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Speaker: Honourable Tom Osborne, MHA

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The House met at 2 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Osborne): Order, please!

Admit strangers.

Statements by Members

MR. SPEAKER: For Members' statements today we have the Member for the District of Exploits, the Member for the District of Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair, Torngat Mountains, Stephenville – Port au Port, Burin – Grand Bank, and Terra Nova.

As well, it is my understanding that the Leader of the Opposition has leave by all sides of the House to present a statement as well.

The hon. the Member for the District of Exploits.

MR. DEAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is with honour and pride that I recognize two Special Olympians from Botwood and Grand Falls-Windsor for their recent success at the Canada Special Olympic Winter Games in Corner Brook.

Stacie Woolridge of Botwood overcame icy game-day conditions, 13 bruises, and bitterly cold temperatures to capture one gold and two bronze medals in skiing for Team Newfoundland and Labrador. Her teammate, Melvin Hanhams, overcame similar challenges in the 200-metre snowshoe race to capture bronze.

Both athletes showed grit and determination by starting a training regime that included regular workouts and nutritious eating. Stacie had stopped skiing for three years to attend college, but after qualifying for the national games last winter, she buckled down and gave it her all. Meanwhile, Melvin credits his coaches for helping him reduce his times by pacing himself from start to finish.

Both athletes are looking forward and ahead to the Newfoundland and Labrador Summer Games in Marystown. Stacie plans to focus on swimming while Melvin is prepping for the track events.

Hard work and dedication pays off, and you need look no further than the performances put on by both Stacie and Melvin.

I ask all Members of this hon. House to join with me in congratulating these two fine athletes.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair.

MS. DEMPSTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Benjamin Disraeli once said the legacy of heroes is the memory of a great name and an inheritance of a great example.

I rise to pay tribute to an amazing individual, Hazel Thomas of L'Anse au Clair. Hazel recently passed away at the age of 94 leaving behind a tremendous legacy.

In L'Anse au Clair, Hazel was what you would call the go to person. If you needed anything, you could always count on her. She was young at heart and everyone's friends. She owned the first general store in town and that also included a basement for youth to hang out, watch movies and listen to their only jukebox. My colleague, the Member for Labrador West who grew up in L'Anse au Clair, has many fond memories of his own of hanging out at this place.

She owned the first phone in the community and was an amazing volunteer. She was a leader of ACW for years. She organized community concerts, was a tremendous cook, baker, quilt maker and the list goes on.

Hazel had four children, 14 grandchildren, 26 great-grandchildren and 2 great-great grandchildren. She was a large part of the fabric of the community who will long be remembered for her kindness, and her knowledge will be passed on through many generations.

I ask all hon. Members to join me in celebrating the life of Hazel Thomas a true lady of Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of Torngat Mountains.

MR. EDMUNDS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in this hon. House today to congratulate Phillip Earle and the good people at Air Labrador for their creative approach in bringing awareness to mental illness.

Air Labrador has copied the words “Create a good day” on one of its aircraft in memory of Dorothy Angnatok.

Dorothy Angnatok, or Duru as we most fondly called her, was a vibrant young Inuk from Nain who inspired both young and old through her dynamic personality, as well as through the work she did in the “Going off, growing strong” program – a program that teaches young people traditional culture and provides seniors and other Members of the community with nutritional wild food.

To the sadness of us all, Duru lost her battle with mental illness this past winter. Duru coined the phrase that we have all adopted: Create a good day.

I ask all hon. Members to join me in thanking Air Labrador for bringing awareness to mental illness and for honouring Duru’s memory.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of Stephenville – Port au Port.

MR. FINN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the 2015 Stephen award recipients, having attended the 37th Stephen Awards banquet this past weekend in Stephenville. Junior athletes of the year, Ryan McNeil Lamswood and Olivia Heneley were acknowledged for their tremendously successful years in various sports, while Special Olympian Josh Harper was named the town’s senior athlete of the year.

Christine O’Brien was named Citizen of the Year as a result of her countless hours of

volunteer work with the Rotary Club in which she serves as vice president. Christine has also generously given her time to the Sir Thomas Roddick Hospital Foundation, Stephenville Winter Carnival and also as an active member of her parish volunteering with the Salvation Army Kettle Campaign and Toy Drive.

Stephenville High student Radhika Verma was named Youth of the Year. In addition to earning first-place honours in her studies and receiving numerous academic awards, Radhika is an active member of her student council and humanitarian club. Further, she spends time volunteering with a number of organizations including the Community Youth Network, the YMCA, Red Cross, Mothers Against Drunk Driving and the Lions Club among others.

I ask all Members to join me in congratulating the 2015 Stephen Award recipients.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for the District of Burin – Grand Bank.

MS. HALEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

When Justin Dodge of Grand Bank left for the Special Olympics Canada 2016 Winter Games, which were held in Corner Brook in March, family, friends and especially fellow members of the Grand Bank-Fortune Seahawks Club, all had high hopes for him. Justin did not disappoint, Mr. Speaker. He brought home gold and silver in the snowshoeing competition.

Justin has learned that his prowess in the sport has earned him a chance to try out for the national squad, and potentially an opportunity to represent Canada at the World Winter Games, taking place in Austria in 2017.

His success in snowshoeing is especially remarkable, considering the conditions for training are often less than ideal in the area of the province where Justin lives. Only an athlete totally devoted and determined could do so well on the national stage, Mr. Speaker. Justin is the son of proud parents Ron and Cecilia Dodge of

Grand Bank who support him in every challenge he takes on.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all Members to join me in congratulating Justin Dodge on his wonderful showing at the 2016 Winter Games, and indeed in wishing him good luck in his quest to gain a spot on the national team.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for the District of Terra Nova.

MR. HOLLOWAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in this hon. House to recognize the Beaches Arts and Heritage Centre in Eastport. The Beaches Arts and Heritage Centre is home to a thriving arts community. It was opened in June 2001 under the stewardship of the Eastport Peninsula Heritage Society which has a mandate to preserve the natural and cultural heritage of the region.

Constructed in the early 20th century, the property originally served as a school for many years, but has evolved as a key venue for cultural arts and entertainment shows, from summer drama festivals to a privately operated movie theatre. In 2012, the society received two prestigious awards for its role in developing tourism: the Doug Wheeler Award for Tourism and the Adventure Central Pinnacle Award for Tourism Ambassador of the Year.

Each year, from May to October, a large suite of events, tours and festivals are hosted at the Arts Centre, including those on the Canada Day weekend and the Annual Roy Babstock Beaches Accordion Festival.

The Beaches Arts and Heritage Centre is a gem for the Eastport Peninsula.

I ask all Members to join me in congratulating the board of directors for continuing to be great ambassadors for this exciting industry.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of Topsail – Paradise.

MR. P. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in this House today to pay tribute to Dr. John Collins who passed away on Saturday at the age of 93. Dr. Collins was born in 1922 in what was then known as the Dominion of Newfoundland. Coming of age during the height of the Second World War, he served here at home as a radio officer and also on the Merchant Marine fleet delivering valuable supplies across the very dangerous waters of the North Atlantic to the Northern Russian port of Murmansk. He was honoured with medals from the Russian government as a result.

A graduate of St. Bon's and Memorial University College at the time, he travelled, after the war, to Scotland where he attended the University of Edinburgh for five years to earn his doctorate in medicine. As a physician specializing in pediatric cardiology, he engaged first in medical research, then next as a general practitioner in private practice and then as the head of cardiology at the Janeway Hospital.

He would go on to serve as the National Chair of the Canadian Medical Association and in the late '60s, he also served on the Child Health Commission, in the early '70s as President of the Canadian Pediatric Society and Chief of Neonatal at the Grace General Hospital.

In 1975 he decided to run for office on the Frank Moores's team and was elected as the PC MHA for St. John's South. From 1975 to 1979 he held the post of Deputy Speaker, while concurrently heading to the Grace Hospital's Department of Neonatology. In 1979 Premier Brian Peckford appointed Dr. Collins to serve as the province's Minister of Finance and the following year as President of Treasury Board as well.

Dr. Collins later served as the province's Minister of Health and for a year, in 1988, as Deputy Premier until his retirement from political office in 1989. Even after his retirement, and working privately in property management, he continued to take an active interest in political life on the province's stage

and that he served so diligently for, for so many years and he thoroughly enjoyed it.

Dr. Collins was known and admired provincially, nationally and internationally for his many enduring contributions. One can only estimate the impact of his service, not only as a legislator and a minister, a merchant mariner, but also as a cardiologist saving the lives of children. It's an incredible legacy that he's left us, and a fine example to follow.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask that we honour his memory collectively as Members of this hon. House and send our heartfelt sympathies to his family.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The Commemoration of the First World War and the Battle of Beaumont-Hamel

MR. SPEAKER: Today for Honour 100, we have the Member for the District of Exploits.

MR. DEAN: I will now read into the record the following 40 names of those who lost their lives in the First World War in the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, the Royal Newfoundland Naval Reserve, the Newfoundland Mercantile Marine or the Newfoundland Forestry Corps. This will be followed by a moment of silence.

Lest we forget: Edmund James Higgins, Silas Hilliard, Llewelyn Hillier, Alfred Hiscock, Edmund Hiscock, John Hiscock, Samuel Hiscock, Edward John Hoare, Charles Hobbs, Eliol Hobbs, John Hobbs, John Herbert Hockley, Stewart Hodder, Ludwig Duncan Hoddinott, Samuel Hoddinott, William Hoddinott, Gerald Hogan, Lucas Holden, Patrick Holden, Joseph Hollahan, Michael John Holland, George Hollett, George Hollett, Albert Holloway, Robert Palfrey Holloway, Aubrey Holmes, Samuel Mayo Hooper, Albert Horwood, Henry Horwood, Edgar Hoskins, James Patrick Houlahan, Japheth Hounsell, George House, John House, James John Howard, Arthur Howell, Thomas Howell, Joseph Hoyles, Obadiah Hoyles, George Hudson.

(Moment of silence.)

MR. SPEAKER: Please be seated.

Statements by Ministers.

Statements by Ministers

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Health and Community Services.

MR. HAGGIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm pleased to rise in this hon. House to recognize today, April 27, as Daffodil Day.

As we know, April is Daffodil Month – an important national fundraising campaign by the Canadian Cancer Society. The campaign presents a tremendous opportunity to raise funds and awareness to support individuals and their families struggling with cancers and to fund research for a cure.

The daffodil is a symbol of hope. It represents the strength and courage of cancer patients and their loved ones, as well as the compassion of volunteers and the commitment of researchers dedicated to eradicating these diseases. The vibrant yellow colour also reflects the importance of optimism in finding a cure.

In 2015, the Canadian Cancer Society estimated that there were 3,500 newly diagnosed cases and 1,510 deaths due to cancers in Newfoundland and Labrador alone. The daffodil serves as a strong reminder to those with cancer that they are never alone in their struggle and that family, friends and communities are always there when help is needed most.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all residents to get involved and to purchase and wear the daffodil pin to show their support. Anyone who wishes to learn more about Daffodil Month can visit the society's website at www.cancer.com.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. P. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I want to thank the minister for providing an advance copy of his statement again today. We join with the government in recognizing April as Daffodil Month, particularly the 27th of April as Daffodil Day.

I can tell you I'm very pleased and proud to wear a daffodil through most of the month of April. We know that cancer has touched so many of us, each of us in a different way. The daffodil is a representative and it's a symbol that means something different to everyone.

Mr. Speaker, statistics tell us that for women in Newfoundland, breast cancer is the most frequently diagnosed type of cancer in 2015. An estimated 360 women were diagnosed with breast cancer in that year, and approximately 100 lost their battle with breast cancer.

So while we recognize Daffodil Day and all the good and hope that it represents, I'd be remiss if I didn't take the opportunity to urge government to reconsider its change in the provincial breast cancer screening program.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. P. DAVIS: These are cuts I'm sure that cancer survivors would all agree is a step backwards.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. John's East – Quidi Vidi.

MS. MICHAEL: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I too thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement. Daffodil Day is indeed an important fundraiser for us to support and it reminds us of the tireless work of the Canadian Cancer Society, as well as reminding us of the many people who support family members and others battling the disease.

I remind the minister and his government that cancer patients suffer not only from their illness

but also from the financial burden of travelling for treatment because of an inadequate medical transportation program, and now they have the added burden of an extra cost of fuel.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Further statements by ministers?

The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Works.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, our government is investing \$62 million this year in the Provincial Roads Program, and this past Friday we announced the full list of projects for this year and began to issue our tenders.

I'm also pleased to inform my hon. colleagues, Mr. Speaker, that our government has been successful in negotiating with the federal government changes to eligibility criteria for cost-shared funding. Minimum traffic volumes for example, have been reduced to better reflect the needs of our province and allow a greater number of road projects to receive federal funding. Eligible projects will be announced in the coming weeks.

Mr. Speaker, the safety of our roads and highways is of a primary importance. Our crews undertake critical work year-round through both the winter and summer maintenance programs.

Our government's budget ensures funding for these programs is maintained, along with brush cutting and brush-clearing funding to help mitigate moose-vehicle collisions, and we are making the necessary investment of \$61.6 million to support our heavy equipment fleet and snow and ice control operations on our highways.

Mr. Speaker, all of this represents a robust year for road construction and maintenance that will benefit the construction industry and communities throughout the province, while encouraging economic growth.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement. It's good news to see we're getting more funding from the Building Canada Fund, I guess coming from the cost-sharing ratios, the criteria being relaxed to get more roadwork done. It's good to see someone over there lobbying the federal government to try to get our fair share. Hopefully the Premier and the rest of Cabinet will follow suit of the Minister of Transportation and Works.

Another point on the roadwork, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Transportation and Works released their road project last Friday with a list of roads to be done and associated scores. We've been calling them on it, still calling for the entire list, to see the scores for all the roadwork. Not just the ones that were took from the master list and scored and then done. I'm looking forward to getting some more details on the entire roadwork projects and their scores.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. PETTEN: Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. John's East – Quidi Vidi.

MS. MICHAEL: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement. His announcement is all well and good but I say to the minister, is the safety of roads really of primary importance to him? Why then choose a band-aid solution to fixing the Conche Road his government is forcing children to travel twice every school day? Why end 24-hour snow clearing which places people who are forced out in storms to get to their work in harm's way? Primary importance?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Further statements by ministers?

Oral Questions.

Oral Questions

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. P. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance has provided no less than three different explanations on how the Liberal levy will be collected from the citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador. Most recently she is saying that the levy will begin to be collected on paycheques in July, but as well she said the annual expected levy amounts that the government will take in is only half this year as what has been expected in a full year.

Mr. Speaker, the message continues to change. I've received several requests from citizens who are confused by the changing discussion, the changing comments by the minister.

I ask the Premier: The minister has confused people, can you clarify once and for all how this levy will be collected?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

MS. C. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, for the Member opposite who I offered yesterday, and I'm sure he's going to take me up on it after today, a technical briefing on how the deficit levy will be collected. As I said yesterday, the levy will be collected –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS. C. BENNETT: – through the personal income tax collection process, the personal income tax process. It is collected through withholding tax, as people pay their regular personal income tax. Tax tables are issued July 1, and those tax increases are for annual years.

If the Member opposite, or any Members on the opposite side, would like to have a technical briefing with officials we can certainly provide that. As we are continuing to provide details and

answers to our constituents' questions, we can certainly help them provide those answers too.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. P. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's the people of the province who are looking for answers. We're asking the questions on their behalf, Mr. Speaker. It's the people who want to know what the facts are. Maybe if they listened to the people of the province they'd just scrap the levy like the people of Newfoundland and Labrador are asking them to do.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. P. DAVIS: Mr. Speaker, on *NTV Issues and Answers* just a few days ago, last week, the minister said that people will pay it next spring when they file their income tax returns. Very different from what we're hearing from the minister today.

Surely she has analyzed the impacts on ordinary, hard-working, low- and middle-income Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. People are at a loss of why the message keeps changing. People believe they're making it up as they go along.

I wonder, Minister, can you answer the people of the province. Do you really understand the impacts of your budget increases, your levy, your tax and fees that people are being burdened with, the low- and middle-income hard-working Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are being burdened with? Do you really understand the impacts on their lives?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

MS. C. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, I believe the person who doesn't understand, quite frankly,

how the tax system works and the budget, and who, I guess, continues not to be wanting a technical briefing is the Member opposite.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS. C. BENNETT: This government has made

—

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS. C. BENNETT: With your permission, Mr. Speaker, after the heckling from the Members opposite, I will provide the answer to the question.

Our government undertook in this budget to implement the Newfoundland and Labrador Income Supplement which makes sure that those individuals making \$40,000 or less actually have an offset to the tax increases. The Member opposite clearly understands, as somebody who has been — somebody who filed taxes for many, many years, I'm sure, in his former careers — that individuals, when they are remitting personal income tax, can do it on a weekly basis through withholding tax or they can pay it when they file their tax return. They have those options as employees, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. P. DAVIS: Mr. Speaker, the condescending tone that continues to come from the minister opposite is astounding. It's shameful the tone that comes from the minister opposite.

It's people of the province who are asking for clarification. We're asking on behalf of the people. I don't think she understands that, Mr. Speaker.

Today, we heard the Premier on province-wide radio this morning. He said he will not listen to the people of the province.

I say to the Premier, while you and your minister may live in a bubble, you may be out of touch with the realities of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians and the difficulties and challenges that they will face because of the levies and fees that you're burdening with them. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, maybe the Members opposite don't understand that, but people are struggling with the concept of the fees that they're going to have to pay in the upcoming year.

MR. SPEAKER: I ask the Member to get to his question.

MR. P. DAVIS: Why did the Premier and his caucus choose to attack hard-working lower- and middle-income families leaving his friends alone? Mr. Speaker, what's your message to them who can't afford to pay those fees and taxes?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, we have listened to quite a few Newfoundlanders and Labradorians and what they are telling us is the future of our province is extremely important to them. The former premier just mentioned about listening to people. Well, I want to remind the former premier that it was the people of this province he was willing to leave the next and future generations \$2.7 billion more in a deficit this year.

So if you want to talk about management and misplanning and poor planning in our province, you need to reflect on some of your own decisions, I say. Our job right now is to clean up your mess, that's what we're about to do, and we will get this province back on track, right for future generations.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Before I recognize the Leader of the Opposition, I'm asking all Members to respect the order and decorum in the House, especially during Question Period.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. P. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I appreciate that, and I wonder how many people during their consultations told them to overburden the low- and middle-income hard working Newfoundlanders and Labradorians in our province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. P. DAVIS: How many of them said tax us so far you're going to run us right out of town. Tax us so hard you're going to run us right out of the province. How many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians told them to do that, Mr. Speaker?

Well, yesterday the Premier talked about his relationship with the federal government. He talked about his relationship with Ottawa. He said there's an agenda of things that they're reaching out for. He said Newfoundland will get its fair share. Well, that's contrary to what he said before when he just said well, it is what it is. That's the approach this government has taken when it comes to our federal government.

So I ask the Premier: Will you table your agenda in the House and tell the people of the province – don't tell me – once and for all give a straight answer, what do you believe is the fair share for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, I want to address the early comment he made as he prepared for his question. This is making sure we set and we put the province back on track.

In 2007 it was a previous administration that made a decision to reduce taxes to the highest income earners in our province. That was your

decision. You had an opportunity to take care of low-income earners then, and you ignored it. You took care of your buddies back at that time; let's not forget. Those tax decreases cost this province nearly \$4 billion, I say to the people that are watching this today.

These are the things just last April when you missed and you just kicked the fact that you owed over \$300 million down the road on an equalization overpayment. That is what you missed, and you signed an agreement for the next 10 years. You did not ask the people of this province about that. That was a decision you had made when you were the premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. P. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The rhetoric continues, because again he didn't answer the question, Mr. Speaker.

Yesterday he talked about 2007 – well, Premier, this is 2016 and you're the Premier today and the people of the province want to know what you're going to do for them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. P. DAVIS: Where's the stronger tomorrow that you promised? Where are the no losses in jobs that you promised? Where are the no tax increases that you promised? Now, you also said you got a great relationship with the federal government.

So, I'll ask you again, and for once, give a straight answer: What do you believe to be the fair share that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians should receive?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is 2016, and in 2016 and 2017 we will start cleaning up the mess that you left this province in. I would say, Mr. Speaker, \$27 billion in debt

if we did not take action. You should be ashamed to get up and tell the people of this province and defend your actions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I'm going to recognize the Premier to finish his question. I've stopped the clock on the Premier's time to respond – order and decorum.

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Given the actions that we've taken in this budget, this puts us back to really 2006 and 2007 tax levels in our province right now, back when you had changed the tax levels too on the high-income earners in our province. So we have gone back there. By the way, that includes the levy. We're very proud that we've been able to put in place a \$76.4 million Income Supplement so we can help the most vulnerable.

These are difficult decisions, but these are decisions that are required because you have left this province in a financial mess. It's just shameful to listen to some of the comments that you hear defending your actions over the past 12 years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the courthouse closed, the medical laboratory sciences program at the college cancelled, upgrades to the hospital in Grand Falls-Windsor shelved indefinitely, MCP and Home Heating Rebate office in Grand Falls-Windsor restructured with many losing jobs; the residents and council of Grand Falls-Windsor are outraged.

I ask: How does the Minister of Transportation and Works justify disproportionate cuts to his hometown, to the town he was hired to fight and represent?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Works.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you for the question and representing the people of Grand Falls-Windsor. We do have two MHAs who represent that area.

One of the conditions of this particular budget, Mr. Speaker, that we've had to face are tough decisions. The part of the decisions is trying to rectify some of the, I guess, overspending that has happened in this province.

Mr. Speaker, all of us, every Newfoundlander and Labradorian is going to be faced with a challenge with this budget, and we understand that. However, I think it is incumbent upon us as Members to make sure that we position this province going forward – not behind, going forward.

I said before, Mr. Speaker, it's a sad situation. I have two grandchildren and when we're spending more money on interest than we are on education, it's a problem for me as a grandparent.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, 24-hour snow clearing has been eliminated, even though just a few years ago Liberal Members opposite were asking for the program to be expanded. Last night was a preview of what's in store for next winter for people travelling at night on our provincial highways.

I ask the Premier: Was this decision to put lives in danger made in consultation with the entire caucus?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Works.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, I think the Member opposite should know quite well what happens and how it works in Transportation and Works when it comes to winter maintenance. We do have a program in place. As of April 19, the Member would be quite aware of the fact that our winter maintenance schedule finished for the year.

As a result of that, Mr. Speaker, the normal course of action – we do have adverse weather conditions periodically in the spring. So what we have done – yesterday before I left the office, we were engaged in discussions because we knew of the pending storm. What happened last night was the fact that we did have a crew on this morning at 4:30 that we would have if there was not the 24-hour snow clearing, which he would know would have ended about a month actually before the regular winter schedule was over.

Mr. Speaker, we were aware of it and we had our crews out this morning, and we'll continue to do that on a needs basis.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I remind the minister I am quite aware of the policy. It's a good example of what is in store for next winter, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. PETTEN: What we seen last night will be next winter. If Members opposite would have turned the radio on this morning, Bull Arm workers were irate, four hours to get to St. John's from work, and they were very upset and very vocal about the state of our roads. This is an example of what we have in store for next year, Mr. Speaker.

I ask the Minister of Transportation and Works: What's changed? Why are you now prepared to put lives at risk?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Works.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, I'm appalled at that type of response or question from the Member opposite. Nobody on this side of the House wants to put people's lives at risk. We are safety, number one, Mr. Speaker, and we are making sure –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. HAWKINS: – that we put safety number one; however, there are certain restrictions in which we have to work with and one of these is that there is a winter schedule in place that ended on April 19. What we are doing –

AN HON. MEMBER: Next year.

MR. HAWKINS: Next year is another year, Mr. Speaker; it is not right now.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. HAWKINS: We will address the situation as they arise, Mr. Speaker, and we will keep safety in mind as a priority for us.

Mr. Speaker, again, last night, we prepared yesterday afternoon to make sure that there was a winter crew in place this morning. That's what we did. We will continue to look after that for the people of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Liberal 2016 budget included 650 full-time equivalent positions would be eliminated. The Liberals are talking FTEs; we like to talk about people. We are getting a lot of calls from public servants.

Can the Minister of Finance let the people of the province know how many people, actual positions, are impacted in core public service, how many Crown corporations, boards and agencies by the reduction of the 650 full-time equivalent positions in Budget 2016?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

MS. C. BENNETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As we said when we announced the budget on April 14, the number of positions and people inside the core government workforce was 125 people that would have been impacted directly. Approximately 30 per cent of those would have been management or non-union positions.

In the agencies, boards and commissions, as we have continued to say, 450 of those full-time equivalents would be affected. As we have said in the House over the last number of days, pinpointing the exact number of people that it might impact will be dependent on when the agencies, boards and commissions operationalize those decisions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. HUTCHINGS: Let's be clear, Mr. Speaker, the people of the province want to know. You've indicated 450 full-time equivalents.

I'll ask you: What does that equate to in job losses and reduction overall in government? What's the number?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

MS. C. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure as people listening at home would certainly appreciate, if the Member opposite doesn't, there's a normal process in the collective bargaining process that requires there to be

bumping and other things to happen. There's also when you look at what a full-time equivalent job is, when it's actually scheduled, it can impact as little as a half-time position and it can also impact a full-time position.

At this point, until the agencies, boards and commissions implement the decisions that have been made as part of Budget 2016, it would be irresponsible of me to reflect any other number than the number we are reflecting. Until the work is done and we know the exact number, we can't provide information that is factually inaccurate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. HUTCHINGS: Mr. Speaker, how many people, to date, has gotten notice that their position is terminated out of 650 full-time equivalents that you announced in the budget?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

MS. C. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, the numbers that were referred to in Budget 2016, the individuals that would have been impacted in core government, they would be notified under the normal notification process when the decisions were being operationalized in each of those departments.

I can certainly provide a number to the Member tomorrow of the exact number to date, but as the decisions roll out over the next coming months, as the full fiscal year unfolds, those decisions and notices would be communicated.

Certainly, we've been very transparent about the decisions that the government is making and when those will be implemented with our employees in the core public sector. Those individuals that work in the agencies, boards and commissions, it would be the responsibility of those organizations to let their teams know when they operationalize things.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So the minister doesn't know the answer. There will be more confusion, much like the levy yesterday. Today, they've announced 650 full-time equivalent positions. They don't know what position that equates to, how many it equates to and they don't know who's been notified. So, again, confusion in terms of executing a budget that she brought down.

Mr. Speaker, in Estimates for Human Resources Secretariat the minister indicated, as I said, 650 positions. The minister then stated that she wasn't sure if they'd been notified.

I ask the minister: How many of those folks have been notified in regard to termination of their position to date?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

MS. C. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, the Members opposite continue to say things that are quite factually inaccurate. I said to the Member in Estimates the exact same answer I'm giving him today. If he chooses not to listen to it or he can't comprehend it, I can't explain that to him.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. HUTCHINGS: We have it right there, Mr. Speaker. The answer she gave in Estimates made no more sense than the one she gave today. She's answering questions for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador that deserve to know. It's disgusting the tone.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HUTCHINGS: Mr. Speaker, more confusion. In Natural Resources Estimates, while the Minister of Natural Resources acknowledged a reduction of staff in her department, she was unable to confirm if those

positions were part of the 650 full-time equivalents that the minister announced. Here's more confusion.

I ask the Minister of Finance: Are there cuts going on in line departments over and above the 650 you announced in the budget, because no one over there seems to know what's going on with it anyway.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

MS. C. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, I'll attempt to answer this question very slowly for the Member opposite. Budget 2016 impacted 125 people in the core government. In agencies, boards and commissions there will be an impact on 450 full-time equivalents.

The Member opposite last year in their budget made actions around attrition. They're having difficulty understanding the attrition of their plan –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS. C. BENNETT: – and the clarity of the actions we've taken. Mr. Speaker, the actions that we've taken in this budget, the 450 full-time equivalents, as well as the 125 people in core government, we have been consistent and clear on.

Mr. Speaker, I'll look forward to continuing to answer his questions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, let's talk about attrition, Mr. Speaker.

I'll ask the Minister of Finance: Does she have a plan for attrition in 2016-2017 in the fiscal budget? If so, are the positions being removed or

is just a budget salary being removed for this fiscal year? I ask the minister.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

MS. C. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, the attrition program that was announced by the former administration and the dollars that were taken out as part of that program continue to be removed from the salary program. This year, that represents \$91.4 million. Those salaries were removed last year and they remain removed this year because, quite frankly, this government can't afford \$91 million to re-inject in salaries.

What is missing from the attrition discussion and the attrition plan that the former government had in place was a full and comprehensive workforce plan which we intend to build as part of our zero base budgeting, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay East – Bell Island.

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The MHA for Bonavista let it slip at a NAPE rally in Bonavista that the CNA campus may close and that he is engaged with a committee to do everything he can.

I ask the minister: Can he provide clarity on what your Liberal plan is for CNA Bonavista campus?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I need to recognize for the Broadcast Centre, the hon the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills.

MR. BYRNE: Mr. Speaker, I can certainly clarify what the Member said because what he said in front of a group of people, as he said constantly to me and to others, is that he wants to make sure that Bonavista, his constituency has access to full services, whatever can be

done, and that the college is performing at its full strength.

Mr. Speaker, this hon. Member understands that when you work with a caucus, you work with a government, you can get things done even in difficult times.

Now I have conducted – I have stated publicly that we will be conducting a review of the college system because as we know, Mr. Speaker, on this side we did not cut over \$17 million from the budget of CNA as did the Members opposite when they were in government while they were enjoying huge surpluses.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. BYRNE: What we did is we said, do you know something? We're going to make sure that this college works to its top function and that students –

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay East – Bell Island.

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So from that response I now realize that there are cuts coming to the Bonavista campus.

What I do ask the minister: Can you tell me what other cuts you're planning to do in other campuses in rural Newfoundland and Labrador?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills.

MR. BYRNE: Mr. Speaker, what we will not do is cut over \$22 million from a budget of over just approximately \$85 million. This is what this government did, it cut – and do you know what?

We did not close Springdale, as that government did.

One thing we will not do is we'll not take erratic decisions without any evidence. We will plan for a successful completion of academic studies for all of our students. We'll make sure we use an evidence-based approach. What we will not do is we will not spread innuendo, as this Member did on *Open Line* saying I have received information that there are big cuts coming to CNA, and then when I challenged him and said: You know something, if you know there's big cuts coming, why don't you come on *Open Line* and you talk about it?

He was silent, because just as he's silent now –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. BYRNE: – he was silent back then –

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. BYRNE: – and he has nothing to say.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay East – Bell Island, for a very quick question.

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, I hope CNA doesn't get cut as much as the libraries did today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BRAZIL: So, Mr. Speaker, taxes on books are going up, libraries will close, schools are being closed and teachers' jobs are gone.

I ask: What is the Liberal plan for literacy and education in this province?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills.

MR. BYRNE: Mr. Speaker, literacy is a very, very important foundation to education. That's why we are investing in adult literacy, that's why we are adopting the new technologies, making sure that those that want to advance their literacy skills have access to the programs and services that are required.

Unlike that former government, which just unilaterally cut Adult Basic Education out of the College of the North Atlantic, we'll take a very reasoned strategy. Things are changing, adaption to new technologies, people are adapting to new technologies, times are changing. We'll adapt to those times, but, Mr. Speaker, this former government adapted to the times by just simply cutting while times were very, very good.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. John's East – Quidi Vidi.

MS. MICHAEL: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The fallout from the provincial government continues unabated as people of the province realize the cumulative impact it will have on their household finances.

I ask the Premier: If prior to finalizing the budget, did this government analyze the cumulative impact of all taxes, fees and levies on individuals and families at various income levels?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, there was an analysis and information that was part of the budget process that we adhered to. These were very tough decisions, and I'm sure the Member opposite realizes, as has been already mentioned, with the climbing debt servicing that was required in this budget.

Because of the tax measures, we are currently back to 2006 and 2007. That includes the levies. We understand the impact of this. We've put in place \$76.4 million to help the most vulnerable in our society right now, in particular our seniors, people with disabilities and low-income

families. We put in mitigating supports to help those people, Mr. Speaker.

These are difficult decisions that we had to make. I assure you we will continue to monitor what's happening. This is a temporary levy. I will say this again, it's temporary. When we roll this back, we will start with the low-income earners.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for St. John's East – Quidi Vidi.

MS. MICHAEL: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

It is shameful that the Premier is admitting that they – he's saying that they know how bad the impact was going to be in saying to people it's okay if it's only temporary. You have a broken leg, don't worry, it doesn't get fixed yet because it's temporary. That is shameful, Mr. Speaker. I cannot believe the Premier admitted that in this House.

I ask him: Did government do an analysis of the impact of the loss of over half the libraries on the rural communities affected, as was announced today. What was that analysis?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

MR. KIRBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to first thank the public libraries board for their difficult work. These are people who have a passion for reading and for literacy. They're volunteers. They voluntarily sit on the board and do the work that they have to do.

It became fairly obvious to me, shortly after being appointed to Cabinet, that the library system in the province was undergoing a slow 'atrophy'. As a result of the previous administration's tinkering and cutting and cutting and cutting around the edges year after year, the system wasn't able to keep up with wage increases and the sorts of expensive leases to the tune of –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. KIRBY: – hundreds of thousands of dollars that the previous administration foisted onto the system. So we worked with the public libraries board –

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. KIRBY: – to come up with a new regional model.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. John's Centre.

MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I ask the Premier: How many jobs will be cut by the library closures? Are they included in the 650 public sector job cuts already announced or are they additional?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

MR. KIRBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

There are approximately 60 positions affected in the libraries throughout the libraries system. Over the next two years, as we transition to the new regional system of libraries, that's how many positions will be affected. They were reflected on the numbers that were provided to the public on budget day.

These libraries that are now going to be closing – because of the cutbacks and the lack of investment in libraries over time – were open an average of about 18 hours a week, frequently between 9 to 5 when people who are working were unable to access them. We're moving to an increased level of service on a regional level where libraries will have a minimum level of service of 30 hours a week –

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. KIRBY: – and additional investment beyond that.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. John's Centre.

MS. ROGERS: Mr. Speaker, can the Premier explain why he is choking the life out of rural communities of the province through the closure of libraries, on top of the closure of AES and CYFS offices, schools and courts?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Before I speak the answer to the question to the Member opposite, I want to address what her colleague mentioned about waiting for broken legs. Mr. Speaker, I will tell you that is fear mongering at its best I have to say to the Member opposite. That had nothing to do –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

PREMIER BALL: – with the decision or the question that you were asking. I would say to the Member opposite –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

PREMIER BALL: – making suggestions and fear mongering like that doesn't belong here.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I've stopped the time on the Premier for order and decorum.

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We are concerned about rural Newfoundland and Labrador. Many of the decisions that have been made are to protect the future of our province. We will see unprecedented amounts of

debt servicing actually strip this public service if we do not make those critical decisions that we've had to make today.

We are concerned about what's happening in this province. I ask all Members here to actually properly reflect what's in that budget and please stop the fear mongering amongst Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The time for Question Period has expired.

Before we move on with the proceedings for the day, there was a comment made by the Member for Bonavista during Question Period. I ask the Member to withdraw the statement.

MR. KING: I withdraw, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Tabling of Documents.

Notices of Motion.

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

It being Private Members' Day, we have time for one petition.

Petitions

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PETTEN: Bad back and all, Mr. Speaker, I beat her. It's not easy to beat her to her feet.

Mr. Speaker, I bring a petition to the House, I've brought it here on numerous occasions and I'll bring it again today.

To the hon. House of Assembly of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in Parliament assembled, the petition of the undersigned residents of Newfoundland and Labrador humbly sheweth:

WHEREAS policing is vital to the protection and service of our province's communities;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to increase the presence of law enforcement in Conception Bay South area.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, I've brought this up on numerous occasions. Many of my constituents have very big concerns on policing and police presence in the district. Like I said before, there is nowhere to show the RNC are anywhere near the community, only when a police vehicle passes by. We used to have an office, that was closed I believe last year or the year before.

I've spoken to the town, and a lot of residents keep encouraging me to keep the fight going. I think it's something we could work on to get some presence in the community. It would be great to see a dedicated office with some dedicated officers for my town. I know the residents are calling upon – with the level of crime. The need is there and I'll keep advocating for them.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

We do have time for another petition, very quickly.

The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl North.

MR. KENT: Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to present a petition in the 90 seconds remaining.

To the hon. House of Assembly of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in Parliament

assembled, the petition of the undersigned residents of Newfoundland and Labrador humbly sheweth:

WHEREAS the seniors of our province deserve the greatest level of respect and care; and

WHEREAS the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has a responsibility to act in the best interest of our seniors; and

WHEREAS the government has decided to shut down Masonic Park Nursing Home and reduce long-term care beds in the region;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to reverse its decision and not bring undue hardship upon the residents of Masonic Park and find alternative measures that will allow them to continue to stay at the place they call home.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, I know I literally have a moment here. The issue is not about the state of the building at Masonic Park. In fact the real savings here is going to be about operational savings because we are eliminating 18 jobs from the long-term care system.

It is really unfortunate for families and for residents, and I ask the government once again to reconsider its position.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Orders of the Day

Private Members' Day

MR. SPEAKER: It being Private Members' Day, I call on the Member for Bonavista to proceed with the motion.

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm sure I won't have to withdraw any statements I make in this and (inaudible).

I bring forward a motion today, seconded by the Member for Terra Nova:

WHEREAS the First World War was a significant event in the history of Newfoundland and Labrador; and

WHEREAS Honour 100 represents the provincial government's commitment to commemorating Newfoundland and Labrador's First World War story and will focus on significant anniversaries, legacy, education, provincial outreach and research; and

WHEREAS as a province we will honour the sacrifices made by our veterans and come together to commemorate the anniversary on July 1, engaging our young people to learn more about the history that has shaped the place we call home;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House of Assembly calls upon all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to join with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to mark this centennial day and commemorate those brave men and women participating in planned events at the National War Memorial and community memorials throughout our province.

Mr. Speaker, as all my colleagues here in the House of Assembly are aware, from both sides of the House, many ideas come forward on the caucus meetings on Wednesday. We all have our motions that we want to get forward. Not everything can come to the table and this one here, I think, is very appropriate. With July 1 and the 100th anniversary of Beaumont-Hamel quickly approaching, it was decided that this PMR would come forward to mark the significant part of Newfoundland and Labrador's history.

As a 14-year veteran of the Royal Canadian Navy, including deployments to Afghanistan and off the coast of Libya, it's an honour for me to be asked by my caucus colleagues to bring this PMR to the floor of the House of Assembly. I'll just give you a little background on the First World War.

War broke out on July 28, 1914, with the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand. From the time the first 107 Royal Naval Reservists left St. John's on September 6, to the end of the war in November 1918, nearly 12,000 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians enlisted in the Newfoundland Royal Naval Reserve, Newfoundland Regiment, Newfoundland Forestry Corps and the Flying Corps, as well as the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

With a population of less than 250,000 people, this represented 35.6 per cent of men between the ages of 19 and 35. Another 505 were known to have served in the Merchant Marine. You take 35.6 per cent of Newfoundlanders between the ages of 19 and 35, I mean that's a lot of the workforce that we had back then; the fishermen, the farmers, the foresters. That was the heart and soul of every community here in Newfoundland and Labrador. As well, many women volunteered in nursing units for the Canadian and British forces.

So I mentioned 107 Newfoundland Royal Reservists left St. John's on September 6, and I'm very proud to say that my grandfather, Archelaus King, was one of those 107 that left St. John's, September 6, 1914. He had joined the Newfoundland Royal Reserve in 1913 and he was immediately called up.

So, of those 107, all of them went to HMCS *Niobe*, which was a Canadian ship. So Newfoundlanders, because we were our own sovereign state at the time, stepped up and helped Canada fulfill her complement. The *Niobe* being the first Canadian ship patrolled the Eastern Seaboard protecting our coastlines. After that, he served the rest of the war with the British Royal Navy.

I was going to talk a little bit about the recruitment of the first 500, but my colleague here for Virginia Waters – Pleasantville is going to speak much more on that because he's got a distinguished background with the Church Lads' Brigade here in St. John's. So I'm going to leave that up to him.

One stat I want to take, and I'm not going to get into the details because you're going to do a good job on that, but within four days of the war being called, the Newfoundland and Labrador

government committed to raise 500 soldiers. So that's what we call the first 500, the Blue Puttees. On August 22, 1914, the call for volunteers went out. Within days, 355 showed up, two-thirds from the cadets brigades. By September 26, a month later, we had over 1,000. So that's amazing in that short an amount of time to get them all from all over the place.

What we're commemorating this year on July 1 is the Battle of the Somme at Beaumont-Hamel. So the Battle of the Somme occurred from July 1, 1916, to November 18, 1916. Allied forces were spread way too thinly for the initial offensive, and on the first day of battle the British army suffered 57,000 casualties, and 20,000 were killed. So as part of the British Empire, the Royal Newfoundland Regiment was part of those forces.

Over 1 million casualties were suffered on all sides over the course of the battle. So you take a four-month battle, a million people's lives were gone. That's a staggering statistic that I hope we never see again – and being someone who's been in foreign countries and seen the devastation of war, I certainly don't want to see it again.

So there's no clear winner. You fought for a metre here, a metre there, but the plurality of historians believe that the battle gave the allied leaders confidence that they could beat the Germans with their new tactics. Noteworthy within the Battle of the Somme, this is the first time that armoured tanks were used. Cars were only prevalent within the last 15 years to having an armoured tank which can fire a weapon, that's a big milestone.

Getting back to the Newfoundland Regiment, on the first day of the Battle of the Somme the Newfoundland Regiment faced a devastating loss. We've all heard the stories that affect every community here in Newfoundland and Labrador. One hundred and eight members of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment went over the top, marching on to German lines. Only 68 answered the roll the next morning; 324 men were killed or missing; 386 were wounded; all officers were either killed or wounded.

I was an officer in the Navy and the officer is where you give all your commands, and that's a

big loss of leadership that we had there. That caused us as the Royal Newfoundland Regiment not to be able to return to battle until October of that year. At the time it was just the Newfoundland Regiment, after the battle, a few years down the road, it was given the royal designation which it currently holds today.

Within the District of Bonavista there are a couple of things I want to mention. I want to talk about the Coaker's Recruits and I also want to talk about the Great War Living History Committee, which is formed out of Elliston and does numerous events throughout the year.

Everyone knows that William Ford Coaker was the founder of the Fishermen's Protective Union in Port Union. He was antiwar, but he saw the need to provide soldiers for the battle to protect our realm, I guess, England's realm.

I'm going to read a quote: "Let England's hour of necessity come, and she will find in Newfoundland 20,000 of the primest warriors ever born, ready to do or die. That day is yet far off and the Colony's chief duty now is to put her house in order and arrange things so that in event of the hour of necessity arising Terra Nova's sons will be strong and healthy and prepared to meet the foe. Half-starved men will be useless as fighters. Thousands through the failure of the fishery will have to fight starvation, an enemy fifty times more dreaded than the Germans on the field of battle or the seas." That was Coaker's concern, if we take too many people from our rural population that it would have a devastating effect on the long-term sustainability of rural Newfoundland.

What he did was he decided that he will recruit soldiers. They'll play their part and keep rural Newfoundland active, providing the fishery that was vital to long-term sustainability for Newfoundland and Labrador, keeping our families supported. "... in 1917, he voted for a conscription (mandatory enlistment) bill. He even went so far as to actively recruit from the Fishermen's Protective Union. Sixty-nine young men, who became known as 'Coaker's Recruits ...'"

Every Remembrance Day the Coaker Foundation of Port Union tends to have soup and sandwiches after their Remembrance Day

ceremony in Catalina. The Coaker Recruits are highly prevalent there.

I also want to talk about the Great War Living History Committee. That was formed locally by some interested parties in the Elliston area, but it's grown outside of that. The purpose of the Great War Living History Committee is to raise awareness of World War I on the Bonavista Peninsula, from Bonavista to Port Blandford, in the Member for Terra Nova's district.

What they have is a Mobile Interpretation program. They have recreated a history and weapons display. They have a replica trench on the Elliston Highway. They educate people on symbolism and identification through their displays, and they have old equipment.

They are very, very active in the community. They're dressed like World War I soldiers. They go out on Remembrance Day and Memorial Day. They're busier than anyone else on the peninsula. They will drive from one end to the other just to raise awareness of World War I and to commemorate the 100th anniversary.

My time is winding down here now, but I just want to talk a little bit about what's going on here in Newfoundland and Labrador in the upcoming weeks and months as we mark the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme at Beaumont-Hamel. At The Rooms – and I would suggest that everyone go there and I'm looking forward to actually going up and seeing the display – they have an Honour 100 exhibit.

We're encouraging people to attend memorial services, including the National War Memorial here in St. John's. I'll be attending and presiding over a ceremony in Catalina. We have a visit – which the Minister of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development brought forward yesterday. We have a visit from Her Royal Highness, the Princess Royal. She's the Royal Newfoundland Regiment's Colonel-in-Chief and she's going to be participating in the commemorative events for the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme on July 1.

I can speak, because I've met her in Afghanistan. She's a wonderful person, very supportive of troops, and very supportive of the history of the First World War and our

contributions to that at the Battle of the Somme and Beaumont-Hamel.

I spoke briefly on it. I'm sure other people are going to talk quite a bit more, but I would encourage all of my colleagues here today to give unanimous support to this initiative. I think it's important we recognize the sacrifices made in the past by those who lost their lives during the World War. We do it every day that the House is open. My friend from the District of Exploits read 40 names of the roll of the 1,600 who lost their lives.

I'm going to finish up, Madam Speaker, and I'm going to let someone else take over. I encourage everyone to support this private member's resolution.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MADAM SPEAKER (Dempster): The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It's a pleasure to get up, actually, and speak on this private member's motion. I thank the Member for Bonavista for bringing it forward.

I had the fortune in being part of when Honour 100 was established in my previous work with the former minister of that department. So it is a pleasure to get up, and I commend the government for continuing on with this Honour 100. As we all know, it's something we can never forget. It's a part of each and every one of us right across the world.

Newfoundland has a special – there's something special about Newfoundland when you come to what happened in Beaumont-Hamel, the Royal Newfoundland Regiment. We have a great history of service in the war and it's something that we should never forget.

Madam Speaker, speaking of World War I, I had the pleasure of actually travelling to Beaumont-Hamel in 2010. I attended the July 1 celebration – we shouldn't say a celebration, but it is, I

guess. Now it's become – it's a very sombre event, but it is honouring the dead. It's honouring what our Newfoundland did in the Battle of the Somme.

While there, I had the privilege of travelling on the Trail of the Caribou, which was a great experience. July 1, I read on the news the other day it's a school trip for – one was cancelled but my daughter is planning on still attending the July 1 celebration, and I encouraged her to do that. It's very important I think for those who never had the privilege to do it – if you ever have the opportunity, everyone should try to do it. It's a very moving experience.

I didn't know how it would affect you; you go there and you say well, this is a yearly thing. You know it's a somber moment but when you do actually attend, it moves you in a different way. It affects you. It's all roped off out there. I mean those people never ever got a burial. They were battling. They were fighting at war. It just shows you the casualties of war and how brave these people were and how big a tragedy Beaumont-Hamel was for Newfoundland and Labrador.

During our time there we did travel to the Trail of the Caribou, so you went to the various monuments. Once again, I had the privilege of going into Belgium. There is an archway there and it commemorates all the war's dead who were never given a proper burial. The King of Belgium – I guess it's pretty well been ongoing now since World War I. His words apparently were that these people were never given a proper burial and they come from all over the world to defend us, so the only way for us to show our thanks is 8 o'clock every evening – and this is something that I guess it is job to fathom it, but it's true. I believe it was interrupted one time, one day.

Every day, 365 days a year, 8 o'clock every evening there is a ceremony in this archway. It is an archway right through the main street through the city in Belgium. Every name of every person that they could look up is etched into this concrete, it is engraved, their name and their rank and whatever country they were from. I took pictures. There is no one would believe you; it is mindboggling, the names, there is that many people. It's incredible.

We went there. It started at 8 o'clock and we looked at the thing and it said 8 o'clock it starts, so it was about 7:40. When we went in, there were probably four or five people around there and I was thinking this starts in 15 minutes. I was kind of lost. I didn't understand how it worked. Vehicles were going back and forth. At 8:00 o'clock I actually took another picture because it was incredible. There were about 1,500 people there, everything stops, the traffic stops and the buglers start playing. I have to say I've talked to others, Beaumont-Hamel is very moving and special because it's Newfoundland and it's a very big part of who we all are.

That was arguably one of the more moving experiences I've ever experienced in my life. Can you imagine anywhere else in Canada and Newfoundland, for us to stop our daily events every evening for 20 minutes to celebrate something that happened 100 years ago? It's sad, but I think we'd have trouble finding the dedication of doing anything repeatedly, seven days a week, 365 days a year. It was an incredible experience. I've talked to others that have actually gone there and witnessed that. They, too, said the same thing. It was quite a moving experience.

The former curator, he used to work at Beaumont-Hamel for years. His father before him is just a friend of mine. Actually, it was recently discussed. He always used to make the reference, that's just as moving but it's from soldiers all over the world, Britain, the US, everywhere. For everything to stop, I think that's the thing. This city is just a very busy, beautiful city and you stop everything. Everyone stops and respects. It lasts about 20 minutes and there is a wreath laying every evening. Then when they finish, by 8:30 everyone goes back to normal. Their life goes on until 8 o'clock the next evening.

So I felt very privileged to have that opportunity to actually go there and experience and witness that. In the following years after our government, the former government decided to – through the hard work of people within the Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and recreation, I think that's the name anyway. They're a great group of staff over there that are working on this Honour 100.

It was a great privilege to actually have that experience. It gives you a different, unique feeling for it. They're doing great work and I want to commend them as well because sometimes they get lost in the shuffle. We say the word Honour 100 and sometimes we forget about the people that are behind the scenes that are making this happen. I think they're doing fabulous work; they're a great bunch. This July 1, the 100th anniversary of Beaumont-Hamel coming up, I'm expecting it's going to be quite the event.

Madam Speaker, we talk about Honour 100 and we tend to go back to Beaumont-Hamel, which is fair enough. It is 100 years that we're celebrating. There were a lot of other wars that happened outside the Battle of the Somme. We sometimes forget – I go to Remembrance Day ceremonies. I go to one religiously up in my own district. I've said to my daughters we go down there on November 11 and we pay tribute, or if you go July 1, of course, it's to honour Beaumont-Hamel.

I think people go down and pay their respects but they never really understand. It's sad that people don't – we do that once a year. We should be thankful pretty well every day of the year because our lives would be probably totally different if not for those people who fought for our freedom years past.

I think our schools are doing a great job on educating our students of the importance of the war and our history. They can only read about it in books but I've noticed there has been a lot more change in our curriculum to include and to teach our children how important it is to never forget. As we all know, a lot of veterans from those wars are getting less and less every year. We should never forget. We should keep their memory alive for as long as possible.

Events like Honour 100 is a great example that we can do that. I encourage government, and I encourage everyone, when we get through the Honour 100 celebrations we should continue on. We'll have a celebration and we'll remember but I think there's something, some little thing we could do.

We always say we do things, but I think we sometimes miss the point of just how important

and how tremendous – what those men did. You look at 68 people answered the roll call the next morning. You go down and you see all their names engraved on a plaque, it's amazing. Sixty-eight answered, that's incredible.

We all know the history. It was a miscue on a flare from the German forces. It was miscued thinking the British said that it was good to go. It was a terrible tragedy. It's something that is carried with us for a long time.

If you go there, go into Beaumont-Hamel, it's a piece of Newfoundland in the South of France. It's incredible, actually. It's maintained impeccably. It's all Newfoundland. Like I said, I can't say it enough. It was a great experience. It was something I'll cherish for the rest of my life and hopefully I'll get around to doing it again.

Madam Speaker, the Royal Newfoundland Regiment earned its royal description encouraging blood, I guess is the best way to describe it. Again, how could you ever forget something like that?

Speaking of forgetting, I'd probably be remiss not to make note, up in my district we had a war memorial. It was down in the Topsail area. You would get small groups go every year. It was kind of just tucked away off a road, it wasn't really kept well. A local group, the Legion and Mr. Wayne Miller, spearheaded to building a new war memorial. He was a veteran and he felt we weren't honouring our veterans in an appropriate manner.

Madam Speaker, if you ever come to CBS now and you go to Long Pond, you'll see one of the most beautiful war memorials anywhere to be found. It's incredible. Every November, May, or any special events of provincial remembrance, we get anywhere from probably 2,000, 3,000 people go to attend these. That was never the way before. It's a real tribute. It's a tribute to them and their commitment. It wasn't easy to get funding for that sort of thing. It's not a dedicated funding pot for that sort of thing, so I need to commend Mr. Miller and the Legion for their commitment to it.

One point I'll make about that memorial. Last year they had it, they have soldiers there but they have a female soldier, which brings us to

the reality of today's war battles. It's no longer all men; we have women in our forces too. It was a great addition. If I'm not mistaken, I wouldn't be quoted, but I think it's one of the only memorials around that has an actual bronze statue of a female soldier. So I thought that was a great addition and it was well thought out by the committee.

Also in my district, Madam Speaker, the Kiwanis Club are presently doing a Tommy Ricketts Park. It was news to me actually. I only found out a couple of years back that the land the Kiwanis Club of Kelligrews actually occupies was owned by the Ricketts Family. I've lived there all my life but I never knew that story. I guess they did their research and whatnot. That was donated to them for a swimming pool and playground.

They've started it and they're doing a lot of good work. They're getting federal funding. They have a small bit of provincial. They're going to turn it into the Tommy Ricketts Park. I think it's going to be a great addition to it. I'm proud to have it in my district, but I think it's a great remembrance to what – as we know, Tommy Ricketts, everyone in this room should know Tommy Ricketts and what he did. He's a great soldier.

We look around – that's just in my district and we can go right across. All hon. Members have, I'm sure, in their districts they have their way of remembering.

AN HON. MEMBER: The Rooms.

MR. PETTEN: What?

AN HON. MEMBER: The Rooms.

MR. PETTEN: The Room, yes. The Rooms are a great example.

There's one thing too you say, because we could tell the story of war, but we all know what the end result was. It's tragic. I want to focus my time more on the effects the Royal Newfoundland Regiment had and our Newfoundlanders had and the effect of the war.

While in France, Madam Speaker, I went to this church. I am not really the religious type, but it

was kind of this massive church. I said I must go in and have a look. Curiosity led me – it seemed a lot of tourists were going in there. I was amazed. We walked down. Again, it was massive – it's an actual crypt. I don't know what the size was, but fairly big and it is all (inaudible). It's a monument to the Royal Newfoundland Regiment. So when you go down to Arras, I believe is the name of the town – anyway –

AN HON. MEMBER: Amiens.

MR. PETTEN: Amiens it is, actually. It's this church tucked away. It's a beautiful, beautiful building and you got a monument, you got a section there for the Royal Newfoundland Regiment down in France. It kind of goes, wow.

When you travel on the Trail of the Caribou, there is respect, that's them Newfoundlanders, that's their way of thanking you. I know we went to – again, I'm lost on the name of the community. I shouldn't be, but it's outside of Belgium. One of their –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. PETTEN: You got her.

Anyway, one of their highest ranking officials came out to take part in that moment, those prayers at that monument, and they're still so thankful. You go there, almost like you're walking – they have so much appreciation and honour for the Royal Newfoundland Regiment and for Newfoundlanders and Canadians alike, but a special place for Newfoundlanders.

As my time is winding down now, Madam Speaker, I just want to say, once again, I want to thank the Member for Bonavista for his private Member's motion. I want to encourage all Members of this hon. House to never forget the importance of what our ancestors did for us to make our lives what they are today. Outside of November 11 and any other day, we should always remember and never forget the important value of what they did, and we shall always be very thankful and remember that.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MADAM SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Virginia Waters – Pleasantville.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. B. DAVIS: Madam Speaker, the events of the First World War have left a permanent stamp on Newfoundland and Labrador society. Every region of our province, every community lost people. We celebrate their memory and sacrifice each year, and we are justifiably proud of them.

From community to community young men enlisted, many of whom were too young to enlist but answered the call for king and country. They travelled across the Atlantic Ocean; many travelling abroad for the first and the last time. They gave their lives in the service of the greater good, for the freedom of our province. These men helped secure the future for all who reside in our province, and we are forever thankful for their sacrifice.

Even though the province has not possessed any formal military organization since 1970, 538 men soon volunteered, which enabled them to enlist a whole battalion to be formed and later maintained throughout the war. It was our great moment. It was a moment when we showed the entire world our courage, our willingness to stand alongside our allies and fight. It was a moment that defined Newfoundland and Labrador, the character we have, and it is a moment that we will continue to look back on for inspiration and guidance.

I'm pleased to rise in this House today to speak to the private Member's resolution brought forward by my hon. colleague regarding the Honour 100. It's important that we continue to remember the sacrifices of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians during the First World War and it is equally important that we pass these memories on to future generations. That's why initiatives like the Honour 100 are so, so very important.

The list of programs funded by the Honour 100 span the entire province. Each project is uniquely suited to commemorate the province's role in the First World War in a diverse and meaningful way and create a legacy that reaches long beyond the commemorative period.

Applicants like municipalities, community groups, arts organizations, not-for-profit and heritage organizations and performing arts companies, all applied for funding. This is truly a diverse cross section of the many organizations that helped make Newfoundland the vibrant community it is.

The list of funded projects include – I'm not going to go through them all because there is a lot – the Bowring Park Foundation, Lighting the Way here in St. John's; Theatre Newfoundland and Labrador, Memorial Show in Cow Head; the Church Lads' Brigade, Where Once They Stood show for Beaumont-Hamel in St. John's; the Town of Gaultois, Storyboards in Gaultois; Conception Bay Museum, the First World War Commemorations in Harbour Grace; Trinity Historical Society, Exhibit: Honouring Our Own in Trinity; Stephenville Cultural Development, a play production *The Christmas Truce* in Stephenville; as mentioned previously by the Member for CBS, the CBS Parks Commission, the Tommy Ricketts Memorial Park in CBS. I'd like to add also he's a former CLB boy and the youngest Victoria Cross recipient in our province's history.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. B. DAVIS: The Town of Carbonear, Legacy Musical Drama piece in Carbonear. Those are just a few of the highlights right across our province and there are many, many more.

We stand in this House and read a list of names into the historical record, but they are much more than names, they're a reminder of these individuals' immortality. Our province lost nearly a full generation of young men. They died fighting for king and country. It's easy for us to remember them in a poetic and idealized way, but it's important that we also recognize the horror and misery of trench warfare in Europe.

These brave Newfoundlanders and Labradorians had to endure poisonous gas, toxic living conditions, mechanized death and destruction on a scale the world had not yet seen at that point. Their deaths were horrible and almost unimaginable, but that's the important part of remembering. We have to believe that by remembering the horror these soldiers

experienced, we improve the chances of avoiding a repeat of a global conflict of that scale.

That's why I'm glad that we are serious about commemorating their sacrifice. That's why I'm pleased to speak to this resolution today. I'd like to recount some history for you here today, just so we remember the extensive sacrifice these men made.

On September 20, 1915, the regiment landed in Suvla Bay on the Gallipoli Peninsula where the British Corps and the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps, or ANZAC, had been attempting to seize control of the Dardanelle Strait from Turkey since they first landed on the 25th of April. Thirty soldiers of the regiment were killed or mortally wounded in action. Ten died of disease, while 150 were treated for frostbite and exposure.

Despite the terrible conditions, the Newfoundlanders stood up well. When the decision was made to evacuate all British Empire forces from the area, the regiment was chosen as part of the rear guard finally withdrawing from Gallipoli with the last of the British troops on January 9, 1916.

As mentioned by my colleague from Bonavista, and mentioned so eloquently well. The regiment suffered great losses on the 1st of July, 1916. This is when they attacked in Beaumont-Hamel and the Battle of the Somme. Some 790 officers and men of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment were called into action. Of these, no fewer than 272 lost their lives. A further 11 officers and 427 men were wounded, making in total, in all 710 of the 790.

When you think about numbers like that, it is absolutely amazing the contribution Newfoundland has made to the war effort at that point. In recognition of the unit's valour during the Battles of Ypres in 1917, King George V bestowed the Regiment with the prefix Royal, and on the 28th of September, 1917, renaming them as the Royal Newfoundland Regiment.

It is interesting to note that Sir Douglas Haig, a Commander-in-Chief of the British forces, said of the Newfoundland Regiment, "Newfoundland may well feel proud of her sons. The heroism

and devotion to duty they displayed on the first July has never been surpassed.”

As I mentioned, the CLB was part of the Honour 100 program with the Spirit of Newfoundland company performing the play *Where Once They Stood*. The CLB actually played a role in the forming of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment.

The former building that burned down in 1992 was headquarters for the recruitment training of the command, given free of charge to the government of the day. The existing archway, which was saved after the fire, was preserved as a memorial for all those that marched underneath headed off to war.

The first man that enlisted in the Regiment was Leonard T. Stick, a CLB boy. Of the first 500, 108 CLB Members answered the call.

My colleague from Bonavista also mentioned that they were called the Blue Puttees, and that’s an interesting story as well. They didn’t have the khaki-coloured puttees, as they’re called, to outfit them but the CLB had blue coloured ones. We gave them to the Royal Newfoundland Regiment. So they became known as the Blue Puttees. It’s a fitting piece of history that we had the opportunity to be part of.

The Trail of the Caribou and the ambassador’s program, for example, are ways we pass on these memories to our next generation. There’s no substitute for actually being there in France and seeing those overgrown trenches and mortar craters, and looking across no man’s land at the exact spot where those Newfoundlanders and Labradorians died. The hon. Member for CBS mentioned that earlier as well.

All of the children who have been lucky enough to go on this pilgrimage will bring back these experiences and memories. They’ll keep them for a lifetime. This will ensure that the flame of remembrance stays alive in our youth. I can’t applaud this initiative enough.

I also applaud the initiative to create a permanent addition to The Rooms collection. The Royal Newfoundland Regiment Gallery will be a tremendous addition to what is already a vital institution of preserving and promoting our cultural legacy.

I’m looking forward to taking part in the events leading into the July 1 anniversary at The Rooms. I think it’s a testament to how important events of 1916 were that Her Royal Highness, the Princess Royal will be here to unveil this permanent exhibition. The United Kingdom does not forget the sacrifices that we made on behalf of them some 100 years ago. I’m glad they continue to demonstrate that.

I’ll wrap up my remarks by again stating that our participation in the First World War was our defining moment as a people. When war broke out, over 6,000 individuals enlisted. Just think about what a huge percentage of our population that would have been at the time.

Almost 12,000 answered the call to serve in the war in various regiments; too many of those never came home. We owe it to their memory and to the collective memory at this moment in our history to remember their sacrifice and to commemorate it every way we can.

That’s why I’m happy to stand in this House to support this private Member’s resolution, Honour 100. I ask my hon. colleagues on both sides of the House to do the same.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MADAM SPEAKER (Dempster): The hon. the Member for Conception Bay East – Bell Island.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It is, indeed, an honour to get up and speak to this private Member’s resolution. I do want to thank the Member for Bonavista for putting this forward.

This is very significant, not only because it’s the 100th anniversary of the battle of Beaumont-Hamel, but because it’s an opportunity for all of us in this House to acknowledge all of those who serve in any level in the military. It also gives us an opportunity to reflect on how Newfoundland and Labrador became internationally known for people who stand up for the rights of

individuals, people who put their own safety forward first for the protection of their citizens. This is a great opportunity for us to get up and talk about the Honour 100 celebration.

This whole focus is around education. It's around identifying our culture. It's around paying homage and respect to particularly those who signed up during World War 1. Those young men who decided they were willing to sacrifice their lives in a lot of cases, and going to a foreign land, having no real understanding of exactly what it was they were facing. Taking the adventure that was part of it, no doubt about it, but obviously it had to be a very fearful situation.

Unlike my hon. colleague over there, I never served in the military, and I have the utmost respect for those who do – and some regret, one day I would have hoped that I had been able to do it. But no matter what level you served in the military, no matter to what degree you travel around this world, homage and respect has to be paid to every veteran that ever served.

I've had the privilege of knowing hundreds of friends of mine, even members of my family who I'll talk about later on, who have military backgrounds, and the ultimate respect around their ability to stand for what's right. Their ability to say I will do what has to be done. Their ability to conform to a set of rules and regulations that are put there so not only the public's safety is in the best interest, but their safety when they serve.

So I want to note that, because I know from our own caucus here the respect for all veterans is very important. As we look at –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BRAZIL: As we look at the Honour 100, it's a great opportunity in this province for us to acknowledge exactly what's gone on. I think what's happened over the last couple of years – and I know what will happen this year and go on until the commemorative service to 1918 to 2018 is completed – is about educating our young people, giving them a real understanding and a real move forward to not letting it die after a 100th anniversary.

Centennials are always important, we can always play them up, but the importance here is to remember what went on. We all know the sacrifices that were made were about trying to prevent war. This wasn't about going out to fight; this was about trying to prevent future conflicts.

So many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians at the time, young men, signed up for that ultimate purpose. Some, unfortunately, gave the ultimate sacrifice with their lives. Others lived a life of turmoil afterwards because of the anguish they had faced and the things they had seen.

Most came back, if you talk to a lot of them – and I know, and I'll talk about it a little bit later. My family members who came back didn't want to talk about it all. It was something they did because it was the right thing to do. It was something they had to do. But at the end of the day, there was no glory in it. There was no honour in having to take the life of another individual, or seeing your buddy die unfortunately. What it was about was doing the right thing. So many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians did that.

We have the ability this summer, particularly on July 1, to pay that homage. I know many schools that I've dealt with in my district are putting programs in place around the education process. They've had fairs around Honour 100. They've selected students who are going to go to Beaumont-Hamel for that anniversary. It's a great opportunity to really educate our young people about what this is all really about.

When we look at exactly where our province has come from, somebody once said while it may not have been our finest hour in a military battle, it definitely was our defining one because the men who sacrificed that day knew what they were sacrificing for. They knew they were standing up for something that was important, for their families at home, for their comrades, for their commonwealth and for the freedom of people in this great world of ours.

I want to acknowledge, too, while this is the 100th anniversary of the Beaumont-Hamel it's also the 90th anniversary of the Legion movement in the world, particularly the Canadian Legions also. We need to reflect on

the reason why Legions were established; 90 years ago, a group of community-minded individuals and some veterans had come back and realized there were some veterans coming back with some issues that needed to be addressed, some supports they needed. There were other veterans who didn't come back, yet their families needed some supports and needed to have a place where they could go and feel wanted and feel secure.

The Legions were set up 90 years ago to do a multitude of things: to address people's health issues; people came back wounded and still needed health issues. Those days there wasn't a big process around pensions. There wasn't a lot of notoriety given from a medical point of view for the veterans themselves. So the community came together, a community of veterans came together and their families and their friends and the municipal leaders and came together and said we need an organization that supports those that gave so many sacrifices for the people here.

I am happy to say that the 90th anniversary is this year and in June, an international conference will be held here in St. John's to acknowledge the Legion's participation in supporting veterans, their participation in educating all of our citizens about what veterans do and what they sacrificed and the importance of supporting them. They also look at ensuring that veterans are included within the community and that the community are included in the activities that veterans themselves take a leadership role on.

It's an honour particularly in this year to have the 90th conference being held in Newfoundland and Labrador and here in St. John's. I know the new Convention Centre will be open and a thousand-plus delegates from all over the world will be here to look at exactly what the Legions have done. No doubt, there will be heavy discussions. I know our delegation here in Newfoundland and Labrador will outline exactly what Beaumont-Hamel was all about, what Honour 100 is all about and how we remember and acknowledge those people who served from this great province of ours.

I'm looking forward to attending that. I know a number of my colleagues in the Legion – and I have the honour of being an associate member of the Legion in Newfoundland and Labrador

because members of my family were ex-veterans. I look forward to that and I know there's a great opportunity for all of us in this House of Assembly to attend that, to attend the multitude of services they're going to provide, the multitude of educational workshops they'll have.

I encourage anybody if you haven't, go on the Canadian Legion's website, look at the offering there and if you want to register for it or if you want to take in one of the workshops, what a great opportunity. I know the Newfoundland delegation will be offering some great insight into veterans in this province, particularly going back to the Honour 100.

I also would like to talk a little bit about some of the other programs and services that Legions are offering here to ensure that veterans are healthy. There are a number of services around mental health. There are a number of services about counselling for families. There are a number of services about even employment initiatives. There are a number of services around the skill sets, keeping in mind every veteran that comes back, who retires from the military and gets discharged, they have an unbelievable skill set. They were all trained in various components of whatever their skills may be. All are leaders in their own right, so we need to tap that. We need to tap that energy. We need to use that in our school system for educating our students, for engaging them.

We've already started the process of Honour 100. Students are now very aware of what the military is all about, what veterans are all about, what they represent. We need to tap that. We need to use it better. We need to make those partnerships between veterans and our young people in our communities. I know we've come a long way and I want to give a hats off to Legions for particularly doing that.

I know we've paid a lot of acknowledgement to those who've served in recent years, and rightfully so. In the last number of years our country has been involved in a number of conflicts. If you look at it, the ratio of number of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who are in the military are higher than any other province. That's a testament to the quality of the people

we have here who serve, what they stand for and what they want to represent.

I mentioned earlier about the whole process of those who left 100 years ago and who signed up. These were people who came from every background. They were business people in their own right. They were sons and daughters of educators. They were sons and daughters of politicians. Don't forget, there were females who may not have fought in Beaumont-Hamel who did obviously have a very important role in the military battles that we had in World War I and supporting those veterans, very much so. Families played a big role, women played a big role and the soldiers themselves played a big role.

I want to talk about some of the important things that are going on now that we need to acknowledge. We need to acknowledge that our students now are very aware of what's happening. We need to acknowledge we're sending delegations to Europe. But I think what's going to be amazing, and I had a close working relationship when a number of things happened, it's the reception they're going to get in Europe. There's a reason they'll get that reception. It's because of what our forefathers did. What they represented over there and the spirit that people have and the respect they have for Newfoundland and Labrador.

It's going to be great to see so many students understand that connection. The monuments over there are second to none, you'll see that. You'll see a lot of these towns in particular areas that will acknowledge Newfoundland and Labrador and the soldiers. You'll see the graves where they are taken care of.

I had the privilege of working with the Trail of the Caribou project team who went all through Europe to identify all the gravesites of fallen Newfoundland and Labrador soldiers from World War I. If you go to any of those sites you'll see the Newfoundland flag there and you'll see a Newfoundland dog pin. It's an acknowledgement of the sacrifice that people made.

What it does for Europe, it gives them an opportunity for everybody over there to understand where Newfoundland is, where

Newfoundland and Labrador is. What it meant 100 years ago, but particularly what it still means today. That we still serve in that same manner. We still serve with that same respect.

I want to note for the last couple of minutes, that in my own family my uncle was one of the first to sign up. He signed up on March 25, 1915. A single 20-year-old miner from Bell Island decided, I want to serve my country. I want to serve the commonwealth. I want to ensure I do my part for safety. He went overseas. He served in various components over there.

When my grandfather and father were telling me stories about him sometimes they'd say, tongue-in-cheek, he was a man who was shot three times. He was gassed, he was burned, he was run over, he was caught on fire. He never once came back; five different times in hospitals. He came back and went back to the front again, very much so.

He had the honour of receiving a number of medals, very important medals in various battles over there. He had the honour of being Tommy Ricketts commanding officer at one point. A man who when he came back here never spoke about what went on but, no doubt, had the memories of his fallen comrades and knowing that they did something that was instrumental in keeping peace in our world.

It's good to have that. Unfortunately, he died in his late 60s and never really got an opportunity to be able to relax in life. He worked all his life when he got back, even with his injuries. He never once complained about anything, never once looked for anything. I think one of the acknowledgements that he got – and it was great for the family – was if you go to Spaniard's Bay, the Legion is named after him. So that's a testament to what he meant to the people of that community. He was originally from Spaniard's Bay and went back there after he left Bell Island. So that an acknowledgement there.

I also want to acknowledge what the government did in 1990 when the newest vessel then, the *Flanders*, was commissioned and built in Marystown and went to Bell Island to do the run. The government – first time ever – that they named the lounge the Matthew Brazil memorial lounge. So again, it was an acknowledgement

that everybody in this province has for those who served in World War I.

It was a great opportunity to do it, and it was one of those rare times when politics is out of it. The PC government of the day had commissioned the ferry and had noted they'd like to do it; they had a number of names there that they would want to start the process of naming it after something military or somebody of significance. But it was the Liberal administration – I give them credit. I was there that day of the christening of the ferry and the minister then was Minister Gilbert at the time, got up, and paid very much respect to all veterans and paid total respect to my uncle and what he had served. If you go on the vessel now, you'll see a picture of him with his rifle and all his medals around the picture there.

So it's an acknowledgement that we've been doing this for years to acknowledge the veterans from World War I. It's a great opportunity to do it now through Honour 100, and I might add I do again compliment the Member for Bonavista for bringing this forward because it's a great opportunity for this House to really show the respect for those veterans who went overseas, those young men who went overseas, who paid the ultimate sacrifice in a number of cases, but came back and still were very productive citizens in this great province of ours.

So, Madam Speaker, it will be more than an honour to vote for this private Member's resolution.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MADAM SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

MS. PARSLEY: Thank you.

I am pleased to rise in this hon. House to speak in support of the private Member's resolution on Honour 100. In August, 1914, when the German troops marched into Belgium on their way to France, the war began.

We refer to it as the war because the war never ended. Thirty-two nations across the globe,

including all the world's great powers, had entered the conflict. Considering the number of people mobilized around the world, it was a short war, lasting a little over four years. Yet because of the tremendous advance in weapons technology, it caused a greater loss of life and more widespread destruction than any conflict that came before it in history.

The amount of resources and men committed to fighting was so huge that for over two years there was a deadlock in the European theatre. Millions were killed and wounded, yet neither side was forced to acknowledge defeat.

Britain blocked Germany to cut off supplies. Germany responded and sent submarines to sink all the ships approaching the British Isles. On sea and on land no upper hand could be gained and no decision could be reached. Gradually, after a long and bloody struggle, the conflict turned into the favour of Britain and its allies. On November 11, 1918, the fighting ceased.

The Great War was over but the suffering and damage caused by the fighting is left with us today. It is critically important that we remember the cost of this terrible war. It is estimated that over 10 million people lost their lives. Many millions were wounded and faced a lifetime of disability and the trauma of horrific experiences.

The loss among the civilian population from disease, famine and fighting reached even greater tolls. The conflict resulted in staggering national debts among the great powers. It wiped out empires and redrew the world map. Twice in the first years of the war, our troops into the fighting land were almost wiped out, once by battle and disease in Gallipoli and once in display of valour against great odds at the Somme.

These four years would go to shape and define the rest of the 20th century. We still feel the impact even today, 100 years later. Let's bring ourselves back to those times here in our own districts. Let's imagine our ancestors travelling from rural communities across the ocean to foreign battlefields. This was a time when our province had few roads, few hospitals and only one-room schools.

Our soldiers went on foot from their communities to the recruitment centres in St. John's, Grand Falls and Corner Brook. When they signed up to fight for their country, they left their homeland to fight in the services of peace in other homelands across the Atlantic Ocean. Their sacrifice caused a long shadow in our history. We were a small but proud nation of the British Empire that stood tall and shouldered the burden of defending the realm.

As the war progressed the reputation of the soldiers from Newfoundland and Labrador were starting to make a mark. The recruits wanted to be wherever the Newfoundlanders and Labradorians were. They fought their battles with courage and dignity. Their graves are scattered throughout our countrysides of our neighbours far across the sea. They lay at rest in villages in France and Belgium, where their contribution will never be forgotten.

This year we are proud to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme. We celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment's participation at Beaumont-Hamel in France. Because of the endurance of our ancestors, because of their sacrifice, we will continue to stand with pride at the cenotaphs and war memorials across the province on this July 1.

I truly believe we are a better province today because of this sacrifice. Yes, the war was horrific, but it defined Newfoundland and Labrador as a proud nation.

We continue to mourn the loss of our young men who were cut down in the prime of their lives. We ponder sadly what contributions could they have made in peace time here in their homeland where they had lived. I do believe we do a great job of preserving their memory.

There are many books by Newfoundland and Labrador authors memorizing the subject. There are songs and stories, there are legends and icons. I'm happy that we have government initiatives like Honour 100, so that we can do our part as a Legislature in preserving the memory of their sacrifice.

My district, Harbour Main, does its part too in glorifying and celebrating the heroism

demonstrated by our soldiers a century ago. Only a week ago, I attended the annual installation of officers at Branch 64 of the Royal Canadian Legion in Holyrood. The strength of this branch was well demonstrated by the attendance, leadership and dedication through (inaudible) and decorum that was shown by members. This Legion branch is sending a World War II veteran to attend the ceremonies at Beaumont-Hamel this year.

As well, a book launch will take place at the end of July honouring all those who signed the attestation papers to serve in World War I, covering the communities from Holyrood to Colliers. We just celebrated volunteer week. I would like to congratulate those working on that project.

The book serves the same purpose that Honour 100 does. Memorizing the sacrifices made in the First World War, preserving their courage, passing it on as a legacy to our future generations so that we can remember our defining moment. We can pass the spirit of commemoration to our young people as we do already through initiatives like the heritage fairs.

To conclude, Mr. Speaker, I recall many stories. One of Michael Carney Ezekiel of Harbour Main. He was the grandfather of my sister Jenny's husband. While overseas at a dance one night the soldier met the love of his life, Grace Darling from Scotland. Their encounter was brief, as he was called to the frontlines. Carney, as he nicknamed, was wounded in the thigh on the 23rd of March 1916. He was transported to Unsworth Hospital in England where he underwent surgery which resulted in a leg amputation.

After months of recovering from the surgery, he traced Grace back to her hometown in Scotland, married her and brought her home to Harbour Main. Grace was possibly one of the first war brides to come to our province, certainly to Harbour Main. Carney and Grace had hard times and good times. Although she survived many years after his death in 1941, she remained devoted to him, his family and to her new homeland, Newfoundland.

From my district, Mr. Speaker, on Memorial Day, July 1, we especially remember those who

paid the supreme sacrifice a hundred years ago on July 1 at the Battle of the Somme. From Avondale: Private James Joseph Pike, aged 19; Private William Joseph O'Brien, aged 21; Private Allan Lyons, aged 23. From Conception Harbour: Corporal William Patrick Costello, aged 19. From Harbour Main: Private Bernard Cleary, aged 19; Private Lucas Holden, aged 21. From North Arm: Private Augustus Penney, aged 22.

Remembering the sacrifice is something we do well. It's something we will continue to do and something we must continue to do. For that reason, I am pleased to stand here and speak in support of the private Member's resolution on Honour 100.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am in support of the bill from my fellow colleague and from the opposite side.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Lane): The Speaker recognizes the hon. the Member for St. John's Centre.

MS. ROGERS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

No one in this place, people with families who lived here at the turn of the century, or people who have moved here since, needs reminding of the terrible price this place paid in the First World War, known to many at the time as the war to end all wars.

How sad that phrase sounds today. How gallant were those young men to fight and often die for that cause. How gallant for the young women to also be side by side with their brothers.

While young men died, young women saw sacrifice as well. Many worked as nurses, many worked to support the war effort. Many lost fathers, brothers, uncles, husbands, lovers; beautiful men, often young men who just never came home.

The cost, as we've all heard here today, a total of 8,707 men enlisted in the Dominion's three services: the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, the Royal Newfoundland Naval Reserve and the Newfoundland Forestry Corps. Another 3,296 joined the Canadian Expeditionary Force, the CEF. That's a total of 11,988 men, nearly 10 per cent of the Dominion's total male population or 35.6 per cent of all men of military age between 19 and 35 years old, young men.

Smaller numbers also served in a variety of other forces such as the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Air Force, and at least 505 sailors from Newfoundland and Labrador were part of the Merchant Marine, as was my grandfather, and worked on commercial vessels shipping passengers and cargo to allied ports. There were also about 175 women who served overseas as graduate nurses or with the Voluntary Aid Detachment, the VAD, a core of semi-trained nurses.

Even more sobering than the following numbers, Mr. Speaker, 1,281, some accounts say 1,305, of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment were killed; 2,284 were wounded. That's about 9 per cent of those who enlisted died in the war, almost one in 10.

The long-term effects of the loss of so many young lives compounded by the number of those wounded, diseased, disabled physically and mentally were substantial. The far reach of the war was felt here at home; it did not stay overseas.

In the most famous battle the Newfoundland Regiment fought at Beaumont-Hamel in the Battle of the Somme on July 1, 1916, the Newfoundland Regiment went into action 753 strong and only 68 answered the roll call the next day. We all know those numbers. Those numbers are burned into our collective consciousness. They have become a very part of our DNA.

The events of that day were forever seared into the cultural memory of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. There was no Internet in those days, no radio, no satellite TV. Casualty lists appeared in local newspapers, but information came in slowly from the front lines and it was often incomplete. Families had to

endure agonizing weeks of wondering whether their loved ones were alive or dead, whether they were coming home.

As people pieced together the enormity of the loss, the news plunged Newfoundland into a period of mourning. The enormity of the loss has reverberated through this place ever since. It continues to echo off our very shores, our mountains, our cliffs.

There are those who claim Newfoundland's struggle economically is because we lost so many young people. Young people killed or wounded. Young people who were never able to contribute to the future of our Newfoundland and Labrador.

The young women who went to war, they, too, returned from war only to find it difficult to readjust to the lifestyle that awaited them. Many were frustrated because their families and communities expected them to return to their domestic roles. Through the war they had taken on more roles, working side by side with their brothers. They, too, were courageous and effective and committed. Many joined the suffrage movement which won Newfoundland women the right to vote in April 1925.

The sacrifices of that war changed everything in this place, our home, and on July 1, again, we will be reminded of what happened. We will be reminded of the sacrifice of that poor, doomed generation. These ceremonies are so important because they remind us of the terrible price we have paid in the past. They remind us how important it is that tragedies like the First World War or any armed conflict really must never happen. It must be avoided.

Canada is a country of peace and these occasions serve to reinforce our commitment to peace at home and to peace around the world. I would like to highlight some of the work that many of our artists have created to honour those who fought in Beaumont-Hamel, to honour those who fought in the First World War.

Some of the writers are local writers: Richard Cramm, who wrote a history of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, which is being re-released by Boulder Publications this year; E. J. Pratt's *Newfoundland Verse*, our wonderful E. J.

Pratt; David Facey-Crowther, *Better than the Best: The Story of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment 1795-1995*; Joan Horwood, *Massacre at Beaumont Hamel, July 1, 1916*; Kevin Major's *No Man's Land*, who I'm sure many of us have read; David Macfarlane's *The Danger Tree* which was also made into a film; Michael Winter's *Into the Blizzard*; Ed Riche's recent play *Dedication*, which just played in St. John's this past week; Spirit of Newfoundland's *Where Once They Stood* the musical; and letters and memoirs of Newfoundland soldiers who served in this war: Francis "Mayo" Lind, *The Letters of Mayo Lind*; A.J. Stacey's *Memoirs of a Blue Puttee*; Owen Steele's *Lieutenant Owen William Steele*; paintings by Grant Boland; *Home Front: War and Family*, a World War I commemorative dance and theatre piece that was performed just a few months ago by Louise Moyes and Lisa Porter.

So all these to help us remember, but not simply remember, Mr. Speaker, but to bring us forward. To look to the future, to look at a future of peace. Lest we forget is no slogan. Rather, it is a warning of the great cost, the incredible loss and devastation that awaits us all if our commitment to peace and non-violence wavers.

I must admit, Mr. Speaker, I was somewhat surprised by this private Member's motion that simply calls on all of us, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, to mark the centennial day and commemorate those brave men and women by participating in planned events at the National War Memorial and community memorials throughout our province.

What I want to ask is what would those young people, those who fought and died, as well as those who fought and came home, many wounded in body and mind, what would they want from us today in the House that they sacrificed to protect? What about the needs of the veterans of more recent wars, wars since the war to end all wars? They would want us debating about services and programs to care for living veterans and their families.

Last week we learned the Veterans Pavilion will not be available for post-Korean War veterans. Veterans who perhaps will need the services of the Veterans Pavilion, but not available to veterans post-Korean War.

What about our current vets back from places like Bosnia and Afghanistan? The *Globe and Mail* recently reported 158 Canadian soldiers died in the Afghanistan mission, but the losses did not end there. A *Globe and Mail* investigation reveals a disturbing number the military has kept secret, that at least 54 soldiers and vets killed themselves after they returned from the war.

There are a lot of veterans in St. John's, a lot of veterans in Newfoundland and Labrador. A lot with PTSD, let alone other physical injuries. My father went to Korea, post the war, to sweep for mines. He was sent over as a minesweeper. He was sent over only a few days after he married my mother. He too returned a changed man.

We have veterans who not only overcome PTSD but have reached out to help others with PTSD. Since returning from a seven-month tour of Afghanistan, Corporal Jamie MacWhirter has become a vocal advocate for soldiers suffering from PTSD. MacWhirter started a Facebook group called PTSD Buddies to help other soldiers dealing with the illness to get help and to support each other, and to help them get the support they need. The group has over 1,500 members. He has said it's a wonderful thing to look at his Facebook, watching veterans helping one another. He was awarded the Sacrifice Medal in recognition for his work.

With debating how to help those vets from our province be a better use of this precious time in our House. Again, Mr. Speaker, no one in our province, no Newfoundlander or Labradorian needs to be reminded to remember Beaumont-Hamel. No one in this House or in our province needs to be reminded to participate in the events and commemoration to remember the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme at Beaumont-Hamel. We will all be there.

As I have said, July 1 is burned in our collective consciousness. It is ingrained in our culture. It has become a very part of our DNA.

To honour the loss and sacrifice made by our men and women would be to debate issues that are the reasons they gave their lives for. They would want us to debate the needs of our people so that everyone, every man, woman or child has what they need to thrive. To have every

opportunity to be the best that they can be and to be a full participant in our Newfoundland and Labrador, to debate our present and our future needs.

I am sure, Mr. Speaker, we will all be recognizing the great sacrifice of our men and women on July 1 and beyond July 1. It is our work for social justice and equality for all that would be the best tribute we could possibly offer to our brothers and sisters who gave so much.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we will be there. For our brothers and sisters who cannot gather at our public events, because of the scars they carry from the wars they have fought, they too will remember and they too will honour in their own ways.

Mr. Speaker, again I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak to this private Member's motion and it is my hope that rather than simply remember and commemorate, that we will all work towards a more just, towards a more equal, towards a more inclusive society, one that the men and women who gave their lives in World War I would all be proud of.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The Speaker recognizes the hon. the Member for Terra Nova.

MR. HOLLOWAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is certainly an honour for me to rise in this House to speak to today's private Member's resolution. I want to thank my colleague, the Member for Bonavista, for bringing this forward. It is a very important resolution. Over the past number of weeks, as we've been sitting in this House, we've taken the time to read from the Honour Roll 40 names each day that we're here as we get to the 1600.

Today, in particular, as I look at some of the names and hear some of the names that were brought forward I recognize that there were two individuals that were named today have the same last name as myself, Holloway. I reflect on when I was a young fella, when I was a young boy, my grandfather actually served in the

Second World War in the overseas force unit – when I was a young boy.

We used to talk a little bit about his time and the effort that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians contributed to war and conflict. It is for those reasons I'm particularly pleased and honoured to be able to stand and speak to this resolution today.

As I look down through the points in the resolution and the things that I will touch on, I'm also particularly encouraged to talk about our commitment to commemorating the First World War story and its focus on education, outreach research, but just as an important part of that is engaging our young people.

I've had some conversations with some people in my district lately about it is so important with the things that we've been involved in as a province, as a country, and it's extremely important that our young people don't lose sight of the tragedies and the conflict that we've been involved in. So speaking to this resolution is extremely important and part of that process.

Memorial Day on July 1 is a time to commemorate veterans, past and present, but it also has come to signify a deep sense of pride for the significant role Newfoundlanders and Labradorians played in the First World War, and in particular, the efforts of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment at Beaumont-Hamel.

Honour 100 events in Newfoundland and Labrador began in 2014 and will continue for the next couple of years until 2018, raising awareness in future generations of the sacrifices Newfoundlanders and Labradorians made during the First World War. The First World War was a seminal moment in the history of this province.

During the Great War – and numbers have been talked about here today by colleagues on both sides of the House – more than 6,000 men joined the Newfoundland Regiment. Many were excited about the prospect of going overseas and helping in the war effort. The sacrifice of these brave individuals that served is an important part of our collective identity and of who we are today as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Their sense of duty shall never be forgotten. We are honoured to commemorate them in this way.

Sadly, however, Mr. Speaker, on July 1, 1916, out of the approximately 800 men who went into battle that morning, more than 700 men were killed, wounded or went missing during a failing advance near the Somme River in France, forever changing the face of Newfoundland's history and remembrance of the Great War. The staggering losses on that date, 1916, in just 20 minutes, Mr. Speaker, amounted to a virtual annihilation of a generation of young men.

I had the privilege some weeks ago to attend, with a couple of my colleagues here in the House – the Minister of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development, as well as the Member for Virginia Waters – Pleasantville – the *Where Once They Stood* theatre and dinner at the CLB Armoury here in St. John's. I can tell you there were more than 150 people who were there. I can tell you as Spirit of Newfoundland recounted the story of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment and the Blue Puttees during the days leading to the battle of Beaumont-Hamel, I was particularly moved to hear the story, to watch how those young people so honestly gave themselves to go into war in duty of the King and of country.

It was a moving performance, and at the end there was a standing ovation. I can tell you, personally, I learned a great deal. I was so grateful to have been able to attend. I encourage everybody who would have had the opportunity, or if you do have the opportunity in months ahead, to partake in that dinner theatre, to really go. It is worth your time.

Mr. Speaker, the Royal Canadian Legion is also a lead stakeholder and partner in our Honour 100 initiatives, and we are working closely with them on several other events. Enhancing the annual Trail of the Caribou pilgrimage – it is important to provide learning opportunities for our children and our youth about Newfoundland's role in fighting for our freedom.

Each year the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador partners with the Royal Canadian Legion, Newfoundland and Labrador Command in its annual Trail of the Caribou pilgrimage, supported jointly by the Department of Municipal Affairs and the Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural

Development to send 16 students, four veterans, four legionnaires, a Newfoundland and Labrador historical guide, as well as chaperones and translators to visit all the caribous throughout France and Belgium, and to be present at Beaumont-Hamel at the annual commemoration ceremony, held at 4 p.m. in Newfoundland Memorial Park.

In addition to the Legion's annual trip, 2016 will be the second year for the Ambassador programs. Now, Mr. Speaker, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador recently launched the Ambassador Award Program and a series of curriculum-based enhancements concentrating on Newfoundland and Labrador's First World War story. The joint projects have been developed by the Honour 100 commemoration program and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Nineteen students from across the province who participated in heritage fairs amongst grades seven to Level III, or grade 12, with First World War-themed projects will also travel to France and Belgium to complete the Trail of the Caribou. General Rick Hillier, a special addition to the trip this year, will lead the Ambassador program.

The Historic Sites Association of Newfoundland and Labrador is also partnering with the Honour 100 program to administer the Ambassador program. Students are selected through the regional heritage fairs to attend a custom European tour of select battlegrounds where the Royal Newfoundland Regiment fought during the First World War.

On April 9, this year – and I mentioned this a couple of weeks ago in this House – I had the privilege of bringing greetings to Branch 27 of the Royal Canadian Legion in my district at their honour and awards ceremony. During the event I had the privilege of going downstairs – and downstairs they have a commemoration room where they have collected photos from veterans and those who have served in all capacities of war. They have that put up on the wall for everybody to see, to pay honour and tribute to those who have sacrificed and who have given for our country. It was events like that that have reminded me of Beaumont-Hamel and the

World War and the Second World War and the things that this country has given.

Mr. Speaker, through the Ambassador Award Program and the curriculum resource enhancements under We Remember: Honouring Those Who Served, we are connecting students with our past, and with a sense of pride, keeping the Royal Newfoundland Regiment's memory alive for future generations.

Mr. Speaker, We Remember: Honouring Those Who Served also allows students to explore the lives of soldiers by researching their military service files. General Rick Hillier will travel with the students and attend all events in this delegation.

Mr. Speaker, our partnership with the Royal Canadian Legion continues as we focus on events and activities here, at home, in Newfoundland and Labrador. I'd like to take a moment to talk about some of those activities that will be taking place here on July 1. We will be supporting the 46th annual Dominion Convention being held here in St. John's between June 11 to 15 at the Convention Centre.

This year's theme is Looking Back To See Ahead and includes approximately 2,500 delegates from Legion branches across Canada, Europe, the USA and Mexico, who will gather to develop the policies and direction that will guide the Legion's future.

Specifically on July 1 this year, the morning will begin with the Sunrise Ceremony on Signal Hill, led by Parks Canada, and the Royal Newfoundland Regiment private ceremony in Pleasantville, in the area they affectionately called Stobs Camp. From there, the Royal Newfoundland Regiment will move to the Sergeants' Memorial on Queen's Road for a 9:30 a.m. ceremony and from there to the National War Memorial on Water and Duckworth Street here in St. John's at 11:00 a.m. for the annual Ceremony of Remembrance hosted by the Royal Canadian Legion, Newfoundland and Labrador Command.

At the conclusion of the Ceremony of Remembrance, the public will be ushered upstairs to the grounds of The Rooms. The

Rooms is planning a significant program event leading up to and for the July 1 commemoration.

My colleagues have referenced the exhibit that is going to be opened: Remember Them At The Rooms. Well, it also includes the opening of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment Gallery exhibit, dedication of the Fortis Courtyard and Amphitheatre, live musical tributes and performances. And has mentioned already Her Royal Highness Princess Anne will open this new permanent exhibition at The Rooms. Residents and tourists will be able to experience stories of the Great War and its lasting impact on the people and the identity of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, through generous gifts and donors, The Rooms has been able to develop a new permanent gallery, as well as the Fortis Courtyard and Amphitheatre – and we're certainly grateful for those contributions. The gallery exhibit itself is approximately 5,600 square feet, and cost nearly \$4 million. So it's been a great contribution for those who want to be a part of this legacy.

Mr. Speaker, as well, The Rooms will be airing a planned broadcast from Beaumont-Hamel and a CBC documentary featuring Allan Hawco, Mark Critch and Alan Doyle. So I encourage people at home and my colleagues here in the House to take the time out to participate, to watch, and to understand a bit more about the First World War and the reason we brought forward this resolution today. At 8 p.m. Opera on the Avalon will debut its world premiere of *Ours*, the story of Padre Thomas Nangle – and I know this gentleman was referenced here in the House previously – and the regiment at Beaumont-Hamel.

So July 1 will be filled with a full day of commemorative activities to honour those from Newfoundland and Labrador who served in the First World War. I encourage all my colleagues to participate where possible.

The forget-me-not – and I know we were talking about this resolution last Wednesday and we were interrupted by snow, just like this morning, and so on everybody's desk in this House we had placed a forget-me-not. I know a lot of Members are wearing those, have them – I have

mine on today. So the forget-me-not is an icon of remembrance for those who have served with sacrifice and dignity. It was first used as a symbol of remembrance in 1924 when the National War Memorial was opened. The flower came to signify Newfoundland and Labrador's losses during the First World War, and especially during the Battle of the Somme at Beaumont-Hamel.

The Royal Canadian Legion, Newfoundland and Labrador Command have been given permission from Dominion Command to officially wear the forget-me-not on their uniform until the end of the year, and I encourage residents to wear it during this anniversary year.

I was at an event at the Legion in my hometown of Port Blandford last week, and on the table for everybody was actually a card and attached inside was a forget-me-not. So I'm pleased to see that is getting out to the residents of this province.

Mr. Speaker, the Royal Newfoundland Regiment's contribution to the First World War is an important part of our history and it's ingrained in the memories of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians everywhere. By identifying and honouring the men and women who fought for peace and freedom in Europe and at home, and by celebrating their legacies, we keep their memories and the weight of their sacrifices alive.

Mr. Speaker, I am especially pleased to speak in favour of this resolution. I thank my colleague, the Member for Bonavista, for bringing it forward.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The Speaker recognizes the hon. the Member for Bonavista.

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm not going to go on too long because what's been said here today has been giving different perspectives. A lot has been said. I think we've certainly expressed how we truly feel about this

momentous occasion that we have here on July 1.

I'd like to thank the Member for CBS for recognizing the hard work of the Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development. They're doing great work. They're doing a lot of things to put forth Honour 100. Your experiences at Beaumont-Hamel are certainly interesting. I think everyone, if they get a chance, should go visit.

The Member for Virginia Waters – Pleasantville brought up some good points and talked about how it's important to talk about this history for future generations. It is a significant event for our province. Big sacrifices were made. A full generation of youth were lost. I also enjoyed hearing about his ties to the Church Lads' Brigade and the contributions they made. He also described the horrors of war. That can't be forgotten on any of us here today.

I thank the Member for Conception Bay East – Bell Island for talking about your uncle. Everyone has a personal story about this event, and I thank you for sharing that.

To the Member for Harbour Main, thank you for letting us know about the book launch, what your Legion is doing throughout this summer and also talking about war brides. That's something we don't often talk about as much as we probably should. They came to a new province, a new country. They have to get integrated into our society. They have certainly become such a rich part of our history, so I thank you for bringing that forward.

To the Member for St. John's Centre, you talked about the arts contributions that were put in place. We have Rising Tide theatre in my district. I mentioned *No Man's Land*. I challenge anyone who watches that play in Trinity not to leave with a tear in your eye. You also talked about the roles of women in war, and that can't be forgotten.

To the Member for Terra Nova, he talked about the importance of focus on our education and outreach. He talked about engaging young people, which we need to do. He talked about the Ambassador Program this summer, which is led by General Rick Hillier – I still call him

General, even though he's retired – 16 students, 16 legionaries and four vets are going to be heading over to Beaumont-Hamel to commemorate it.

I'm honoured to stand here today and bring this debate to a close. Mr. Speaker, thank you for your time and I hope that we all vote aye for this motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Seeing no further speakers, I call the question.

All those in favour of the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Against?

The motion is carried.

Order, please!

The House does now stand adjourned until 1:30 tomorrow.