Good Afternoon Comrades,

I hope everyone is taking care of yourselves, both physically and mentally, as we continue to do our part to stem the spread of the virus.  While we may be separated physically, we are still very much connected socially.

Updates for today:

**Nijmegen March 2020**

The Four Day Marches organization announced on April 21 that the 104th International Four Days Marches Nijmegen is cancelled as a result of the extension of the corona measures in the Netherlands. The Royal Canadian Legion’s 2020 Marches Nijmegen representative, Comrade Joan Cook, will remain our selection for the 2021 Marches and carry on her training for next year.  More info on the cancellation can be found <https://www.4daagse.nl/en/>.  A notice has been posted on the Legion COVID-19 page, communicated on social media and will be in the May issues of the Legion Debrief and Dispatch.

**Financial Assistance to Branches**

Since notice on branch financial assistance was circulated on 25 March, the federal government has announced a variety of potential funding options that branches may be eligible to apply for.  A summary will be circulated by week’s end.

**Provincial Conventions**

We are aware of two commands that are considering rescheduling their 2021 provincial convention to 2022 (and one command considering rescheduling their next one to 2025) so as not to conflict with the 2021 dominion convention.  If your command is undertaking such plans, can you please advise Comrade Tom and myself for information only.

For those commands considering a convention year change, GBL 1001 requires a provincial command to hold an annual or biennial convention; please know that DC C&L will be recommending a by-law amendment to DEC at the June Zoom videoconference to remove this requirement, thereby enabling a command to adjust their convention schedule as necessary.

**2020 Poppy Campaign and National Remembrance Day Ceremony**

Strictly as a planning measure should the situation necessitate, we have undertaken a review of how the Poppy Campaign could be impacted if operational restrictions and distancing limitations remain in place; we will investigate what form the campaign could take and what changes would be necessary to enable Canadians to donate to Poppy funds and receive a Poppy.  There are existing digital options (digital Poppy, donate online to Poppy fund) but how else can the Legion enable Canadians to remember and support Veterans in their community.  As information, New Zealand ANZAC commemorations (25 April) are cancelled country-wide and their Poppy Day collection is postponed.  Our operational preparedness is essential.

Similarly, physical distancing requirements, if still in force in November in all jurisdictions, will directly impact not only the national ceremony, but ceremonies across the country.  We must ensure that service and sacrifice is never forgotten and the Legion must be ready to guide Canadians.

**Legion HQ Re-Opening**

Currently, Legion HQ plans to re-open on 1 June but it will not instantly be business as usual.  As a result, I have directed a Workplace Re-Opening team be formed to commence work to establish workplace directives to govern the re-opening of the headquarters.  With input from all departments and sections, the team will explore the requirement for any physical workspace adjustments, limitation on the number of staff in each department at one time, physical distancing in common areas, visitors to the building, timelines, etc.

As information.

Stay healthy and be well,

Steven

Steven Clark

National Executive Director / Directeur exécutif national