

# REES' Pieces

I believe Peter MacKay's statement of March 1<sup>st</sup> that the navy will get the ships it needs. What his statement doesn't elaborate on is over the next 30 years, (life of the shipbuilding program) technology will change. New technology will be developed to protect Canada's coastline, and the navy may not need the same amount of floating steel. Maybe there will be a focus on using pilotless drones for coastal surveillance.

Which means Canada does not have forward-thinking leadership.

I'm not an expert, but let's look at how things have evolved over the past 25 years. Faxing was the elaborate way to communicate vast amounts of information and cell phone technology was embryonic. Cell phones came in a big box and costs was in the range of \$3,000, albeit there weren't many areas with good reception.

In the past decade, we have seen an explosion in cell phone technology, and now there are almost as many cell phones as there are people in Nova Scotia. Overseas, drones are being used fly reconnaissance missions and satellites have the capacity to recognize every movement of man or beast anywhere on earth.

In the same issue of the Chronicle Herald in which MacKay made his assurances about the navy's requirements being met, two immigrant engineers in Cheticamp are looking for an initial round of funding to develop the "SkySquirrel" technology. For those who are not familiar with "SkySquirrel", it's an unmanned airborne device similar to a helicopter that would be used to search for missing persons using on-board infrared heat sensing cameras to local missing persons, when the weather was bad, or initially before calling in regular helicopters, which cost many thousands of dollars per hour.

At the pace technology is developed and introduced; it's hard to believe why our coastlines cannot be equally or more safe without as much floating steel as the Department of Defense now professes. That is not to say we don't need a new naval fleet. Yes, we do. However, it's my projection technology advances and the cost of cutting steel will mean less ships are constructed. Sure we'll spend the same amount of money, or perhaps a bit, more, but we'll have fewer vessels to show of it.

If Canada's leaders want us to be on the "cutting edge" they should provide leadership in development of new technologies which will protect our coastline for a lot less money. Drug trafficking, fisheries patrol, illegal human trafficking, and search and rescue operations could easily be our surveillance way into the future.

The region's aerospace industry could become a great manufacturing facility. If IMP Aerospace can keep all the large military aircraft repaired and flying, I'm sure they have the technology to be a leader for manufacturing drones. The aerospace facility in Lunenburg could be a major component supplier.

A marine drone program could breathe new life into airports in Yarmouth and Sydney. What about the airstrips near Liverpool and Port Hawkesbury, could they be used. One thing to notice here, each of those runway facilities are located in areas which are economically depressed or facing major challenges.

As rural areas decline in population and economic activity everyone needs to think of ways to build upon the assets in rural areas. We need to remember it's the rural areas, which built this country.

Most certainly the closure of smaller rural schools is not the way to rebuild the rural economy. Why doesn't the province direct the school boards to consult with rural areas asking for their input and direction on how to make smaller rural schools more economical. A recent example is the announced closure of the 100 year old Bass River Elementary School. According to residents they were not consulted on ways to reduce costs.

I project it will cost more to renovate WCCS to accommodate elementary students than will be saved by the school closure. The school board probably isn't as concerned, because, in all probability, the renovation funds will come from Halifax instead of being a drain on their operational budget.

In Nova Scotia we sometimes have a weird way of determining costs. We look at today's cost instead of the end result. When will Nova Scotians develop a back bone demanding what's right for them be done?

Maurice

## Letters to the editor

This is an open forum for your opinions and comments.

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Dear Maurice:

I now work for Home Hardware in Weston Ont. They are the most friendly company I have worked for in all my years.

They treat all employees as family not like Home Depot & Lowes as they an American company. I would encourage Anybody to visit the store as they are very competitive to all the above mentioned companies. If you want to use my Comments feel free.

Wayne.

(Editor's Note: Wayne is my brother who has lived in Ontario for over 40 years. He sent this note following the story about the expansion of the Home Hardware Distribution Centre in Debert).

To the Editor:

In recent weeks and months, there have been many myths spread about the changes made to the Employment Insurance pro-

gram. Unfortunately, opposition MPs in Nova Scotia, who seem only focused on political gain, have spread many of these rumors. The purpose of this piece is to give reason for the change and to clarify what this will mean to claimants.

Through Canada's Economic Action Plan 2012, the Government of Canada made targeted, common sense changes to better connect EI recipients with available jobs in their local areas. This was done by making the program more efficient and by putting the focus on helping claimants get back to work. Included in these changes was an improved job alerts system that will now provide twice-daily updates to those on claim. After all, the health of Canada's economy depends on having available jobs filled, and removing disincentives to work.

With that said, claimants

will only be expected to take a job in their field of work if it pays a comparable wage. A claimant will never be forced to take a job that will make them worse off financially than they were on claim. In addition, a number of other personal considerations will also be taken into account to determine suitable employment. These include health and family circumstances, hours of work, commute time, and the availability of jobs in your area. That is, if the cost of gas or the cost of childcare makes the job a financial disadvantage you will not be required to take it. These changes are reasonable, and take regional economic disparities into account.

The Government remains focused on strengthening Canada's economy, included in that is connecting Canadians with available jobs and removing disincentives to

work. These changes do, however, take into account the economic realities of our region and will not put unrealistic expectations on EI recipients. Statements to the contrary by Liberal and NDP MPs in Nova Scotia are both irresponsible and disappointing. I encourage anyone with questions to visit [www.servicecanada.gc.ca](http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca) to find out more.

Yours sincerely  
Scott Armstrong, MP  
Cumberland - Colchester -  
Musquodoboit Valley  
Atlantic Caucus Chair

## 76% of Businesses Lack Succession Plans

By Kim Inglis

A Quantitative Study of the Business Succession Market in Canada published by RBC Royal Bank found only 3% of business owners plan to wind down their operations at retirement. A whopping 88% intend to have the enterprises taken over by family members, by employees or partners, or by third party entities. The rest simply don't know.

Although a large percentage of small business owners are considering succession of some sort, most haven't planned for it. A TD Waterhouse poll found that 76% do not have a succession plan. It's a large percentage but much can be attributed to emotion.

Most small business owners have invested years of "sweat equity" building their companies. They are proud of their accomplishments and the companies have become a big part of their identity and self-esteem, so it's not surprising they find succession planning difficult to contemplate. Fortunately, the process can be less daunting than it seems and there are many options, particularly for those who



want to keep it in the family.

BDO Dunwoody LLP Chartered Accountants and Advisors say that shareholder agreements require careful consideration and should cover share ownership rules, buy/sell rules, and the death or disability of a shareholder. The conduct of shareholders and any areas of potential conflict also need to be spelled out.

Share ownership rules stating who can own the shares of the business are of utmost importance when marital breakdowns occur. BDO points out that shareholder agreements may prohibit in-laws from becoming owners but provincial family property equalization rules can result in shares becoming property of the ex in-law. Properly structured agreements can

address this by requiring family members to have specific conditions in marriage contracts, in order to be eligible for share ownership.

Buy/sell rules are another important consideration. The Family Firm Institute says that 70% of family businesses will not survive into the second generation and 90% won't make it to the third. When family members want (or need) to sell their shares, buy/sell rules help by outlining where and to whom shares can be transferred and how they will be valued.

There is much to consider when drafting buy/sell rules. Some families want restrictions that only allow share transfers to other family members, or that offers must be presented to the family before selling to non-family members. Some want conditions governing any sale to non-family members and, of course, there is the question of what happens if the business is sold. Buy/sell rules should dictate the approval procedures for any share sales.

Finally, shareholder agreements should cover the more sensitive areas such as disability or death of a shareholder. If a shareholder is an employee and they become disabled, shareholder agreements need to clarify what benefits are paid and whether any share sales are required. In the event

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**Shoreline**  
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to find us:

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Bayside Pharmacy  
Dominion Chair Factory Store

**BIBLE HILL:**

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MacQuarries Pharmacy

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Masstown Market

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