiens se sont trouvés régulièrement au coeur des conflits entre les Britanniques et les Français pour la possession de l'Amérique du Nord.

The most (Indistinct) event in Acadian history is (Indistinct) the massive expulsion of (Indistinct) the land they occupied, which is today Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

This Great Upheaval was the outcome of a tragic, long period around which the Acadians regularly found themselves at the heart of conflicts between the British and France for the possession of North America.

For more than a century the Acadians were able to maintain their self-contained lifestyle along with the Mi'kmaq, enjoying large families and peaceful communities strengthened by a devotion to their faith. Family ties and the Catholic religion