

Silver Cross mother Mrs Hilda Kolman, Mel Arnold, Member of Parliament for North Okanagan-Shuswap, Eric Foster, Member of the Legislative Assembly for Vernon-Monashee, Victor Cumming, Mayor of Vernon, my fellow veterans, ladies and gentlemen,

George Price was from Moose Jaw, SK. He was 25 years old when he was killed in action, shot by a sniper in the village of Ville sur Haine in Belgium. Despite only being a private soldier, he had volunteered to lead a patrol to clear buildings of enemy machine guns overlooking his battalion position. As he pursued the retreating Germans, he was shot and a minute later died in the arms of a Belgian nurse. It was 1058 in the morning on Monday November the 11th 1918. Two minutes later at exactly 11 am, the armistice came into effect and the war was over. Tragically though thankfully, George was the last Canadian and Commonwealth soldier killed in action as part of the war to end all wars, we now know as the First World War.

We remember him.

As we gather here today on the 100th anniversary of his death and the armistice, we are here to remember him and all 68000 of his colleagues who gave their lives in that war. They came from all across Canada and indeed my own Regiment, your local Regiment, The British Columbia Dragoons, then known as 2nd Canadian Mounted Rifles, suffered 732 killed and 2276 wounded of a total of just over 4500 men who served in the Regiment. As the Okanagan's own Regiment, many were men from this Valley. When we consider that at the time Vernon was the largest town in the valley with a population of only around 3000, we can surely see the devastating impact that war must have had on this community, across the country and on the world as a whole.

We remember them.

Sadly, the armistice did not mark the end of war. WW1 was not the war to end all wars. Despite a welcome downward trend in deaths caused by war, since then, a further 49000 Canadian service members have made the ultimate sacrifice on operations overseas in WW2, Korea, UN operations and in Afghanistan.

We remember them.

The most recent of those was 31 year old Sgt Andrew Doiron, from Moncton NB, a member of the Canadian Special Operations Regiment killed in Iraq on Operation IMPACT on 6 April 2015 .

We remember him.

The commemoration of the armistice has become an established ceremony in the last 100 years. But it is not just a commemoration of bravery and sacrifice. All of these brothers and sisters in arms deserve to be remembered not just because they died but because they lived prepared to make the most difficult choices and do the right thing irrespective of personal cost: as John Macrae's poem will tell us in minute: to take up the fight against the foe.

The valour of all service men and women is that in choosing to serve their country they have each freely written a blank cheque to the rest of their fellow citizens upon which they have promised to pay the nation on demand the sum of their lives. Veterans and soldiers do not judge us or the politics or the strategy of our country's interests but simply stand ready to act as we ask.

Duty and sacrifice are one side of this contract. But the other side is the responsibility laid on every one of us as Canadians to live each day that we are granted the privilege and gift of life here in a way that keeps faith with those who willingly sacrificed their lives. Passive memory once a year is not enough. We must strive to live by take active responsibility over everything we may positively impact: at home, in our communities and in the world. Our responsibility, our duty, is to be a good neighbour, to be a good citizen and continue to be prepared to make personal sacrifices in our collective interest as Canadians.

This is how we remember them.

Thank you very much.