



Province of Newfoundland and Labrador

FORTY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

Volume XLVIII

FIRST SESSION

Number 12

HANSARD

Speaker: Honourable Tom Osborne, MHA

Wednesday

13 April 2016

The House met at 2:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Osborne): Order, please!

Admit strangers.

I understand we have a group in the gallery, which I'm about to read out. We'd like to welcome to the gallery today a group of students from Keyin College, the business and human resource program. The instructor is Paulette Sampson.

Welcome.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Statements by Members

MR. SPEAKER: Today we have Members' statements from the Members for the District of Conception Bay East – Bell Island, Placentia West – Bellevue, Virginia Waters – Pleasantville, Cape St. Francis, Exploits and Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair.

I recognize the Member for the District of Conception Bay East – Bell Island.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today to acknowledge and congratulate a new organization in my district. I speak of the Paradise Minor Hockey Association. In 2004, Paradise was granted a minor hockey association contingent on a number of conditions being met. It took 11 years for all conditions to be met, which included the building of the Paradise Double Ice Complex.

With this facility open, the next chapter in the establishment of the Paradise Minor Hockey Association was to have an executive put in place to organize the 2015-2016 hockey season. Under the leadership of President Chris Griffiths, the entire executive and a number of volunteers, the first season of the Paradise Minor Hockey Association was very entertaining and successful. The association had nearly 500 registered players in their first year, competing in all categories of the minor system.

In February, after calling for the public's input into the name of the association's teams, it was decided that the association name would be Warrior. In typical Paradise fanfare, the logo and name was unveiled by the president in front of hundreds of supporters.

I ask all Members to join me in congratulating the Paradise Minor Hockey Association on a successful first season.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of Placentia West – Bellevue.

MR. BROWNE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today in this hon. House, not in celebration of a happy event, but in recognition and appreciation of the work volunteer firefighters do across Newfoundland and Labrador.

On March 22, a vehicle crash on the Trans-Canada Highway near the Long Harbour-Chapel Arm intersection claimed the lives of five people – one of the worse highway tragedies our province has seen in recent memory. Twelve first responders of the Norman's Cove-Long Cove Volunteer Fire Department rushed to the scene from their home and from their jobs.

An accident of this magnitude would be difficult to witness even for experienced, career emergency responders. As we mark Volunteer Week, I ask all Members of this House to join with me in recognizing the invaluable and difficult role played by volunteer firefighters in our communities who step up to the plate in the face of challenge and adversity.

I especially ask Members to join me in saluting members of the Norman's Cove-Long Cove Volunteer Fire Department. For their selfless efforts, they deserve our sincere recognition, gratitude and respect.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of Virginia Waters – Pleasantville.

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

I rise in this hon. House to recognize a pioneer in the fight for better health care in the developing world. Dr. Robert Walley is an emeritus professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Memorial University, and is founder and executive director of MaterCare International. MaterCare is a charitable organization headquartered in St. John's, operating with the mission to bring obstetric care to some of the poorest regions of the world.

Dr. Walley's expertise in the field of maternal health care in the developing regions of Africa has earned him international recognition, including a papal medal. On March 17, Dr. Walley was selected as a panellist for a side event at the United Nations during its 60th session of the Commission on the Status of Women. He delivered a presentation that advocated on behalf of mothers who are suffering due to inadequate obstetric care in their home regions. This presentation, aimed at bringing greater awareness to the Western world of this vital issue, was the latest in an outreach effort that he's championed for decades.

I ask hon. Members in this House to join me in recognizing Dr. Walley for his humanitarian advocacy and his long-standing effort to bring accessible maternal health care to the developing world.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for the District of Cape St. Francis.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. K. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in this hon. House today to congratulate the organizers of the 2016 Snowfest celebrations in the Towns of Flatrock and Pouch Cove. The time and dedication of many volunteers have made this event a success again this year.

I had the pleasure of bringing greetings at the opening ceremonies, during which marvelous talent and incredible community spirit was

shared. It was fantastic to see the joy and excitement from the children and the families in attendance.

Snowfest is filled with fun activities for all ages, which includes a kid's pajama movie party, craft fair, ice fishing derby, community skate and a delicious hot roast beef dinner hosted by the Pouch Cove Lions Club. There was also a kids' bingo, card games, a scavenger hunt, youth musical showcase, heritage society contest, tea and bake sale and an adult dance.

Our seniors also had special activities to attend, like bowling and the seniors' food celebration, which offered a healthy living workshop. Organizers, with the assistance of the Volunteer Fire Department, hosted a bonfire night at the beach in Flatrock with storytelling and refreshments.

Please join with me in congratulating the organizers and volunteers for this fantastic Snowfest celebration.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for the District of Exploits.

MR. DEAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today in this hon. House, midway through Volunteer Week, to acknowledge the past and ongoing efforts of the thousands of volunteers in the District of Exploits and throughout our province. Day in and day out, without pay or fanfare, devoted volunteers bring their talents, compassion and time to our tables.

For communities across the province, volunteerism is an essential component of society. Volunteers enrich communities and make them safer and more welcoming places for us all to call home. It helps to strengthen trust and solidarity amongst participants and recipients and it encourages greater community participation.

An aging population, smaller families and outmigration are all contributing to declining numbers in our volunteer ranks. In spite of this, and to the benefit of communities across the

District of Exploits, and the rest of the province, there is a firm resolve by those remaining. They show a continued willingness to forge ahead in their unselfish pursuit of making things better for others. Their continued efforts greatly enhance our quality of life and add to the moral fabric of our society.

I ask all hon. Members to join with me in thanking our faithful volunteers for their profound benefit to all of our communities.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for District of Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair.

MS. DEMPSTER: Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize an outstanding citizen of Labrador, nurse Isabel Rumbolt of Mary's Harbour.

A young nurse from Glasgow, Scotland, Isabel came to Mary's Harbour in 1973 to provide health care. She extended her service to include the north and south coast.

In 1975, when a medical clinic opened in Charlottetown, my hometown, she was our first nurse, and a phenomenal one at that, I might add.

In 1976 she married school teacher Reg Rumbolt. She not only married the love of her life, she also in many respects married Labrador.

In 1998, Isabel set out to do something special. Along with Barb Rumbolt, they came up with the idea of building a senior's home in the region. In 2004 that dream became a reality. Today nurse Rumbolt serves as chair of the board of Harborview Manor, and she is tireless in her commitments to the residents.

She is also an amazing volunteer in many areas. She works hard for her church, for seniors' groups like the knitting club, and for many years has taught guitar lessons to the youth of the region.

Nurse Isabel is a true Labrador treasure, and I ask all hon. Members to join me in offering our

heartfelt thanks to Isi for her outstanding contribution to her adopted homeland, Labrador.

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 Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: I will now read into the record the following 43 names of those who lost their lives in the First World War in the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, the Royal Newfoundland Naval Reserve, or the Newfoundland Mercantile Marine. This will be followed by a moment of silence.

Lest we forget: John Thomas Ellsworth, Walter Emberley, George Emberly, Hugh S. England, Gordon Etheridge, Richard Etheridge, Henry Evans, Hubert Evans, John Evans, Joseph Wellington Evans, Leonard Evans, Nicholas Evans, Francis Evoy, Joseph Ezekiel, Stephen Fallon, Joseph Farewell, Martin Patrick Farrell, Patrick Joseph Farrell, John Roy Ferguson, Stewart Small Ferguson, James Joseph Fever, Lawrence Joseph Fewer, John Field, Charles Fields, Frederick Fifield, Frank Fillier, Ernest Fisher, John Fitzgerald, Thomas Joseph Fitzgerald, Alphonsus Fitzpatrick, David Flannigan, Richard Fleming, Richard Fleming, Dominic Foaley, Albert Folks, Albert Follett, Elias Ford, Gerald Ford, James Ford, Stephen Fortune, William Fortune, Norman Forward and William Fowler.

(Moment of silence.)

MR. SPEAKER: Please be seated.

Statements by Ministers.

Statements by Ministers

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

MR. CROCKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday a fire destroyed the Quinlan Brothers' shrimp and crab processing

plant in Bay de Verde. This afternoon, the Premier, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and I will visit the town to witness first-hand the impact of this devastating fire.

I would like to begin by recognizing the incredible work of the volunteers and communities who came together during this time of need. I was in Bay de Verde on Monday and was overwhelmed by the support. The first responders were on the scene, working tirelessly to extinguish the flames, including neighbouring fire departments. Town councils, community groups, schools and residents assisted in any way they could to help those affected.

During our visit, Mr. Speaker, we hope to speak with the residents of Bay de Verde and hear their concerns. We are also meeting with Quinlan Brothers to discuss arrangements to process their crab purchases and redeploy plant workers to nearby plants.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue to engage with those involved including residents, plant workers and Quinlan Brothers. We are committed to working with the company as they move forward with short-term options and as they make long-term decisions about the future of their operation. This is truly a terrible loss for the region and, during this very difficult time, we will remain committed to doing everything we can to help the workers, the company and the communities.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

MR. K. PARSONS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement. We, too, join with the people of the province and realize what happened on Monday was very devastating to the people of Bay de Verde, the Quinlan company, family and anyone in the surrounding areas that worked in the plant. We realize that there are 700 workers out there and it is one of the major industries in the area. As a matter of

fact, one of the largest processing plants in the province and the huge effect it has on the people in the area.

We, too, want to thank all the volunteers. It is something that we are as people in Newfoundland and Labrador, whenever devastation comes to our communities it always seems that we get together and do our best. There is no sweat to get volunteers to come out. I believe there were nine different volunteer fire departments that responded. They even came from 100 kilometres away.

Any time that we see something like this, it's important that we all work together to make sure that the people that need our help are there. We understand the crab fishery started just recently and this has a devastating effect on a lot of people in the area because unemployment is running out and it is a source of income for these families.

It is very important that both sides and everyone in this province work together to help these people in their time of need.

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. The people of the community of Bay de Verde and the workers who lost their jobs with Monday's devastating fire are in all our thoughts of course. It's a miracle that no one, including first responders, was physically hurt. The truth, however, is that many will be hurting financially.

I was really pleased to see the minister say that he will remain committed, he and his government, to doing everything they can to help the workers, which I point out was a bit of a change from the original draft we got and I'm glad to see the change. We are going to need to find tangible financial solutions to ensure workers are properly looked after until the new plant opens.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Further statements by ministers?

The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

MS. COADY: Mr. Speaker, I rise today in this hon. House to provide details on two recent Call for Bids issued by the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board.

The calls include 13 parcels in the eastern Newfoundland region and three parcels in the Jeanne d'Arc region. Under the new Scheduled Land Tenure System, four of the 13 parcels are being reintroduced and have been made available in the 2016 call.

This province's offshore offers some the best prospects of any frontier regions in the world, and our government is actively engaged in creating conditions for increased exploration and development that ensures we maximize value to benefit Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

The previous Call for Bids in November 2015 resulted in a total value of \$1.2 billion in work commitments for seven of the 11 parcels offshore. This was the largest total bid ever in the Newfoundland and Labrador offshore area, and demonstrates that we have a great opportunity for further exploration and development.

The November 2015 bid has already resulted in drilling. As one of the successful bidders, Statoil was issued an exploration licence in January 2016 and, by March, had already begun drilling a well.

Our government looks forward to a positive 2016 Call for Bids as we create an environment that captures the full potential of Newfoundland and Labrador's offshore petroleum industry.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I certainly want to thank the minister for an advance copy of her statement. Despite some of the volatile oil prices we see today and some of the challenges we have, the offshore industry in Newfoundland and Labrador is certainly well positioned for the future when we look at the reserves we have offshore and the seismic work we have done and what that is indicating.

As mentioned by the minister as well, in 2015 there were record-breaking bids. About \$1.2 billion in work commitments for seven of the 11 offshore parcels was received at that time. I'm certainly optimistic that this year's bids, as well, will be equally as significant.

The minister mentioned Statoil. In the near future, we would certainly look to have an update on negotiations with Statoil and how those are progressing. As well, I wanted to point out in reference to the (inaudible) Law of the Sea, as we expand our oil explorations and productions, there is a 7 per cent growing royalty there that we believe is rested with the Government of Canada. We have already stated that it needs to rest with Canada and certainly hope the minister follows up and adheres to that as well.

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 her statement. This announcement is exciting news for government and our offshore industry, and for the people of the province. I hope we see as good, if not better, results from this round of land sales. Despite the current slump in oil prices, I believe our offshore industry will continue to be of great benefit to our province down the road.

Also, it is good to hear hopeful news from government today instead of the endless doom and gloom they have been manufacturing.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Further statements by ministers?

The hon. the Minister of Child, Youth and Family Services.

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: Mr. Speaker, I rise in this hon. House today to highlight an important partnership between Child, Youth and Family Services and the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption.

This foundation is a national American non-profit public charity with the mission of dramatically increasing the adoptions of children from North America's foster care systems. Through the foundation's Wendy's Wonderful Kids Program, grants are awarded to public and private adoption agencies to hire child-specific recruiters. These recruiters implement proactive, child-focused recruitment programs targeted exclusively at moving the longest-waiting children from foster care into adoptive families.

In June 2014, the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services obtained a grant to contribute towards hiring its own child-specific recruiter. Our recruiter receives ongoing training from the foundation to help employ practices and proven tactics focused on finding the best home for a child through the starting points of familiar circles of family, friends and neighbours, and then reaching out to the communities in which they live.

The department is now in its second grant year and, to date, almost 10 children have been successfully matched and are in various stages of the adoption process as they move towards having a permanent and forever home. As Dave Thomas once said, "These children are not someone else's responsibility. They are our responsibility. And it's time to take action."

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to thank the minister for an advance copy of her statement. We join with Members opposite in recognizing this important relationship between the Newfoundland and Labrador government and the Dave Thomas Foundation.

Mr. Speaker, we know that there are more than 30,000 children in Canada who are waiting in foster care for, as their website says, their forever families. Every child deserves a loving, stable home, a home that provides a safe environment that allows them thrive. The service offered by the Dave Thomas Foundation does a fantastic job of ensuring that happens for so many, but it is only a single piece of a much larger puzzle.

We all too aware that much more work remains and there are numerous challenges we face. We have so many children in this province alone who are in foster care. Let's continue with every effort to have those children and youth find a loving, adoptive family. They deserve nothing less.

I'd like to thank the Minister of Child, Youth and Family Services for acknowledging an important partnership facilitated by our administration. We are all very glad to see that they are continuing to support it. I would be remiss if I never took this opportunity to also acknowledge the fantastic work of those in the field of adoptions, many of whom work with the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS. PERRY: The job you do is so important and we cannot thank you enough.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I, too, thank the minister for an advance copy of her statement. It is good to hear that the hiring of a social worker as a child-specific recruiter is producing results – results on behalf of the children.

Three years ago the new *Adoption Act* expanded the definition of family members who can adopt and changes were made to speed up the process. It is also crucial that government continue to support the Poverty Reduction Strategy to ensure that no child grows up or lives in poverty and that no family is broken up due to poverty or the lack of supports for families.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral Questions.

Oral Questions

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Speaker, along with other oil-producing provinces like Alberta and Saskatchewan, our province faces significant financial challenges. We are by no means in a unique situation.

I ask the Premier today if he is confident that he has made every available effort to lobby the federal government for additional funding and additional assistance, and will extra funding and support from the federal government be identified in tomorrow's budget?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, there are obviously ongoing negotiations with our federal colleagues, and we've talked about that quite a bit in this House of Assembly. We, and all our ministers, are engaged in whatever opportunities are available to us to bring more benefit to Newfoundland and Labrador. This is what we are engaged in.

I find it, again, ironic that the Leader of the Opposition continues to raise this when they

were virtually shut out of and had a number of opportunities that they themselves – even with the Small Communities Fund, as an example, just last year, which they did not even go after, nearly \$35 million that was available to them. The CETA fund is another example, which they could not close those deals.

We've been there now about four months and we've made significant advancements with the federal government, and we will continue to do that because we know that Ottawa will be and can be a part of the solution; but the bigger part of the solution for our problems is to actually proper plan and proper manage the affairs of this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

We well know that the communities fund is a 10-year fund. It's not going to expire anytime in the near future. The government's going to have lots of time to anticipate and to involve themselves in that fund. I suppose the next part of the blame game will be them saying that we're also responsible for Alberta and Saskatchewan's circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier claimed only just a few short months ago that his Liberal government would make a one-time investment of \$8 million in 2016, and that would create a return of \$78.9 million this year.

I ask the Premier: Will this plan be laid out in budget 2016, and will the revenue they claimed they could deliver on be included in the budget, the expected revenue for 2016?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I noticed yesterday you made comment to the House of Assembly about being concise in our questions and answers, and I'm going to try and do that. So within a 45 second time frame, unless you give me more time, I would like to remind the leader opposite that back in 2009 and

2014 they missed two opportunities to actually renegotiate and talk more with their federal colleagues about equalization. Guess what, Mr. Speaker? They did not. They did not even get involved in any of those discussions. Yet, when they talk about the blame game, they come to us today and talk about things and actions that we should be doing. They refused to get involved in that.

I also want to remind the leader opposite that Saskatchewan is actually not in that bad a position. They planned for the position they're in. They are nearing a balanced budget right now, even with the volatility they have in their own economy, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

He may have made an effort to be more specific to answering the question, but he wasn't very specific in answering the question. I will give him another chance to do that – I'll give you another chance. You made a claim a few months ago that an \$8 million investment would create a return this year of \$78.9 million.

The question is very simple: Will we see that revenue in this year's budget?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

There are a number of different things that we're going to see in tomorrow's budget when it comes to how we create some economic diversification in our province. I just mentioned Saskatchewan. It was actually just a few months ago they were mentioned because of the great work that they had done in terms of economic diversification within their own province. That was a government that had realized you cannot focus all your attention on commodities like oil. They took the advantage, in some ways, to actually create investment in other areas.

You can see this government will take an approach to look at all the industries, all the

opportunities that we have available to us. We will make the necessary investments where we see we will get the return for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

I really believe and truly believe that the people expect and deserve more than the inaccurate history lessons and blame games that are going on opposite, Mr. Speaker. So I'll try this one because the Premier is also on the record that his one-time investment of \$8 million would return \$360 million over four years, a 10,000 per cent return on investment.

Just to remind him in case he's forgotten, a MUN professor who has a Ph.D. in mathematics, Tom Baird, called the Liberal promise gibberish and magical thinking. An editorial said, "It is in the realm of flying reindeer and dancing broomsticks."

I ask the Premier once again: Will the revenue that he's projected resulting from the \$8 million investment be in this year's budget? If he wants to give the answer, it is very simple. Yes or no, will we see that in this year's budget?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

When we stand in this House of Assembly, when we talk about inaccurate history lessons – that's the professor now that we need to be taking lessons from about the economy in our province? Actually, I would say that based on the experience of the previous administration with the financial affairs of this province, they are the ones that probably needed a history lesson on how actually to properly manage the affairs of our province.

Also, I would say it was in this very chair right here that the past, former minister of Finance said that math wasn't his forte. I can tell you

what; if there was anything that proven right, it was that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER BALL: I say, Mr. Speaker, we will bring a budget to this House tomorrow afternoon, to the people of our province. Based on the lessons that we have learned from their experience, we will do what's right for Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

It sounds like another no from the Premier, that it won't be included this year. I guess it's another promise they won't be keeping and that the people won't have to look forward to in tomorrow's budget, or even in budget number two this fall for that matter.

Mr. Speaker, in last year's budget our administration included a list of priority infrastructure projects. People that we're hearing from are expressing their concern about this year's budget in many ways, but also very concerned about the status of projects and projects that they believe and fear may be cancelled or delayed in this year's budget including, we already know, the Springdale health centre is being delayed. We're hearing concerns about Coley's Point school. We know there are concerns about the development of long-term care, also the Trans-Labrador Highway needs investment.

So I ask the Premier: Can you advise or confirm for us if a list of infrastructure projects and timelines will be included in this year's budget?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

There will be major infrastructure investments into the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. So when the Member opposite speaks about delays in infrastructure, I'm just surprised that he raises some of those because they were

the very projects that they delayed for many years.

The budget tomorrow will outline infrastructure investments that we will make into the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and information about where those investments are, what will be jointly shared with our federal colleagues.

So we recognize an investment in infrastructure in our province is important. Number one, it's important to keep the economy moving. Therefore, tomorrow's budget will outline many – not just about infrastructure – of the things that we plan to do in the future for our province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, before Easter we asked the Minister of Finance if she would be keeping her election promise to achieve \$50 million in revenue from the sale of unused assets. The minister said these decisions could not be rushed but her election plan promised \$50 million in revenue in this fiscal year.

I ask the minister: In the budget tomorrow, have you determined which assets your government will be selling this year, and will your plan and list be laid out in budget one on Thursday, or budget two in this fall?

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

MS. C. BENNETT: I thank the Member opposite for the question. I look forward to answering all the questions on the details of the budget when the budget is released to the people of the province, which will happen tomorrow.

When it comes to decisions about the sale of assets that the government currently owns, those decisions will be made when we review the assets that we have available. We make decisions in the best interests of the people of the province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I remind the minister that the commitment was made for this fiscal year, for the \$50 million of assets to be disposed and it would be a revenue generator for this fiscal year.

Are you saying that's not the case, they won't be shown this year as \$50 million in revenues as you indicated you could do and would do in this fiscal year?

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

MS. C. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, the Member opposite is certainly aware of the budget process. Tomorrow as we unveil the budget and we take the other actions that we're going to take over the course of the next number of months to correct the fiscal situation that the province finds itself in today, based on the actions of former administrations, we'll certainly be making the information public to the people of the province when we make those decisions.

Our intention is to make sure that any assets that are not generating cash or have cash stranded in them are made available to use for the people of the province so we can lower the amount of borrowing that we're doing. Nobody in this House I'm sure, the people of the province don't want us to be investing and spending money when we don't need to borrow. Certainly if there are opportunities to sell assets to get money, we will do that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. HUTCHINGS: So I guess the answer is no, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, a December 22 directive spoke about the reduction of consultants used by government.

I ask the Minister of Finance: How many consultant contracts have been eliminated since your December 22 directive?

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

MS. C. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, that one's a relatively easy one. Every consultant contract that we didn't need was the ones that we eliminated.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. HUTCHINGS: Mr. Speaker, the question was how many. So you know the ones that were eliminated, how many were eliminated?

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

MS. C. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, every minister and every deputy minister and leader of an agency, board and commission was directed to take a look at consultants that they might be using and, in all cases, those decisions were left to and encouraged and followed up on by Finance. We certainly encourage those departments, agencies, boards and commissions to continue to take very clear analysis of whether or not they are going to use consultants.

To the Member opposite if he would like to get a detailed list of all the consultants that we use or we don't use, he can certainly drop by my office and we'll have that chat.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. HUTCHINGS: So she doesn't know. She said there was ones that were cancelled but she can't give us the numbers of which ones they were.

Mr. Speaker, the Ernst & Young report yesterday on Muskrat Falls, the Minister of Natural Resources indicated that she would accept all of Ernst & Young's recommendations.

I ask the minister: Has she lost faith in the oversight committee chaired by the Clerk, as well the Nalcor leadership team, as she indicated she would automatically accept all the recommendations?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

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

The Ernst & Young did an incredibly important piece of work for the province. It was very important to have this independent review of the Muskrat Falls Project, and of course, as I indicated yesterday, the cost schedule is being re-baselined and we hope some components of it will be available by the end of May.

Regarding the oversight committee and the project governance, we are strengthening project governance and we will be expanding the oversight committee. As Ernst & Young cited in its report, its recommendation was that we have independence on the oversight committee, and that is something we will be doing.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I remind the minister that Ernst & Young was involved in the prior quarter oversight committee report. So they were already involved in oversight in regard to Muskrat Falls and involved with it through the oversight committee.

Again, I ask her: Based on your suggestions yesterday that all recommendations after the \$1.7 million you spent or maybe more, you'd automatically accept those recommendations. Are you going to do those in isolation of the oversight committee now, Nalcor management team, and do you have that confidence still in the management team and the oversight committee that now exists?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

MS. COADY: As I said, Mr. Speaker, we will be adopting all recommendations that are in the interim EY report that was released yesterday. That specifically does mention project governance, and we will be working on expanding and improving upon project governance. We will be adding independence and expanding the oversight committee, as was requested in the EY report.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. HUTCHINGS: Mr. Speaker, my understanding is Ernst & Young had access to the information with Nalcor.

I'm just wondering if the minister could identify what information her and her officials couldn't get access to that Ernst & Young was needed to get access to that information?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you for the question. It wasn't a matter of access to information. The former government had access to information. It was very important for this new government in its earliest days to have an independent review of the Muskrat Falls Project. EY brought in experts that had been involved in massive projects, public sector projects. They have a depth of expertise. They reviewed and compared and reviewed the costs and schedule from September, 2015. They will be reviewing the re-baseline. They had some excellent recommendations to Nalcor, as well as to this government, and we will be 'actioning' all those recommendations.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune.

MS. PERRY: Mr. Speaker, only a couple of weeks ago government released the *What We*

Are Hearing document. This document notes: shutting down rural health clinics, forced amalgamation and centralization of services. The Minister Responsible for the Office of Public Engagement stated that the ideas would be made into actions that will be reflected into the budget this Thursday, this fall and in the budget next year.

I ask the minister: How much of this document will be acted upon in budget number one on Thursday versus budget number two this fall? Which budget will be an attack on rural Newfoundland?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

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

Thank you for your question. Yes, we did, indeed, release a *What We Are Hearing* document. It was exactly what we were hearing.

Over a thousand people took time from their busy lives to come share with this new government some of the things they thought were important, changes that they think should be enacted. It was a discussion document. It was, as it was titled, what we are hearing. It did not necessarily mean that it will all show up in a budget document or that it would all show up in terms of what we are going to be able to implement.

It was what we were hearing. It was a reflection of those ideas.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune.

MS. PERRY: Mr. Speaker, in reading the document there's a reoccurring theme that singles out rural Newfoundlanders and Labradorians; items such as forced amalgamations, sharing or eliminating of local services and reductions in health care.

Given that rural Newfoundland and Labrador represents 51 per cent of our population, I ask the minister: If these suggestions are turned into actions, how hard will rural Newfoundland and Labrador be hit when you finally make some decisions?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

MS. COADY: Thank you very much for the question. I appreciate it, Mr. Speaker.

The people of this province, over a thousand people in this province came out to a number of sessions we held around the province. Some 30,000 people went on the app that we had available to them so they could have a dialogue.

This was raw data that we were able to reflect in the *What We Are Hearing*. It is exactly what we were hearing from the people of this Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. It was their suggestions, their ideas. We committed to ensuring that we produced a document of what we were hearing and we've done just that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Monday when I asked, the Minister of Transportation was quick to boast about the new process adopted by this government. He promised to take the politics out of roadwork. All was going well until the minister admitted he sent a list to the Premier for approval before sign-off.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister: How is sending a list to the Premier for sign-off taking the politics out of anything?

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to thank the Member opposite for his question and let him understand that it went to

the Premier's Office and the Premier did not make any changes.

As a matter of fact, contrary to what the Member was saying, the last question that he asked in the House was the fact that he had some idea that we weren't giving the information. I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, that we indeed gave that information. Not only did we give the information of the number of roads that we're doing, we also printed the format and the criteria that we use to determine what roads were going to be used and what needed repairs.

The Member opposite should really start looking and doing his homework and seeing what's going on and what we're doing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have another question. I'm going to come back to that, minister, but I wanted another go at this politics question.

A promise to taking politics out of the process is reminiscent of the Liberals flawed signature piece of legislation currently before the House in Bill 1. You promised a process of merit-based, non-political decision making but in reality offered nothing but window dressing.

I ask the Minister of Transportation and Works once more: Who directed you to send the list for the 40 district to the Premier for sign-off?

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

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, I can fully understand why the Members opposite have a real problem in understanding how you take politics out of this, what we are doing. I really have a real problem with that.

It went to the minister because we have the courtesy – when we are Cabinet ministers, we have the courtesy of informing the Premier of what we're doing. We don't leave the Premier in the dark. So part of the process is that when the

roads came to me, I signed off on them without making any changes. They went to the Premier's Office so that he would be well aware of what we were going to be announcing.

Let me tell you something, the Premier did not change anything there. We announced the roads without political interference for the first time in the history of this province, Mr. Speaker.

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 his response. I'm not sure if politics was taken out of anything but I'll stick to that.

I'm going to ask another question that will probably tie it all together again.

AN HON. MEMBER: That will be helpful.

MR. PETTEN: Yes, it will be helpful.

Why an ATIPP request provided a short list of approved roadwork projects? It was almost a little bit bigger than a postage stamp. It completely failed to provide a complete list of all the projects. I do have experience in that department. I do know what the priority list is like, it's pretty extensive. Why wasn't the list with all the projects (inaudible) an entire priority list shown? No.

I ask the Minister of Transportation and Works: In the spirit of openness and transparency, will you now table the entire – I don't care which ones were approved – the entire list with the scores attached?

Thank you.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the Member opposite for his question.

Again, I'll state that I know the way in which we are doing things is being open and transparent. I

know it's very difficult for the Members opposite to understand that process, but what we are doing is we are not doing it piecemeal. We are looking at a broader picture when we look at infrastructure.

Part of what we did, we are actually doing \$18 million of work that this particular government failed when they put tenders out in September knowing quite well that the work wasn't going to be done in 2015. As a result of that, Mr. Speaker, we now have to pick up the work that they didn't complete last time. We're working with that and we will also work on the infrastructure piece that we have going forward that we have put to the new Building Canada Fund and also to the federal government to try to look for funding. That's what we are going to be doing, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

MR. K. PARSONS: So I guess the minister is not going to supply the list. That's what all that just meant.

Mr. Speaker, the minister's statement today talked about the devastation in Bay de Verde. I understand, and I think it's great that the minister, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and the Premier will be out in that community this evening. As I stated in my comments, a lot of people, 700 people were employed in this plant. This is the time of year when the crab season starts, unemployment is over and people are really in desperate need.

I'd like to ask the minister: What programs are you going to be offering the people of Bay de Verde and the people who work in these communities to assist them, because this is a real serious time of need for these people?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

MR. CROCKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the Member for his question. I would like to take a moment, Mr. Speaker, to thank all Members of the House on both sides –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CROCKER: – for the genuine concern they have shown for the people affected in Monday's fire.

I say to the Member opposite, like he reiterated, the Premier, Minister Joyce and myself will be in Bay de Verde this afternoon and we will be meeting with the company, the town and other stakeholders involved to get a better grasp on the numbers of people that are going to need assistance. If the Member wishes, we will certainly update him as soon as the information becomes available on those numbers.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis for a very quick question.

MR. K. PARSONS: Oh, a very quick question.

Mr. Speaker, 700 people were really affected. Harvesters are also really affected. The crab fishery started – I know in my own area fishermen only went to the water on Monday for the first time.

I am wondering if the minister knows the contingency plans that are in place with Quinlan Brothers. And can he show the House that none of the crab will be sent off to another province or anywhere else to be processed?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

MR. CROCKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, to the question of the raw material, Quinlan Brothers has been very active in the past two or three days making sure their buy of raw material is allocated to plants throughout the province. That's one of their main concerns. In a release yesterday to the media, they've reassured their harvesters they will continue to purchase their product and ensure their product is processed to the best interests of the people that were already employees of their facilities.

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.

Nalcor CEO Ed Martin has said Muskrat Falls construction contracts were unit priced and that those prices were fixed, helping to provide some cost certainty for the project budget. EY reports that, in reality, the MFG concrete contract is based on person hours of labour expended, rather than the amount of concrete poured.

I ask the Premier: Is Mr. Martin right and EY wrong, or are EY right and Mr. Martin wrong?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Muskrat Falls Project, there are a number of different components to it. There would be, essentially, about eight major contractors when you look at the project in a general sense. The one that the Member opposite is referring to, which would be around the powerhouse and the work that's done by a major contractor, that actual budget or that tender package is actually divided into a couple of different components. One would be around person-hours, and the second one would be around materials, or essentially the concrete that's provided for the project. So I think that's what the Member is talking about.

The particular contract that she's referring to, I believe, is the one that refers to the pouring of concrete that has two separate components – one on person labour hours, and the second one on materials.

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.

Before I ask my next question, I invite the Premier to table the documentation to back up what he has just said.

Mr. Speaker, the province's Public Utilities Board was never given a true opportunity to review the Muskrat Falls Project. The Nova Scotia government ensured their board, the UARB, was given full oversight of the Maritime Link Project to ensure Nova Scotian ratepayers were protected.

I ask the Premier: Given the revelations in EY's interim report, will the Premier now ask the PUB to assume oversight of the project?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, proper oversight is something we had called for many times during the Muskrat Falls debate we had in the House of Assembly. I'm sure the Member opposite can remember those long evenings and those days we had here.

Right now, this project is essentially well underway. In your scenario, the PUB would have been involved earlier, like it was in Nova Scotia. It was UARB that actually went in. They reviewed the Emera piece of the project. It was on behalf of the work they had done with Nova Scotia that there was actually an intervention, if you remember, and there were some amendments made to this project.

In this particular case right here, what we have is a project, as I said, well underway. We're well into the budget of this. So to delay right now, to cause much disruption in terms of a massive review by the PUB in this particular case, what we will do is look at the recommendations of EY and the recommendations that are there to provide more oversight. These are the actions we will take based on the recommendations we have.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. MICHAEL: I ask the Premier: Will he tell us what action he is going to take? He has to

know by now what action he is going to take to strengthen the governance.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The EY recommendations are out there, so we have a number of options that are available to us. This is a megaproject where we see many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians right now who are currently employed on the project. We will look at the individuals, the people who are available to us that could actually beef up and strengthen the oversight on this particular project right now. These are the actions we will take.

We've been working very closely with the minister here who has accepted responsibility for this. The EY report, as you have seen, you have that, the action that we will take will stem from the recommendations from the EY report.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. ROGERS: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Natural Resources has again said that the Muskrat Falls Project is too far along to stop.

I ask the minister: If her government believes in evidence-based decision making, will she table the specific evidence and decision-making process she used on which she based her decisions?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I appreciate the question. As the Premier just mentioned, the project is far along. We did review the entire project itself. We looked at our commitments. We looked at our contracts. We looked at the loan guarantee. We looked at our commitments to the Province of Nova Scotia through Emera. We looked at all of these aspects and it has been determined in the best interest of this province that we must continue on with the project. We will be ensuring – we will be

diligent in our efforts to ensure that this project is on track from here on in.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees.

Tabling of Documents.

Notices of Motion.

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

Petitions.

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

MR. A. PARSONS: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 27, I'd like to call Orders of the Day.

MR. SPEAKER: I understand there's been co-operation of all sides of the House.

We now call Orders of the Day.

Orders of the Day

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

MR. A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to say, before I move forward, that I appreciate the consent of both parties as we move forward and get consent to do third reading of these two bills, Bills 7 and 8.

Mr. Speaker, I call Order 2, third reading of Bill 7.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. JOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Government House Leader, that Bill 7,

An Act To Amend The Vital Statistics Act, 2009, be now read a third time.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that this bill be now read a third time.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion that the bill be read a third time?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Those against?

Carried.

CLERK: A bill, An Act To Amend The Vital Statistics Act, 2009. (Bill 7)

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 7, An Act To Amend The Vital Statistics Act, 2009, has now been read a third time and it is ordered that the bill do pass and its title be as on the Order Paper.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Vital Statistics Act, 2009," read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 7)

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

MR. A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'd now like to call from the Order Paper, Order 3, third reading of Bill 8.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. JOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Government House Leader, that Bill 8, An Act To Amend The Change of Name Act, 2009, be now read a third time.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that the said bill be now read a third time.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion that the bill be read –

The hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. JOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I'm just going to have one word on this. I want to thank all Members in the House of Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, this was a bill that was brought forth, it was put in the House of Assembly yesterday, went through the three readings and will receive royal assent today. With the Day of Pink, it shows that all Members in this House of Assembly, the Members opposite and the Members of the NDP, are all concerned about this bill. I just want to thank everybody in the House of Assembly who spoke to the bill. I thank all the Members for speaking so well on the bill. They expressed their views, and now, like I said yesterday, this is a proud bill for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians that people could have pride. People can now have dignity.

I just wanted to thank all Members, because this is a bill that went through this House very, very quickly. I mentioned yesterday, the Opposition had the bill ready to go in the House. We brought the bill in, the NDP supported it. So I thank all Members of the House of Assembly for recognizing this and what better day.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion that Bill 8 be now read a third time?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

CLERK: A bill, An Act To Amend The Change Of Name Act, 2009. (Bill 8)

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 8, An Act To Amend The Change Of Name Act, 2009, has now been read a third time and it is ordered that the bill do pass and its title be as on the Order Paper.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Change Of Name Act, 2009," read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 8)

Private Members' Day

MR. SPEAKER: It being Private Members' Day, I now call on the Member to present the private Member's resolution.

The hon. the Member for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's certainly a great honour for me here today to bring forward this very important private Member's motion to the hon. House of Assembly of Newfoundland and Labrador here assembled.

I will be moving today, Mr. Speaker, the following motion:

WHEREAS the remains of a Beothuk woman named Demasduit, and her husband, a chief named Nonosbawsut, have for many years been in storage in Edinburgh at the National Museum of Scotland; and

WHEREAS the remains of these Aboriginal people of Newfoundland and Labrador should be repatriated to Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada, and laid to rest in the place where the Beothuk people lived;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this hon. House call upon the Government of the United Kingdom to facilitate the repatriation of the remains of Demasduit and Nonosbawsut to Canada so that they may be laid to rest with dignity.

Mr. Speaker, this is, as I started out in my opening, such an important and historic day for us here in Newfoundland and Labrador, because we are officially advancing the process of repatriation of Demasduit and Nonosbawsut. We want to bring them home to their native homeland. We want to bring them home to Newfoundland and Labrador.

It has been a great pleasure for me over the last year or so to work with Saqamaw Mi'sel Joe and the Miawpukek Band Council on this very important initiative. Many of you may know Saqamaw Joe, and I certainly attest and those of you who know him can attest that he is very

committed and very passionate about returning Demasduit and Nonosbawsut to their native land where they can be laid to rest with their ancestors.

He has been pursuing this aggressively and has personally travelled to Scotland twice so far in his quest. The first trip occurred from October 3 to 9 in 2014 where he established some contacts and initiated discussion. He then made a second trip in late April of 2015 where he had the honour and privilege of being in the same room as the remains of Demasduit and Nonosbawsut. There he conducted a traditional smudge sweetgrass ceremony, which is the purification ritual, Mr. Speaker. He relayed to me that it was an incredibly powerful experience and one he will cherish forever.

Since his return back from Scotland, he has been ramping up his efforts and he has enlisted the assistance of myself, as his MHA, and his federal MP for parliamentary support at both provincial and national levels in Canada. He has spoken several times with media on programs such as CBC *CrossTalk* and on the *Central Morning Show* to increase awareness of his efforts and garner further support, Mr. Speaker.

He has indeed already received a significant amount of support with letters of support from the national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Qualipu, the Atlantic Policy Congress of the First Nations and the Innu Nation.

I first brought this motion to the floor, Mr. Speaker, last spring, on June 11, 2015, and the House closed before we were able to debate the motion. I am absolutely elated to be back here and completing this very important step in the repatriation process.

AN HON. MEMBER: An important thing to do.

MS. PERRY: A very important thing to do.

I am very pleased to report to this hon. House that last year, after the motion was brought forward but, like I said, we never had the chance to debate it, the former minister of Aboriginal Affairs, and an Aboriginal person himself, Keith Russell, took the initiative to write the director of National Museums in Scotland, Edinburgh,

and that letter was sent officially on June 15. It has started the official request for repatriation. So the process is underway and we certainly thank the former minister of Aboriginal Affairs for being very quick to get that addressed, Mr. Speaker.

The return of their remains is important to all of us in this Nation we call Canada. The Beothuk are an integral part of our history here in this province and they deserve the highest respect. While we certainly do trust that the remains are being stored properly, these remains are of particular importance to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. In fact, under Newfoundland and Labrador's law, the *Historic Resources Act* holds that "The property in all archeological objects, whether or not those objects are in the possession of the Crown, is vested in the Crown."

There is no doubt in any of our minds, as people who reside in this province, that Demasduit and Nonosbawsut are of significant historical importance, Mr. Speaker. All Aboriginal communities in our province have a very important historical significance and the Beothuk, some may say, particularly so. Indeed, Demasduit and Nonosbawsut can be considered famous. They are well known and their story is well known, Mr. Speaker.

The Government of Canada has also clearly acknowledged this. On July 26, 2007, the hon. Loyola Hearn, who was then minister responsible for Newfoundland and Labrador, held a ceremony at Botwood to erect a Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada plaque commemorating Demasduit for the contribution she made in preserving the language of the Beothuk. As such, Mr. Speaker, she is officially recognized as a person of National Historical Significance for an entire country.

Despite the great adversity she faced, she helped to keep the legacy of her people alive and provided a remarkable record of the Beothuk language with over 180 words, including the word Beothuk. Madam Speaker, we have that knowledge because of Demasduit and the knowledge she shared with Europeans before she passed. In honour of her memory and significance, today I want to enter into the record of Assembly some of the history of these

incredible people who once roamed our coastline and our interior as a way of life.

Beothuk lived a semi-nomadic lifestyle living around the lakeshores of the interior during the winter, where they hunted caribou and other game, then travelling to the coast during the summers for food, mainly salmon and seal. Nonosbawsut, a chief, and his wife Demasduit, were among the last of their tribe. Their story is indeed tragic. Nonosbawsut was killed in a conflict while trying to protect his wife from capture. Two days later, their young son, whom she was nursing, also passed away.

Upon her capture, Demasduit was brought to Twillingate. Many may know Demasduit as Mary March, the Christian name she was given while living there with a Church of England priest, Reverend John Leigh and his family. He named her Mary after the Virgin Mother Mary and March for the month of her capture.

Eventually, she was taken to St. John's where she made quite a favourable impression with those who were fortunate enough to meet her. In fact, they were so taken with her and so upset about her capture that a group of influential, high-society residents set out to raise the funds to return her to her home in the interior. Sadly, she died on route of the dreaded tuberculosis. They did bring her body back to the Beothuk campsite where her people placed her body with that of her husband, Nonosbawsut, in a sepulchre.

During her time in the capital, she was a frequent visitor to the governor and Lady Hamilton painted her portrait. Her beautiful image hangs proudly in the corridor of this Chamber.

Demasduit and Nonosbawsut were kin to another famous Beothuk, Shanawdithit. They were her aunt and uncle. According to the limited knowledge we do have, nearly a decade after their death, their skulls were removed from their burial site and transferred to the University of Edinburgh by William Cormack in 1828 and, later, they were transferred to the National Museum of Scotland. Cormack was born in Newfoundland, but educated in Scotland and held a very close relationship with the university. Their remains have been stored in

Scotland ever since. Nearly 200 years now, Madam Speaker.

During my research for today's bill, I was pleasantly surprised to learn that members of the Scottish Parliament have also brought a motion to the floor of their House for the repatriation of the Beothuk back to Canada, back to Newfoundland and Labrador. Their motion acknowledges that remains are of cultural and ethnic significance to us and commends the work of Chief Mi'sel Joe and the Miawpukek First Nation to achieve this.

Madam Speaker, we all certainly acknowledge the good work done by the Scottish Museum and other Scottish institutions in respecting the bodies of our Beothuk, but we feel very strongly that they deserve to be brought back home. We will accept nothing less because they deserve nothing less. Their remains are sacred and they should be returned home. It is the right thing to do. We must not stop our efforts until we reach success.

I'm absolutely honoured that we are debating this motion here today. I look forward to the full support of this hon. House, Madam Speaker. Many of us, those of us who are fortunate enough in particular to study Newfoundland culture and heritage during our high school curriculum, learned a lot about the Beothuk. I find myself enthralled with every piece of literature that I do write. I thoroughly enjoy my discussions I have with Chief Mi'sel Joe regarding their way of life and regarding the significance and just how important it is to the Aboriginal people of this province and to all of us living here in Newfoundland and Labrador that they have returned to their rightful home to be laid to rest where they died with their ancestors.

I truly hope that this important step, this is the second step – the official letter has been made. As I said, the letter of request has been done by Minister Russell and will continue I'm sure to be followed up by the present day government. I trust that some of my hon. colleagues across the way will champion and see that this does indeed get done, Madam Speaker. I certainly hope we are all around when the day comes that they are actually brought back home so they can be laid to rest.

Thank you very much. I look forward to hearing what the other speakers have to say. I am confident we will have full support.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MADAM SPEAKER (Dempster): The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. EDMUNDS: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I thank my hon. colleague. I remember it was just last spring that she had proposed to bring this statement forward but the House of Assembly adjourned before it could be done.

It is in reference to a very dark time in our history. Samuel G. Morton, a renowned scientist in the 19th century, once stated: Races are not varieties of human kind but rather separate inferior species. Madam Speaker, that's the attitude that justified slavery and extermination of Aboriginal people. That was over 100 years ago.

Madam Speaker, one of those peoples that are no longer with us, probably the first people of this Island, is the Beothuks. They were hunters and gathers that lived on the coast and actually travelled inland with the arrival of the Europeans to get away from sickness and extermination or war. In the end, the whole tribe perished.

Like my hon. colleague said, Shanawdithit was the last remaining Beothuk and she passed away in 1829. The repatriation case that we're talking about now is her uncle and her aunt, Demasduit and Nonosbawsut. Her husband was killed in an altercation. I won't get into detail because my hon. colleague had made reference to it already.

When we looked at the research, there were a lot of conflicting stories – I'm sure my hon. colleagues saw the same thing – in terms of the names, the dates and the English names that were attached. Shanawdithit was also known as Mary March, and then another page said Demasduit was Mary March. There is a lot of conflict, but I suppose when there's no one left out of people to explain it, these questions will arise. Demasduit was taken back, she was captured. She eventually died of tuberculosis

and was taken back to her place of capture and buried.

My hon. colleague referenced Mr. Cormack who somewhat stood up for the Beothuks, but actually was the same person who removed the bodies, removed the skulls and transported them to England. Craniology was a big study in the 19th century and probably hence the reason for bringing the skulls to England. They eventually ended up in Scotland, which brings us to where we are today.

This is not just an isolated incident. About eight or 10 years ago we went through the same process and brought back 180 of our ancestors from museums in Europe. We laid them to their final resting place on Rose Island in Saglek Fjord. A little while after we brought back 18 more and laid them to rest in Zoar, which is about 30 miles south of Nain.

It's not an easy process to just go over and say we want our ancestors back. In the case of the Beothuks, you have to prove relations. Madam Speaker, if there's no one left of your people, it's hard to prove relations. In some of the cases with the Inuit repatriation, some of the family names that exist today, like Nochasak, were actually the first names of some of the ancestors that were taken to Europe. So there was a connection.

I talked to a lady named France Rivet who did a lot of groundwork in the Abraham Ulrikab story, where there are still eight Inuit ancestors at the national French museum. She gave me a lot of insight into the process of getting your ancestors back from foreign countries. It's a lot of work by a lot of people.

In the case of getting our ancestors back, it went through the department of foreign relations with the Government of Canada, and the European governments that held possession of our ancestors at the time. It's a back and forth process; it's not an easy process.

Coming back to the Beothuk remains; we went out, myself and the Premier, to Conne River last July and attended the powwow. We actually took some time to sit down with the Miawpukek First Nation. One of the items on the agenda was

the plan to repatriate the remains of Demasduit and Nonosbawsut.

I've talked to Chief Mi'sel Joe several times, and actually quite recently. He talked a little bit of the frustration of the process. I think he's been to Scotland twice; he's been over to Europe three times. He's met with the federal member, MP Scott Simms, on due process and I was glad to hear of the work that was done by the previous government. I just want to say, quite plainly, we will continue that work. I'd like to be able to stand here and say the work will stop when Nonosbawsut and Demasduit are returned to their resting place.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. EDMUNDS: I won't go on too long because my hon. colleague has given a lot of depth and detail, but I'd just like to talk about another family that were invited to Europe in 1880. At the time in Europe disease was running rampant, and unless you were immune to it or immunized, then you were subject to it. These eight people included Abraham Ulrikab and his family, wife and two daughters; Tigianniak and his family, wife and daughter; and a young fellow name Tobias.

Now, Madam Speaker, they weren't immunized when they got to Europe. As a consequence, they all died from disease in Europe, and their remains are in a museum in France. I guess the current incoming president from Nunatsiavut, Mr. Johannes Lampe, did travel over to Europe and went through that process. I talked to him afterwards and he said it was very moving, it was very emotional and I know Chief Mi'sel Joe said the same thing that it just strengthens your mandate to get your ancestors back.

One thing that our government outlined in the Five Point Plan for A Stronger Tomorrow was to work with all parties involved on all levels of government, including international, to repatriate Nonosbawsut and Demasduit and all of our ancestors, hopefully, that we can find outside of our province and bring them home to their resting place.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It is a great pleasure to rise on this private Member's motion today and support the call for the repatriation of the remains of two of the last Beothuks. You might have to pardon me for pronunciations, because I try, of the Chief Nonosbawsut and his wife Demasduit.

I first of all want to congratulate my colleague, the MHA for Fortune Bay – Cape la Hune, for educating us and being passionate and supporting Chief Mi'sel Joe on this private Member's motion for repatriation. She is very passionate about it. I just want to commend her for keeping it alive and educating all of us. She has been very vocal on the issue and I just want to acknowledge her for that.

Madam Speaker, children in our school system are taught about the history of the Beothuk people in our province. I lived in Newfoundland all my life and one time or another the Beothuks are a part of our culture and it is part of who we are. They go back hundreds of years. I believe right now it is part of the grade five, grade eight curriculums. I believe repatriating these remains of these two individuals will bring the classroom to life for these students.

It will help the students with their studies and also serve as an educational tool for all of us because we should never forget our past. As they say, you have to know where you come from before you know where you are going. The Beothuks are deeply rooted in our culture, and it is something that we should be aware of. I'm sure everyone in this hon. House is.

The discussion that we are having here today should pique the interest of some members of the public. Through that, they will remember the contributions the Beothuks have made to the province. But by bringing the remains back to the province where they belong, they could serve as a constant reminder to adults and children alike of the history of the Beothuks.

Madam Speaker, students in our province will be familiar with the stories of Nonosbawsut and Demasduit. Nonosbawsut was a Beothuk chief

who died in March of 1819 in a conflict with the Europeans, as we've already heard. He died protecting his wife and young infant son, which is kind of a sad tale actually. When you look back, it's pretty basic – we look now and see wars happening around the world and people getting repatriated. We've seen it in Afghanistan on a weekly basis. Unfortunately, bodies were brought back home. There's a very solemn, somber ceremony held every time they come back. It was almost a televised event. There are not many here who did not watch a body – after a war – being returned to the country. It's a very solemn reminder what was happening around.

When we ask about the Beothuks and repatriating these remains, it's no different. It's only we're looking at something that happened over 200 years ago. They should be brought back to their rightful place and repatriated here. It's great to see – the Scottish museum has done a great job in preserving these remains, but they should be returned home. It's only the right thing to do. I sure hope that our provincial government will lobby, in conjunction with the federal government, and make representation to the Government of Scotland to, in fact, have those remains repatriated.

As I said, the chief died in conflict and his wife, Demasduit, was captured. There were among the last Beothuk people in our province, which is another sad statement. After the capture, Demasduit was taken to Twillingate, as we have all heard, and she lived with the priest. It's kind of sad her remains never stayed in Newfoundland and they ended up in Scotland. But, I guess, that's a history lesson in itself. It's part of the reason we're stood here today, like I just said, debating, trying to get the federal government to come on board and get these remains repatriated.

When you consider it, we're not really asking for a lot. Chief Mi'sel Joe went there and did the sweetgrass ceremony which was very touching for them. We seem to be asking a pretty basic question, though – bring them home where they belong. Repatriation may not necessarily mean Newfoundland. We don't know, but I think they belong in Canada, Newfoundland preferably, but somewhere they can be preserved for years to come and people can respect and visit and do what's required.

During the summer of 1819, as I said, there were a number of attempts made to return her to her people. As we heard, she subsequently died of tuberculous which, again, is a sad story. The Beothuk, I think, is a sad chapter in our history which we can't reverse, but doing something right is never a bad thing. It happened. It's in the past and as we all learn through schools and we all know any time anyone talked about the Beothuks, it was pretty unfortunate what happened to a small tribe. I think anything you can do now – it is 200 years later, but I still think it's never too late to do the right thing.

As I said, those remains are held in a National Museum in Scotland. They've done a good job respecting these to date, but they do belong in Canada and preferably in Newfoundland.

The application process has to have the support of the local provincial government in conjunction with the federal government. From what I gather, there seems to be a joint feeling. Everyone is on the same page with that to get it done. I guess highlighting it through a private Member's motion is to spur the conversation because sometimes things like these can get lost in the shuffle of bigger things, like tomorrow brings, and every other day in government.

It's good for my colleague to keep it to the front burner because stuff like this unfortunately can get lost in the cracks. I really do hope that both governments come together and do what's right.

As I said, Madam Speaker, Beothuks once were very populous in our province and at the time of John Cabot's arrival we had upwards to 1,000 individuals. As I said, disease ended up getting them and other causes, as we all know. There's been a lot of study done on even the remains they have now. We've discovered what their diet was, what water they drank and where they lived. It is pretty incredible actually and I think some of those studies were done on just two teeth from individuals, which is incredible when you look at what you can learn from DNA.

Bringing the remains back – I will say it again – is the right thing to do because they should be brought back where they belong. I'll be honest, I didn't know all there was to know about this particular case but after speaking to my colleague, I put a common sense light to it. Why

aren't they here? It's pretty common statement. Why are they over in Scotland when they are native to Newfoundland, or at least to Canada? At the time it was Newfoundland because we were our own country. I do hope that there will be closure for the Beothuk and for these people, and for the people who are lobbying on their behalf.

As I said, from the DNA we determined they were semi-Nomadic people who went around the shores and beautiful lakes. We know about their diet. They built the mamateeks. I guess now I know where the Mamateek Inn name came from. I wasn't really familiar at first. I didn't realize it at first but now I've educating myself on that.

I do hope that all Members of the House will support this resolution, and the provincial government works with the federal government and the Scottish government, the National Museum of Scotland to have these remains repatriated.

In the past several years, as I mentioned just briefly, Chief Mi'sel Joe has been a great advocate for this. He should be recognized because he has done a lot of work. Like I said, he travelled to Scotland. He's done the sawgrass ceremony and he has been a very vocal advocate to get these remains repatriated. He's close to my colleague and he has lobbied her as well. He should be commended for that.

The Assembly of First Nations, all chief assemblies of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Quebec, the Innu and other groups, they all support this. It's pretty unanimous support across the board, Madam Speaker. He has led the efforts to bring these remains home for some time now and he has worked tirelessly on this.

As we all know, he is Chief of the Conne River Reserve. He started this because there was no one around to speak up for the Beothuk people. If we don't all come together and speak and try to fix – do what's right now, even though it's 200 years later. I commend Mi'sel Joe for taking the cause and speaking up because it's very important. Like I said, it may get lost in the cracks sometimes but I don't think we should ever lose sight of the importance of our past.

In closing, I just want to acknowledge Chief Mi'sel Joe and I encourage all Members of this hon. House to commend him on his efforts too. I just want to say I really wish; I really hope that we lobby the federal government to get the support and join together to lobby the Scottish government and the national museum of Scotland to bring these remains back home where they belong.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MADAM SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Placentia West – Bellevue.

MR. BROWNE: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

We are here today to bear witness to a tragedy, which is the passing of the Beothuk people. Madam Speaker, I would ask the consent of all Members for a moment of silence to reflect upon the passing of the Beothuk before I begin my remarks in this hon. House of Assembly this afternoon on this private Member's motion.

(Moment of silence.)

MR. BROWNE: I thank all Members for their consent for that moment of solemn reflection, Madam Speaker. I want to thank the Member for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune for bringing this motion forward.

Who were these people, Madam Speaker, who once made use of the rivers, plants, birds, fish and animals of this land to raise their families, live their lives, and practice their customs and immerse themselves in their spirituality?

Ingeborg Marshall, at the launch of her book entitled, *A History and Ethnography of the Beothuk*, said: "... they were a heroic people who valued their independence and traditions above all and were prepared to face hostilities rather than be subjugated."

Before the arrival of Europeans to this Island, Madam Speaker, the Beothuk lived here as coastal people, organized in small bands throughout the various bays to fish and hunt seals, other sea mammals, and birds. They

visited interior locations to take caribou at river crossings.

The Beothuk lived in bark or skin-covered tents in the summer and in semi-subterranean houses during the colder months. Bows and arrows, harpoons and spears were used in hunting, which often took place from sea-worthy bark canoes with a high prow and stern.

Beothuk artifacts include carved bone, antler, and ivory pendants intricately decorated with incised patterns. Their use of red ochre, with which they painted their canoes, other artifacts, and even their bodies, was responsible for the term 'Red Indians', which later applied to all First Nations peoples. However, the arrival of Europeans altered the natural rhythms of Beothuk life.

The Beothuk camped at Red Indian Lake where caribou crossed the Exploits River. This location also gave the Beothuk access to Notre Dame Bay during the summer, when they harvested seals, birds and fish. However, Notre Dame Bay also became a favoured location for settlement by Europeans during the 1700s and animosity developed between the Beothuk and Europeans.

Firearms, which the Beothuk lacked, made it clear to the Newfoundland authorities at the time that the Beothuk had to be protected. A proclamation was issued in 1769 making it a capital crime to murder any Beothuk. For example, the following excerpt is from the proclamation issued by His Excellency, the Hon. John Byron in 1769: "... it is His Majesty's royal will and pleasure that I do ... strictly enjoin and require all His Majesty's subjects to live in amity and brotherly kindness with the native ... " Beothuk "... of the said island of Newfoundland."

Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, this increased concern about the welfare of the Beothuk would have little real effect. In 1792, Captain George Pulling surveyed the English settlers on the Northeast Coast collecting accounts of actions against the Beothuk and submitted this report to a parliamentary committee, although nothing came of his efforts. "... governors, beginning with William Waldegrave in 1797, issued proclamations forbidding attacks on the Beothuk and offered rewards for making contact with the

beleaguered people, but again with little positive result.”

Hostilities continued and in the late winter of 1819, a group of settlers attacked a Beothuk village on Red Indian Lake and captured Demasduit, after killing her husband Nonosbawsut. “... Demasduit, or Mary March, as her captors would call her, was sent to Twillingate and then to St. John’s to meet the governor, who ordered her returned to her people. After a futile attempt to reunite her with the remaining Beothuk, she died aboard Buchan’s vessel in January of 1820.” Her body was returned to Red Indian Lake.

Seven years later, William Cormack’s expedition found the burial hut on Red Indian Lake containing the remains of Demasduit and Nonosbawsut and their child. Later he had the two adult skulls transported to Scotland where they remain today.

Madam Speaker, repatriation and reconciliation are now long overdue. These remains must be returned to their Island home for a respectful and solemn re-interment. These spirits cannot be at rest in a foreign land. We must bring an end to this torment and reunite Demasduit and Nonosbawsut with the spirit of the Beothuk people. We must consecrate the memory of the Beothuk and allow that memory to take place and a reconciliation in our hearts, and in all that we do as a government in our relationships with Aboriginal people, and to ensure all Aboriginal people may achieve their visions.

Much has been done on reconciliation, but much more remains to be done. I would be remiss at this point if I did not pay homage – as the Member for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune and the Member for Torngat Mountains did – to Chief Mi’sel Joe for crusading for the repatriation of the remains of Demasduit and Nonosbawsut. He’s been to Scotland twice for this purpose and performed a ceremony with the remains.

Chief Mi’sel Joe, I thank you for inspiring all of us to bring those spirits back to this Island that we share. I wish to assure you, Sir, that we will continue to work with you in this great and noble cause.

It is, indeed, inspiring that Aboriginal culture in Newfoundland and Labrador is expanding. We see the Innu taking control of their education and income support. The Inuit have established their own government. The Miawpukek First Nation is a model First Nation in Canada, the Qalipu are experiencing a cultural revival of epic proportion and the members of NunatuKavut are showing their traditions to the world.

With this expansion of Aboriginal culture, it is fortunate that we will still have the traditions of the Beothuks as told to us by Demasduit, Shanawdithit and others, and scholars like Ingeborg Marshall to work on these traditions.

We must honour our Aboriginal heritage and those traditions which is why the Premier asked the National Museum of Scotland for the return of the remains, which was outlined as a commitment in his mandate letter. I am very fortunate, Madam Speaker, to work with him in his capacity as the Minister for Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs to realize these goals.

Our government recognized that it is time to lay them to rest with dignity in the home of the Beothuk. The Museum of Scotland has replied that three conditions will have to be met. First, the federal government must support the return; secondly, a national museum must support the return as well. And we will be working with federal ministers Carolyn Bennett and Joly, as well as the parliamentary secretary, the Member for Labrador, Yvonne Jones, to see that we can meet these first two conditions.

We hope to work with Chief Mi’sel Joe and others to meet the third condition on Aboriginal participation in the return. Sadly, there is no longer any Beothuk community to support the return.

As well, we must continue to reconcile on all fronts. We must bring the Innu Land Claims to a conclusion. We must effectively work with the federal government and the Nunatsiavut Government to implement the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement, and we must build stronger relationships with NunatuKavut, the Qalipu and the Miawpukek First Nation.

At the second National Roundtable on Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls in

Winnipeg in February we committed to participate in and fully co-operate with the National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls. We must heed the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that is a responsibility of this government to address.

We must ensure provincial programs and services are delivered in culturally appropriate ways, and we must advance Aboriginal autonomy and aspirations at every opportunity. We are very pleased that our new prime minister desires a new relationship with Aboriginal people, especially given the federal government's exclusive constitution's grant of jurisdiction for Aboriginal people to the federal government.

We are also pleased that there is an increased federal funding for Aboriginal people, including funding for Aboriginal people in this province, like the new federal \$15 million for housing in Nunatsiavut. We want to work in partnership with the federal government and Aboriginal governments and organizations to create a more inclusive province where all hopes may be realized.

Madam Speaker, I want to reiterate again, to say thank you to the Member opposite for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune for bringing this forward, not only here today but last year. This is something that she's long worked on and I hope that all Members of this House will join with she and I to make sure this becomes a reality moving forward.

I agree also with the Truth and Reconciliation Commissioner, Justice Sinclair, when he said: "Words are not enough. Reconciliation is not an aboriginal problem – it is a Canadian problem. It involves all of us." Therefore I look forward to that day when we bring Demasduit and Nonosbawsut back home and that the consecration of our efforts to the legacy of the Beothuk will cause all of us to live in a shared province of hope, pride, diversity and happiness, freedom from want and fear and to never again have a people disappear. That we will feel on our quiet lakes, ponds and rivers, and barrens and woods the spirit of the Beothuk always moving in us.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It's indeed a pleasure to stand and speak to this private Member's bill today for a number of reasons. We've had a very high level of education here when we talk about an understanding of the Beothuk Indians and the tribe and the historic significance here and what this repatriation of the two members of the tribe mean to this province, mean to us historically.

As parliamentarians we get an opportunity every week, as backbenchers or Opposition, to present private Members' bills around what we feel are significant issues, significant pieces of policy or issues that we feel should be brought out to the public domain for discussion. I want to thank my colleague the Member for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune for putting this forward. I know my history with her going back prior to my political days dictated knowing when she worked on the Connaigre Peninsula and particularly around the work she did in Conne River and those areas that this was on her agenda for many years. This is not just a political issue right now. It's an important issue because it's significant, not only to the region but to this whole province.

I support this for a number of reasons, but particularly because this is an important resolution from a historical point of view and a cultural point of view, but from a moral point of view. It's the right thing to do. It's the right place for this to take place. It's the next step, particularly around the political next step, in moving this forward and making sure that the repatriation is done in the right manner and expedited as quick as possible. It's a great opportunity for us to bring back our native sons and daughters back to their homeland.

My experience with the native community has come about in the last 30 years from some direct experiences and working relationships. I have an unbelievable appreciation now for the cultural

significance and the importance around the spiritual needs, when people need to be repatriated back to the land that they were the forefathers of. They're the ones who made this province an important part of our history. It's unfortunate that history didn't deal them the right set of cards, and history in the previous centuries was cruel and very devastating to our Aboriginal friends here.

I do remember, as a young man, my first encounter with various cultures, particularly around Aboriginal challenges or Aboriginal-unique cultures was when I had the privilege, with the Leader of the Third Party, of working in Labrador, in Sheshatshiu, and doing some work with the band council for a period of time and getting a real understanding, as a young man, not really realizing the cultural differences and the particular challenges. And particularly, maybe some of the misunderstandings we have, as a European society, around the cultural needs and where the Aboriginal and our first settlers here, particularly the Aboriginal community, about the significance of the land and what it means to them. I got a great understanding and a great appreciation for what that meant.

When I was asked to speak to this, I said, of course, I would. I think it's a very important resolution. I know everybody in this House will support it because, as I mentioned at the beginning, it's the right thing to do. When you have champions like Chief Mi'sel Joe who, for the last number of decades, has been beating the drum around making sure the right thing was done. He has made every effort through the federal politics, to international politics, to ensure this wasn't forgotten.

Now we're at a stage where we have an opportunity to move this to the next level. I'm glad we're here in the House and we're hearing some very articulate, committed movers and discussions around exactly how we put this forward.

I did have the privilege, in a previous life, of doing some work on the Connaigre Peninsula and getting to go to Conne River, and being part of an Aboriginal ceremony and getting a better understanding of the cultural needs there; but getting an understanding, particularly, around the spiritual needs when it comes to repatriating

these two tribes people who, unfortunately, were taken away at a young age but also were taken away from their homeland.

The significance of the Beothuks as we all know, historically, and it's been noted here before, is one of the cornerstones of this great province. It's perhaps one of the scorns we also have to live with, of how our forefathers came here and mistreated our Aboriginal friends.

Mr. Speaker, as was mentioned before, this is about righting a wrong. It's about doing the right thing. It's about expediting that, so that community can heal and these individuals, from a spiritual point of view, can get back to their land.

We talk a lot about what's gone on in the past, and we talk a lot about historically what our Aboriginal people mean to us. Mr. Speaker, we have an opportunity now to make this a very important issue here. I know the discussion here in this House of Assembly is all about doing the right thing and moving that forward.

It's important we look at not only this part of our Aboriginal needs, but how we also improve the Aboriginal stake for our other Aboriginal communities that we have in this province – it's an important part of it. This brings to light injustice done in the past, but we want to ensure we continue to move things forward in the present. It's very important to all of our cultural needs here.

I do want to go back to my time in Conne River and an understanding that the people there have a unique connection to the land. Again, from a spiritual point of view, and I don't consider myself overly spiritual at times, but it was moving, because of their respect for the land itself, their understanding of the land and what it means for them.

So as we go back and we reflect on exactly what this bill is about and what this member's statement is about, it's particularly around doing what's right, bringing two native citizens back to their homeland. It's about now taking this and moving to the next level.

This also gives us an opportunity to fully move forward to all parts of our society here, the

history of the Beothuk tribes in Newfoundland and Labrador, particularly around what impact it had on our culture hundreds of years ago. Maybe it gives us a better understanding of our own forefathers, some of the challenges they faced, some of the mistakes that were made. We need to reflect on those things so that future generations understand it and have a better appreciation for what's gone on.

Mr. Speaker, I know there are a number of other people here who want to speak to this member's motion. I know it's very important to a number of people here because they have significant connection to the Aboriginal communities, and I do again want to thank my colleague, the Member for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune, for bringing this forward. Again, it's been a testament to her desire and the people she's worked with in that particular area for the last number of years. It's been a testament of the dedication from Chief Joe over the last number of decades. It's a testament to the people of this province, because it hasn't gone away.

People wanted us to bring it forward. Now it's brought forward. Now it's us as the elected legislators in this province, it's for us to bring it to the next level and to ensure that we do correct the wrong in the past.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make it known that I will be, and I would think along with all my colleagues here, supporting this member's motion.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Lane): The Speaker recognizes the hon. the Member for St. John's East – Quidi Vidi.

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

I'm very pleased to be able to stand and speak to this private Member's motion here on our floor today: "... BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable House call on the Government of the United Kingdom to facilitate the repatriation of the remains of Demasduit and Nonosbawsut

to Canada so that they may be laid to rest with dignity."

I think it's a terrible shame that we have to be standing in 2016 asking for this to happen. One would have thought by now in our civilization, as we like to call it, that we would understand these bones should not be resting outside of where these people lived. These bones should be back here.

I think one of the things that have been said by one of our Aboriginal leaders in this province is something that's worth quoting here today. Miawpukek First Nation Chief Mi'sel Joe got it right when he asked, as a matter of comparison, what would happen if we went over and dug up the bones of one of Scotland's most beloved poets. Here's how he put it: "Maybe what I need to do is go and dig up [Robert] Burns, maybe that'll open somebody's eyes ... I mean, what's the difference in me going to dig up [Robby] Burns and bringing him back to study in Newfoundland than them taking the remains of our people to study for all these years?"

That's the shame of it. That's why we should make sure as a provincial Parliament, that our federal Parliament takes action on this. I would suggest to our colleagues in government that we make sure it happens quickly because I feel certain that we're all going to vote for this motion here today. Then I'll be urging the Premier to make sure that action is taken. We can't let this go on.

There are two parts to this; one, the bones should physically be brought back. They should be buried here where they belong. The other is that this is symbolic. It's symbolic of what happened to Aboriginal peoples in this province when we became part of Canada in 1949. The repatriation of the bones might be a repatriation of the rights of Aboriginal people, a symbol of the repatriation of the rights of the people in this province. I think that's what makes it so important.

I want to go to that history a bit because probably some of our older and younger generations aren't aware of what actually happened in 1949 when negotiations were taking place with regard to the Terms of Union of Newfoundland, as we were called then, joining

Canada. I guess Labrador – the way it happened at the time, and I think this is symbolic too – was sort of dragged along. It took us a long time to recognize Newfoundland and Labrador ourselves and the importance of Labrador as being part of the province.

When the Terms of Union were being done, the original Terms of Union had reference in them to the Aboriginal people on the Island. What happened was that the reference to Aboriginal people on the Island and in Labrador was literally pencilled out in the Terms of Union.

So Aboriginal people were pencilled out and what that did is it created an atmosphere in Newfoundland and Labrador that Aboriginal people didn't count. Aboriginal peoples were not free to even see themselves as Aboriginal. Name changes happened, a denial of who they were.

Not only was it that they didn't benefit from what existed in 1949 on a federal level with regard to the *Indian Act*, not only did they not benefit – and the benefits weren't as good as they are now. Even now, we know we are far below what they should be. Because of not having that recognition, they were wiped out on the very land in which they lived. I have brothers and sisters in this room who have Aboriginal blood. I think we need to apologize to them. One of our brothers stood today. We need to apologize to them for the way in which they were literally wiped out.

It's been a struggle for our Aboriginal people in Newfoundland and Labrador. I'd like to remind ourselves of some of those struggles. I have to say that I've been privileged to be able to have been in solidarity with some of the things that happened over the years.

When the Labrador Inuit Association, the LIA, was first formed in the 1970s, I was already involved in social justice work, mainly on an international development level. The LIA made contact with some of us here in St. John's at that time when they were first formed. I have this connection for almost 40 years with the Inuit of Labrador because of that, in different stages of their negotiations with government, both provincially and federally, being involved and being in solidarity with them.

For 30 years, they worked as the LIA to get to the point of having land claims recognized. It wasn't until 2005 that Nunatsiavut was formed as a government. Finally the Inuit people of Labrador were self-governing. The struggle, the time it took, the energy it took for them to prove who they were as a people and to become recognized to get to where they are today – we don't understand how much it took.

Let's look at Miawpukek and Conne River as it's commonly known, and what happened there. Some reference has been made to Chief Mi'sel Joe, but I want to go more specific to what happened in 1983 when they came in from Conne River and in total desperation took over – I forget what it was called then – the department of northern and aboriginal affairs, I think, down at Atlantic Place.

They came in and took over the offices to say we can't take it anymore. Their money for the housing was being withheld by the premier of the day. Being withheld, taking the federal government money and not giving it to them in Conne River, which they deserved to have.

They were imprisoned for it. They went on a hunger strike. I was part of a group that supported them here in St. John's through all of those days. It was horrendous what they fought for and what they had to go through.

Then we had the Innu Nation when they formed in the 1980s as well. What were the first issues they were dealing with? They were dealing with the fact that nobody respected the impact on them and on the land they used, of the low-level flying that was going on; those low-level flights which were the military jets from European countries flying over their land with medical proof their children were suffering from those flights. Eardrums breaking, blood coming from their ears – I'm not exaggerating, this is a fact.

They ended up being imprisoned. Elizabeth Penashue herself was imprisoned in Stephenville with other women because they dared to protest, because they dared to stand up and say, you can't do this to us and to our children. This is our land.

This is our history. We're not talking 100 years ago when we're talking about Chief Mi'sel Joe

leading his people in here to St. John's, and Elizabeth Penashue and the other women elders leading their people. May I add, Elizabeth Penashue's son, Peter Penashue, should remember that as well, what his mother and his people went through to get to where they are today. They're still fighting. They still don't have the final settlement of their land claims.

Then we have NunatuKavut. The whole dimension of being Metis is another issue, an issue that had to be dealt with in other parts of Canada. For us, it was like a shame for them to have to start saying: but we are different, we are a separate group, Metis are recognized by Canada as a different group and we need to be recognized. Finally, they now know, after struggling, that at least they have the right to be identified as an Aboriginal group, but the fight is still on.

We still have land claims that aren't settled in Labrador. The Innu Nation is not finalized. NunatuKavut hasn't even been recognized, whether or not they're going to be able to go ahead and go through the process. They're at the very early stages.

Then finally we had the Qalipu Nation, a Mi'kmaq First Nation Band formed, a landless band. The federal government messed that one up and that's not finalized. It's an ongoing struggle and we have to acknowledge that struggle. We have to start getting active as a provincial government to make sure the struggles end and actions are taken to make life better, and to treat our Aboriginal peoples in this province with respect. We have to acknowledge that.

So it's wonderful that we have the motion on the floor today, but bringing back these bones means nothing if we're not also dealing with the issues of our Aboriginal people in this province today. You take, for example – I can't go through everything that's here on my sheets, and I thank our great researchers for everything they've given me. I wanted to speak from my own personal experience.

I was on the Voisey's Bay Environmental Assessment Panel. I was honoured because the Innu Nation asked me to be their nominee. The reason they asked me to be their nominee on the

panel was because they didn't have elders who were fluent enough in English to be able to be on the panel. The people who were fluent, the young leaders, were needed to be part of the negotiations. They really couldn't spare one of their young leaders who could have taken his or her place on the panel. They asked me would I be their nominee and I was honoured.

One of the things – well, there are all kinds of things I remember from when I was on the panel. One of the issues that were an issue when I was on the panel and it is still ongoing right now – there are many, but the one that really is a very serious one is the whole issue of methylmercury downstream.

Methylmercury now is an issue with regard to Muskrat Falls, but it was an issue also when we were on the Voisey's Bay panel. Now it's an ongoing issue when it comes to Muskrat Falls. We know methylmercury has been an issue with the Upper Churchill, but it was never recognized. So we have to look at something as serious as this issue and say: Why haven't governments taken it seriously? Why aren't we dealing with it?

I remember the first time I brought it up in this House as an issue with regard to the Lower Churchill. I was mocked by the minister on the opposite side when I brought up the issue. I was just raising a fuss over nothing. Well, it wasn't a fuss over nothing. The work we did on the Voisey's Bay panel was intense work. That was a high point, by the way. This is something we should be talking to the federal government about. We should be looking at as a government.

That panel was unique because you had the provincial government, you had the federal government, you had Innu Nation and, at that time, the LIA, Labrador Inuit Association, all for an equal partnership in charge of the panel. It was a high point of environmental assessment in this country. I'm sad to say there hasn't been one like it since because it worked so well. All the decisions about how the panel functioned were made together. The federal government or the provincial government had no more rights in making decisions about how the panel worked than did Innu Nation and LIA. It was actually a high point.

I invite the current government and ministers involved to go back and look at that. We've got to start looking at how we start working together respecting. The same way when it comes to the whole issue of the missing and murdered Aboriginal women, we're saying that we agree with the resolution that has been passed. A resolution that we brought up there – I brought into the House, as a matter of fact, an all-party resolution to make sure the Government of Canada launched a national inquiry. We have a government that is now saying it is going to do it. I encourage us to work with them.

MR. SPEAKER: The Speaker reminds the hon. Member that her time for speaking has expired.

MS. MICHAEL: Leave, just to clue up please, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Member have leave?

AN HON. MEMBER: Leave.

MS. MICHAEL: Thank you.

Just to say there's so much that we have to do. We have to do it ourselves, but we also have to work with the federal government. The motion is one issue and we have so many more. I invite us to continue looking at how we do that as a Legislature.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. DEMPSTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

A lot of times, Mr. Speaker, when we stand to speak we say it's a pleasure and an honour to speak to the motion or in debate. Of sorts, I guess, it is always an honour and a privilege any time you get to stand and represent your district and speak in the provincial Legislature. However, it's somewhat with sadness and mixed emotion that I stand today and share a few words on this topic. I thank the Member for Fortune

Bay – Cape La Hune for bringing this very important private Member's resolution to the floor today.

It wasn't so long ago, I think it was February, maybe, that I met Chief Mi'sel Joe for the first time. He is a quiet man, but a wise man – much wisdom. When you sit at a table he doesn't say a lot, but when he speaks, you listen. I have some very good friends, as the Member would know, from Conne River. I am looking forward to attending my first powwow coming up this summer in Conne River.

Mr. Speaker, today we're talking about a very dark point in our province's colonization, the loss of a native people and their way of life, as well as the immense loss of the long-term contribution the Beothuk First Nation could have made to our province, our culture and our society. While we're a fairly small province, just 527,000 people, we're very rich in history and culture. We have a number of Aboriginal groups that have been mentioned here today. They contribute significantly to our rich culture and heritage.

I stand today, Mr. Speaker, not only as a proud daughter of Labrador – no stranger to anyone in this Chamber – but also as a very proud member of NunatuKavut Community Council. Somebody here who has southern Inuit roots, the mother of a daughter who has southern Inuit roots and is also a member of NunatuKavut Community Council, a very proud member.

NunatuKavut, like Nunatsiavut, is in the process of trying to settle a land claim agreement. They have, as some would know here, put forth a document unveiling NunatuKavut.

Mr. Speaker, last night I read through – I wanted to see who was Demasduit and Nonosbawsut and Shanawdithit, the niece. I did some reading after I went home; a tragic story, a very, very tragic story of a man and a wife; a man who lost his life because he stood to protect his partner. Then we see she lost her life to tuberculosis. Then they were taken away to a foreign land, taken away to be studied, for some people to do some learning in a university.

In my notes was a picture of the young lady, their niece, Shanawdithit. I looked at her, a

beautiful young lady. I read a little bit about what it said about her, a lady who didn't smile very much. I reflected on that. What it must have been for her, the weight that she carried on her shoulders, knowing that she was the last of the Beothuk people. What a sad, sad story.

Mr. Speaker, we heard it said many times, we cannot change the past. That's the life we live. I have an uncle up in Labrador who always talks about how we are on a journey. That's true because every day, once the day has passed, we can't have it back. We can't change the past, but we can certainly learn from it.

So today, Mr. Speaker, we're talking about doing the right thing, not just spend an afternoon here in the Legislature today talking about we need to have the bodies of this man and woman repatriated back and reconciled but we must ensure that after today action is taken.

I'm very proud to be a part of a government where our Premier, who carries the portfolio for Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs, right in his mandate mentioned those two Beothuk individuals. He said: "In this role, I will support efforts to repatriate the remains of Demasduit and Nonosbawsut from the National Museum of Scotland and lay them to rest with dignity in the home of the Beothuk, and work with the governments of Canada and the United Kingdom to ensure there is no further injustice to their memory."

Mr. Speaker, I reflected on – I'm sure all of us in the House have lost people belonging to us. In that process when you lose someone, from when you lose them to when you lay them to rest there is a period of time and you begin to pick up pieces and move on to a new normal after you lay them to rest. But there is something very spiritual and sacred about that laying to rest.

Mr. Speaker, what we're talking about today with this man and woman should not only be important to the Aboriginal people of the province but it should be important, and I'm sure it is, to all people of the province. That we bring these individuals home and we lay them to rest.

When I was looking through this and I was thinking about inadequacies and injustices, many of us will agree there is nowhere that is

more prominent than among Aboriginal people. I represent a district where I have some people from my colleague's district, Nunatsiavut, and I have many who are members of Nunavut community council.

Mr. Speaker, as I was campaigning last fall you knock on doors, you hear lots of sad stories. I'm someone who always determines that I'm able to do it because I'm very big geographically, I don't have big numbers, but I work long days because it's so important to me to get to every single door myself, to talk to the people that I am wanting to represent.

I remember at the end of a long day, knocking on a door in Cartwright. This elderly man and wife, not a lot of money, getting by, but he wanted to show me something. He went into the bedroom and came out with this little Inuktitut bible. That was the language. He talked about what he lost in being sent to residential school. He said this was taken from me. I don't know my language and every day I feel like something is missing because we were put in this very difficult environment.

Mr. Speaker, along with my colleague from Torngat, I stood back a few months ago out front when the Truth and Reconciliation report came out. We heard many people share their stories; stories of hardships, stories of ways of life taken from them. While we can't change that, we can correct the course and we can adjust the sails as we go forward.

I want to share a quote by Romeo LeBlanc that I have carried and never forgotten. Romeo LeBlanc was the – I'm going to digress for a moment. When my grandfather, Ben Powell, was received into the Order of Canada in the early '90s, a very proud day for my family, Romeo LeBlanc was the governor. I know his son now sits to the left of the Prime Minister.

Romeo LeBlanc said, and I quote, "We owe the Aboriginal peoples a debt that is four centuries old. It is their turn to become full partners in developing an even greater Canada. And the reconciliation required may be less a matter of legal texts than of attitudes of the heart." I'm going to say that again, Mr. Speaker. He said, "... the reconciliation required may be less a

matter of legal texts than of attitudes of the heart.”

As I was going through recently, some of NunatuKavut, my own organization – as I was going through some of their *Unveiling NunatuKavut*, the document that they have put forth in an effort to start their land claim negotiation process, some very, very striking sections there, Mr. Speaker, that many will relate to; many who have lived it, certainly, at a different level than I have.

It talked about, in the document, the stigma attached to Aboriginal people, including the NunatuKavut Members, the southern Inuit culture and ancestry. It talked about the stigma of looking native, Skimo often referred to, and how that led to many of these people remaining silent with outsiders about their ancestry.

Those are the kinds of things that we’re talking about here today, Mr. Speaker, in this PMR, where we’re coming here collectively as all parties to continue the effort and to support Chief Mi’sel Joe in his actions to bring Demasduit and Nonosbawsut home. I share that because we must not lose sight that we all need to have the right attitude in our heart, that we are an inclusive society and that we need to practice what we preach.

I think about when I was reading about these two individuals and their skulls resting in a museum in Scotland. Mr. Speaker, are they any less than the loved ones that we, ourselves, have that are buried in sacred hallowed ground in many places in Newfoundland and Labrador? I’m going to beg to consider they were not. Who are we to be any respecter of persons? We are all to be valued the same way.

I was raised in a home where my grandmother taught us that you treat the CEO and the janitor with the same respect every single day, a rich heritage for me. I’m impressed with the legacy that my grandparents instilled in me, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to clue up by saying I’m happy to speak to it, but it’s not good enough to simply stand in the House and let each other know that we support the efforts to repatriate the remains

of our Aboriginal people from Scotland. We must do better and we must go forward.

Mr. Speaker, I mention the Premier’s mandate letter where this was a priority for him. In addition to that, I was also very proud that in our platform *A Stronger Tomorrow*, once again we see the repatriate of the Beothuk remains. It was felt so strongly by members of the Liberal Party that it was included as one of our pillars in our platform. The federal Truth and Reconciliation report emphasizes the importance of correcting past injustices in the treatment of Aboriginal people in Canada, and those are some of the things I just talked about. In our province the extinction of the Beothuk following European settlement remains a tragic injustice and irrecoverable loss.

I’m not sure who it was that said: staggering to think that people that have been here for many, many, many moons, did we wipe them out in mere centuries? What have we done with the full loss of a people?

Mr. Speaker, I think it incumbent on many of us in our schools, in our educational systems as we go forward, to ensure the story of Demasduit, Nonosbawsut and Shanawdithit, that they’re talked about, that the next generation knows. Everything we do in life does have a butterfly effect, every decision we make today, and I’m very cognizant of that as a parliamentarian.

While it is a huge, huge privilege to sit in a Legislature and be a part of the democracy in Newfoundland and Labrador, it comes with a huge, huge responsibility, Mr. Speaker. Every decision we make every single day is going to impact somebody, somewhere.

Mr. Speaker, I’m pleased to be a part of a government, led by our Premier, that I’m sure will continue to do everything it can to ensure the bodies of those two Beothuks are brought home to the place of their homeland, laid to rest and given the dignity and the honour that they, like our own people here, are so deserving of.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Osborne): The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

MR. K. PARSONS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I wasn't going to speak on this motion today, but I felt that I wanted to because I wanted to show support for this important motion. Also, I'd like to support the Member here on the side of me, who sat on the side of me when I was over on that side of the House too. We've been pretty good friends for the last number of years. I remember when the motion first came forward, when she put it forward, how important it was to her.

There are things we do in this House that we all agree on sometimes. We had a great couple of pieces of legislation that went through yesterday that were unanimous and this is another part of it. This is something we really have to be together on and make sure it happens because it's an important part of our history, for one thing, and it's an important part of who we are.

I agree with the speaker who just spoke that time for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair when she said this is a start. There are other things we can do. There are a lot of things we can't do, but sometimes you have to take those small steps first in order to get to where you want to go down the road.

I think this is an important step of who we are as people to show our young people. As one of the Members mentioned here earlier today, it's taught in grades five and eight, I do believe, in the schools. We all learned about the Beothuks. We learned about what they meant to this and how they were here before we were.

I had the opportunity this summer to attend a powwow down in Conne River with my hon. Member. I had a great couple of days down there with her. We travelled her district. It was absolutely beautiful. It's an absolutely beautiful part of the province driving down. It's really heartwarming just to see the beautiful scenery all the way along.

I had the opportunity to meet Mi'sel Joe. I have to say, what a fine gentleman. We had a cold night. They were all beating on the drums and

we went through the different ceremonies and everything else. Just to see the people of Conne River, the young and old, and all people – we did a drum thing they had there, three or four drums and all hands around. It was beautiful to see. It was absolutely beautiful to be able to be involved in it and to know the traditions of the people are still being met in that part of our province.

It was very eye opening for me. Meeting Chief Joe was a remarkable man. He still, today, is a remarkable man. He was just a class act the whole time we were down there. To know this is so important to him, so important to his people and so important to the people of this province that we really show the Beothuk people were –

Mr. Speaker, I'm an avid hunter. I love to hunt. I have a couple of trips every year where I go to Red Indian Lake. We have a cabin up on the side of Red Indian Lake. I go there. I can't wait to get on the bike and go up in the country and look back at Grand Lake, Long Lake and all the different lakes in the area.

I can only imagine the Beothuks there before we even came here, just realizing the beauty of what they had. It's absolutely breathtaking to be up there when you can sit in a cabin and look at Red Indian Lake and see a couple of caribou come off the side, swim across and shake themselves off in front of you, in front of the cabin. It's probably one of the nicest experiences I ever experienced in my life. This is what they had. These people had a beautiful country that they loved. They loved this area.

I'll tell you a little story now about a friend of mine. His name was John Paul. I'm not sure what descent he was, but he used to come to our cabin every time. We'd bring him up a bit of salt fish. He was up in the country all the time and he loved salt fish. So we'd go up and he'd make sure that the cabin – he was all the time checking on our place and making sure of everything. To see his respect for the land and understand the land, understand the animals, understand where the fish were and what was a good time to do this.

I'll always remember one thing. We went and got two moose one year. Both of them were bulls. One was, I think, a 14 point bull and one

was seven point bull. We came out the road – now maybe he could have been a little bit farfetched or whatever. He said, okay, you got that one, and he named the road we got it on, and he named the other one where we got the other one. I was just blown away because the people, they knew their land. They knew everything about their land. He could name where we got the two moose and he was spot on where it was to.

We came, John Cabot discovered. We came here in 1497 and there were about 1,000 of them here. It's too bad, history will show that we didn't – it was disease and there were conflicts and everything else. The Beothuks became extinct after a while. What a great day it would be today if we had them around to teach us the land and to teach us to respect the land. I know that they always did respect the land.

I know one time when you'd go hunting or you'd go in fishing to a pond or whatever you'd see people leaving tin cans, beer bottles and everything else. Today, we're more educated. We're better people today. We take everything out now and make sure that our land – that's what those people were about. They were all about the land and what they did.

This is important in our history. It is important as who we are as a people to make sure we keep the Beothuks. They were the first ones here on this Island. They were the first ones to believe and look at the beauty that we have. Like I said, up on the side of Red Indian Lake where they were, I drive in the road – and I didn't know this until the other day – and we always pass by this bridge. I didn't know it was the niece.

Shanawdithit is the name of a big river that runs into Red Indian Lake. It's a great spot to go fishing. We usually take a break there all the time going in. We always stop at the Shanawdithit Bridge on the way into our cabin. Hopefully this year when I go up I'll be able to tell people the story of how it was the niece of the two descendants that were killed.

It's a tragic story that was told here today. It's a very tragic story when you see a husband protecting his wife and his child and got killed. The child apparently died a couple of days later through malnutrition. That's a very sad story. I

think the age is now – she was 24 when she died of tuberculosis. We are not really sure. I think maybe a couple of years older, but two young people died and a young child died. It's sad. No matter what happens in any part of society, that's a sad story.

It's important that we do what we're doing here today. I respect everybody that got up and spoke today. I really believe that this is an important part of our history.

I really commend the Member for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune because she is the one that really wanted to push this through, along with the people in her district that this means a lot to. It means a lot to me as a person. It means a lot to people in our society.

I hope that education – that the children in our schools will learn about the Beothuks and will learn something from the Beothuks. Learn that our land is so important to us. It's so important that we keep our rivers, our streams and everything that we do – keep it clean. Keep it the way it was when they were here.

I can only imagine when I go in on top of the hill and I look back at Long Lake and Victoria Lake. I make the trip every year to go up and just have a look at it because it's so beautiful. How lucky were they to be able to be there and be able to see this and see the beautiful area that they had. Then we came and, like I said, that's history.

This is an important day for everybody in this province. It's an important day for the history of Newfoundland and Labrador. I really encourage government to put this on the priority list.

Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, you look at things like this and they can say, oh yes, it's a nice thing to do; it's a great thing to do. There are a lot of important issues in our province, but I urge the government to really put this on the forefront because it's important. It's who we are as a people. It's important to Newfoundland and Labrador to make sure that people know where we came from, who was here and enjoyed it.

I believe we live in the most beautiful province in Canada. I think we live in the greatest part of this country. If you ask me to go on a trip

anywhere else in the world, or ask me to go to Red Indian Lake fishing or moose hunting, I'm gone to Red Indian Lake. It's a beautiful area of the province. We're very fortunate to live here.

I think that knowing who was there before is so important. Shanawdithit; now every time that I cross the Shanawdithit River I'll know it's a part of our history and I'll know the importance of Red Indian Lake to the Beothuks.

Like I said, I told a story about a gentleman that I knew. He's passed now. His history and the love of the land – he explained to me how they used to do the fur trapping and how they had canoes. They portaged from one area to another area. They'd start off probably in January, and by the time they got down it was March. They'd have their big slew of pelts and furs and whatever they could hunt over there. It's important. It's an important part that we keep the history of Newfoundland alive.

I really want to applaud the Member. I want to thank Mi'sel Joe for putting such an effort into this and making sure that this is done. I want to emphasize to the government that this is an important part of Newfoundland's history. It's very important that we continue and make sure that this happens because we're bringing people home to the province that they deserve to be home in.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: If the Member for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune speaks now, she shall close debate on this private Member's resolution.

Seeing no further speakers, I recognize the Member for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm filled with great pride for the support shown here in this hon. House today for the efforts of Chief Mi'sel Joe to repatriate Demasduit and Nonosbawsut back to their native land. I would like to thank the Members for Torngat Mountains, Conception Bay South, Placentia West – Bellevue, Conception Bay East – Bell Island, St. John's East – Quidi Vidi, Cartwright

– L'Anse au Clair and Cape St. Francis for your very informative and interesting speeches this afternoon in support of this motion, Mr. Speaker.

As many of the speakers alluded to, repatriation is a very complicated process. As the Member for Torngat said, it takes a lot of work by a lot of people for a lot of years to achieve repatriation. I think we're well underway now with respect to trying to see that Demasduit and Nonosbawsut are returned home, but we have a lot of work left to do ahead of us. I think we all agree that none of us are going to give up until we are successful, Mr. Speaker.

The next step that has to be taken now is for the federal government to make a formal request to Scotland for the return of the remains to parallel along with ours provincially, Mr. Speaker. If the first request isn't agreed to by Scotland, then I think our stance should be, both provincial and nationally, send another, send another and send another. The federal government must be persistent until we achieve success.

As I alluded to when I did my opening address to the motion, I referred to a motion that made its way to the floor from the Scottish Parliament just last year. If I may, Mr. Speaker, I would like to read that same motion into our House here today.

It reads: "That the Parliament notes that the remains of Chief Nonosbawsut and his wife, Demasduit, two of the last members of the extinct Beothuk tribe of Canada, are held in the collection of the National Museum of Scotland; recognises the growing campaign in Canada for the repatriation of these remains, which are of religious, cultural and ethnic significance to many; commends the work being done by Chief Mi'sel Joe of the Miawpukek First Nation to achieve that end, and, while urging the Scottish Government to ensure the museum accedes to the request now made by Chief Mi'sel Joe in the spirit of common humanity and respect for the dead, also recognizes previous good work by the museum and other Scottish institutions in respecting those circumstances in which the rights and wishes of communities, countries or cultures can override established policy on the integrity and maintenance of collections

particularly where human remains and religious artefacts are concerned.”

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, that motion didn't carry; however, I do thank them for their efforts, and hopefully through continued efforts in this province and this country, with agreement from Scotland, someday soon we will see those remains returned. We certainly look forward to working with them in that regard until it does happen.

We've talked a lot here today about why it should happen. It's hugely important, of course, the historical significance in and of itself. What's even more poignant to the larger discussion is these are human beings and they deserve respect and dignity. These bones should be returned, if for no other reason than that they were taken from a sacred burial site. Let's not lose sight of that most important fact, Mr. Speaker.

Beothuks played a significant role in our provinces rich history. We owe it to ourselves and to future generations to ensure our heritage is preserved, appreciated and respected, with an emphasis on respect, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to, once again, thank everyone in the House who spoke today to this debate. I thank Members opposite, and I trust the new Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and his parliamentary assistant will do everything they can from an administrative point of view to ensure this advances. They can rest assured I will continue to lobby them on a regular basis, as will Mi'sel Joe. By working together, all Members from all parties of this hon. House, we will achieve success because we have determined we're not going to stop until we do.

If anything, I think all of us have strengthened our resolve even more. So let us continue this effort together, Mr. Speaker, in earnest, let's do the right thing, and let's bring Demasduit and Nonosbawsut home.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

I declare the motion carried.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. A. PARSONS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, just prior to this House adjourning for the day, I'd like to announce that Bills 7 and 8 did receive Royal Assent this afternoon.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: It being Private Members' Day and no further business, the House stands adjourned until 2 o'clock tomorrow, being budget day.