

Attack in London brought back bad memories

By Bill Rea

Last week's attack on Westminster Bridge and Parliament in London, England, prompted expressions of sympathy from MPs in Ottawa.

A man drove a car into a group of pedestrians before launching a knife attack within the gates of Parliament. Five people were reported dead, including a police officer and the assailant himself.

The incident struck close to home to members of the Canadian Parliament, including Dufferin-Caledon MP David Tilson, who recalled the similar incident that took place in Ottawa in October 2014.

"It just seemed like yesterday when we had that fellow come into the House of Commons," Tilson recalled. "We were all locked down."

Tilson commented last Thursday that he was offering his condolences to the victims in London, adding a moment of silence had been held in the House of Commons in Ottawa that day.

A single gunman shot and killed Cpl. Nathan Crillo, 24, as he stood guard at the National War Memorial Oct. 22, 2014, then entered the Parliament Buildings, where shooting erupted.

Conservative MPs had been in their weekly caucus meeting when the shooting had started, and Tilson recalled at the time everyone was terrified. He remembered members barricading doors to the room, hustling then prime minister Stephen Harper to a side room and fashioning flag poles into spears in case the doors were breached.

He recalled last week what it felt like to be in lock-down all day, "not knowing what was going to happen to us."