

HANSARD

NOVA SCOTIA HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

STANDING COMMITTEE

ON

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Thursday, October 29, 1998

Committee Room 1

Group Captain Everett Baudoux

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Murray Scott (Chair)
Hon. Wayne Gaudet
Hon. Russell MacKinnon
Charles MacDonald
Frank Corbett
Peter Delefos
William Estabrooks
Gordon Balser
James DeWolfe

[Hon. Wayne Gaudet was replaced by Hyland Fraser.]
[Hon. Russell MacKinnon was replaced by Raymond White.]

In Attendance:

Darlene Henry
Legislative Committee Clerk

WITNESS

Group Captain Everett Baudoux, World War II Veteran



HALIFAX, THURSDAY, OCT. 29, 1998

STANDING COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS

9:00 A.M.

CHAIR
Murray Scott

THE CHAIR: We will call this meeting to order. We had a request from Mr. Britton in regard to the stained-glass windows. I believe Gordon Balser had an update for us last time and there were some questions the committee had in regard to their request for assistance from our committee. Darlene, they responded with the letter on the front?

DARLENE HENRY: Yes, the top one.

THE CHAIR: So Mr. Britton had written to the committee, as I said, and he was looking for support from our committee. The letter on the front explains the concerns the committee had. I guess the committee didn't want to get involved in a push and shove with the people of Shannon Park. So maybe the members would just like to brief themselves on the letter from Mr. Britton and decide what direction you want to take. Any suggestions from any of the members on what direction we should take from here?

It appears the windows in question are presently in a building in Shannon Park but maybe they are not as important to that area as they are where they originated from. I guess we were afraid to get into a conflict.

CHARLES MACDONALD: Have we talked to Shannon Park, is it possible, or Shannon Park, wait now, get the parks right, Cornwallis. They came from Cornwallis, didn't they?

THE CHAIR: Yes. But apparently it is not on the base. It is in the chapel at the apartment complex.

JAMES DEWOLFE: The fact is the windows are just sort of over the other

windows on the inside, overlapping them. It sounds like they are bigger than the actual windows that are in the chapel but that's beside the point. I guess it makes it easier for removal. It sure would be nice to get them back to the building where they originated; it is going to be a museum.

THE CHAIR: Mr. White.

RAYMOND WHITE: Who is Mr. John Britton? I wasn't at a previous meeting so I am just curious.

THE CHAIR: He would be one of the people that organized, I guess we don't have the other letter.

RAYMOND WHITE: So I would assume he is an executive member of the museum group.

THE CHAIR: Yes, I believe it was the local group, they started this museum at Cornwallis, on the base, and the building was turned over to them. These windows were paid for through government finances, and through money that was raised through graduates of Cornwallis. If you read the information that has been passed there, they were removed because the base was closed and now it has been turned into a museum and these people would like to get these stained-glassed windows and put them back in their original home.

I guess we had asked him about Shannon Park, Charlie, just on your request and I guess the information is there. I don't know how the members feel. Should we contact them in writing and ask them if they oppose the return of these windows or do we just simply write a letter in support of it, or what are the members' wishes?

JAMES DEWOLFE: Well, as it says here, the windows were actually stolen from the storage area or removed by somebody.

THE CHAIR: Just for the record, if you would just indicate you want to speak. Mr. DeWolfe.

JAMES DEWOLFE: Well, it sort of indicates here that the windows were removed from the storage area. They were just put in storage for safe keeping, which was the proper thing to do, until the building had been vacated. It is not in use anymore, so it was more or less for safe and secure storage. I think we would be in order to write to request the windows be removed from their present location and returned to Cornwallis.

FRANK CORBETT: I would second that motion.

RAYMOND WHITE: On the topic, Mr. Chairman, not knowing the people involved personally, there are some strong accusations made of things being actually stolen, so would it be more appropriate before the committee acts to contact officials from Veterans Affairs, ask for a chronological explanation of why we reached the point where we are now, knowing that the committee is cognizant of the concerns raised by the Cornwallis people, and then make a decision after that, because there doesn't appear to be any rationale available to the committee as to why it is one location versus the other. I can certainly understand why the people of Cornwallis are concerned because that is part of their history.

THE CHAIR: You weren't here for the previous conversation?

RAYMOND WHITE: No.

FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Chairman, it appears by the flow of information here that - especially the letter from the Office of the Minister of National Defence, from Randall McCauley - the one qualifier that they wanted to get those windows returned was to set up a museum in the chapel, and it seems that that has been fulfilled. This being accurate, I certainly agree in some ways with Mr. White that it appears that we are hearing one side of the story, but, this being accurate, I would certainly support that these windows be returned to the former Protestant Chapel in Cornwallis. Again, similar to Mr. White, I wasn't here for these meetings and not knowing Mr. Britton, there is no statement of what his actual position is, if he is just an interested party or if he is chairman of that committee. That is just from my being absent.

THE CHAIR: The letter of Mr. McCauley, September 1st, states that, "The Minister has directed that they remain there until the disposition of a maritime museum in Cornwallis is known."

JAMES DEWOLFE: It is pretty straightforward.

RAYMOND WHITE: Would it be in order, Mr. Chairman, now that we know the disposition of the museum at Cornwallis, for the committee to contact the department and say, we have been informed that a museum is now up and running, do they intend to carry out the original intent of their correspondence? Then from there the committee members who were present for the original discussions could follow up on that at your next regular meeting.

JAMES DEWOLFE: Mr. Chairman, that was the intent of my motion to write requesting that under the circumstances that the windows now be returned and the original intent be addressed. We could send a copy of the original letter with it.

THE CHAIR: The motion by Mr. DeWolfe, seconded by Mr. Corbett, is that the

committee send a letter to the Office of the Minister of National Defence and cc a copy of that to Mr. Britton as well as a copy of the letter from Mr. McCauley, asking if they do intend to adhere to the original decision regarding the museum at Cornwallis. Is that it?

JAMES DEWOLFE: Well, I think we should recommend that they be returned and ask them to adhere to their original intent.

THE CHAIR: Are we ready for the question? Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The next area of business was our next meeting date, we might as well set that while we are waiting as well. Mrs. Henry has set aside November 19th, where Ms. Babineau and Mr. Gallant from Veterans Affairs Canada will be appearing to make presentations. Is everyone okay with that date? From 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

RAYMOND WHITE: A question, Mr. Speaker. Two of our regular members are Cabinet Ministers who regularly meet on Thursday. I suppose there are no days left in the week for committees to meet?

DARLENE HENRY: No, they are all booked.

RAYMOND WHITE: I suspected that, thank you.

[9:27 a.m. The committee recessed.]

[9:38 a.m. The committee reconvened.]

EVERETT BAUDOUX: Mr. Chairman, I apologize. Unfortunately, the gentleman who was to accompany me this morning had a problem arriving at our rendezvous, so I am bearing the load alone this morning. Mr. Wright from the Legion was to be with me but, as I said, he couldn't make it.

THE CHAIR: We would like to welcome you, Group Captain Baudoux. Normally what we do is we go around and introduce ourselves for the record.

[The members and observers introduced themselves.]

THE CHAIR: Mr. Baudoux, I understand you have a presentation to make to us this morning. Whenever you are ready, feel free to begin.

EVERETT BAUDOUX: Thank you. What I would like to do, if I could, this morning is - I have many notes and I have written on veterans' affairs for years, and if I

would leave all these with you, it would keep you reading for the next week and you don't need that, I am sure - I would prefer to make a verbal presentation to you, and I would appreciate it if it were to be taped, because there are probably some things that I would like to make reference to, that it would be nice if you wish to refer back to them. I think that would be the most convenient way. With that, I will launch into what I have prepared to give you this morning.

If I may start off by saying that many of the things that I will probably say this morning will sound fairly critical to you. I hope they don't sound like complaints, but they are criticisms that come from veterans affairs and points of view that over the years have come into our lives, because as time has gone on - and I am not quite sure what your total terms of reference are, but I know veterans' affairs in general is the responsibility of the federal government, but on the whole I know that there are one or two areas of involvement that do concern the provincial government in which the provincial government is very much involved. I would like to touch on those later and be more specific at that time.

Again, I am not too sure how people identify a veteran. A veteran in my mind probably is somebody roughly around my age with the same colour of hair or no hair and probably came out of service in World War II or the Korean Conflict. Perhaps if I say a few words as to how I see myself as a veteran and this is not to embellish my views of things to too great an extent or myself in particular, but I probably am the most senior veteran of World War II from Pictou County. I don't know how much further afield I can go, but I say this because I was literally an officer in the Royal Air Force flying as a pilot when war broke out so I was there the first day of the war.

I should say too that one of the things that is probably not generally known or appreciated, perhaps appreciated is a better way of saying it, is that there were 2,000 of us Canadians who were flying in the Royal Air Force at the outbreak of the war. Of that 2,000, only half of us survived. Of the 2,000, over 600 of us received gallantry awards from the King. This group of people has never been identified as having any special merit, but the fact is that if we Canadians were not in the Royal Air Force at that time, it could have made a very significant difference in the outcome of the flying side of the war in the early days, including the Battle of Britain.

I do not think anybody wants to spend much time looking for applause or kudos. That is not the purpose. The purpose is to identify what this Canadian involvement was, which probably identifies veterans in one sense. I know a lot more about not just the air side of it but from the ground forces side of it, because my two brothers were also in the war. My older brother went up through Italy, the whole campaign there, and also through the campaign in Europe. I take pride in saying - and it is probably not known - that he was the first Allied Forces person to set foot back on the beaches of Dieppe. It was just

one of those things; he survived.

I think that, probably, the recognition of people has taken a strange kind of feel. Many of the veterans today, myself included, go around to the schools, which is quite proper, and try to talk to the young people. We talk to them in terms of pride, pride of our country, the need to contribute to your country, to be prepared to sacrifice something for your country, for the way of life we have here. If you are not prepared to do this, we will certainly lose it. That is the message we try to give. Not to glorify conflict or violence; this is the wrong way to go, we all know that.

We also know that the world and the way of mankind, human nature and so forth, has not improved to a very great extent. Perhaps to some extent, through the United Nations efforts and so on. We know that there is conflict all over the world, and to think that we will not have to sacrifice to maintain the kind of life and society that we believe in, that we will not have to have military forces available, that we will not have to make significant contributions again, I think is a fallacy that we would pay dearly for, if we accepted it.

I should say to you, I will try not to go on too long in this vein. I don't want to pontificate, but at the same time, please stop me if you have heard enough. Anyway, I will go on.

I mentioned the 600 Canadians who happened to be in the Royal Air Force, and of course, as the war went on, as we know, thousands by thousands, we went across the ocean and involved ourselves in World War II, in the cause of freedom. But the young people today seem to turn out on Remembrance Day and take an interest, and they do ask very pertinent and pointed questions. Some of them are very hard to answer, because I don't know if one can describe with any real depth of feeling what it is like to be at war over even a short period of time, but a long period of time of five years or so that we had.

I think that people who were in the trenches, in the direct conflict, in the firing lines, and this is in all three forces, the Navy, Army and Air Force - we would be lying if we didn't say that there were many days when you said to yourself, is this my last day? I don't know how one describes this, or how one can talk about this in terms of wartime. You would wish it on no one. I say I don't know if one can describe it. That is probably part of it.

I think many of my friends, some more than others, have carried this through the rest of their days. Sometimes I think of my close associates and when I say close associates, I mean the Canadians that I went overseas with. When I joined the Royal Air Force in 1938, there were nine of us. I was the sole survivor of that lot. I would like to say that there is good fortune and luck in most things in life, and I happened to be the

person who had that going with me. Other people had great skills.

Then there were people who survived the war, truly great heroes. Ones I think of here, when I used to come to Halifax - and I would be involved here frequently - was Don Curren, who was the person who started the paraplegic organizations here in Nova Scotia and really was one of the leading figures in Canada in this role. He was blown up flying a Warwick, which flew rescue boats out to get people who were surviving in the ocean. He was injured in a crash in a bad situation, and of course, was a paraplegic for the rest of his life. He went through law school here, a tremendous man. He died here in Camp Hill two years ago.

Another gentleman by the name of Lee Perry, from the South Shore. This 19 year old sergeant was blown up in Italy. He told me, you know, then they put me on a stretcher on the jeep, and they started to shell the jeep, so the guys died underneath the jeep and I was on top of it. That was his humour. Again, a gallant person who paid all those years for his country.

I don't know, it is not strange to me, not really, but the most highly decorated person among the Commonwealth people of World War II died here in Halifax. In his latter years, he had been a member of the Royal Canadian Air Force. The most highly decorated man. He had three Distinguished Service Orders and three Distinguished Flying Crosses and various other awards from the United States, France and other countries. John (Bob) Braham. The leading night fighter pilot of World War II on our side.

I attended his funeral service - I should say that he donated his body to medical science, by the way - and I think there were 50 of us present. I don't think John would ever be out looking for applause or praise or kudos of any kind, that was not him. He was the most generous and decent man; he was Commandant on Citadel Hill in his latter years. Very few people here know this, I don't know if it is important or not, but it is interesting, if you go to the museums in London, England, you will find among the memorials the Battle of Britain; there is Bob - we called him Bob - there are his awards and his medals. The most decorated man on our side in World War II. He resided here in Halifax and it is not known.

Also I think that probably something has happened to us in recognition of people like him. You may recall, possibly two or three months back, there was a Maclean's Magazine issue in which it listed a series of people who were probably some of the most important and meaningful Canadians in our history. The leading figure was Governor General Georges Vanier. Those of you who knew him, know he was a gentleman of the highest quality. A most gallant man, he lost a leg in conflict in World War I and was awarded the Distinguished Service Order.

I looked at that Maclean's Magazine article, and I don't think many people probably looked at it the same way I did, but I knew him, and I was a great admirer of him. The highest award he had was the Distinguished Service Order. I hold the same award but that was the highest award he had. He had a Knight of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem but that in precedence, I could tell you where it is, it is something like 30th down the line. You start off the precedence with the Victoria Cross, George Cross, Cross of Valour, Order of Merit and then a series of things until you get down to No. 7 which is Commander of the Order of Military Merit and then there are the various Orders of Canada and so on.

What kind of choked up a bit with me was when I pick up the paper and see our millionaire sports figures - and I like to watch sports the same as everybody else - and find if you are a splendid entertainer making a lot of money or if you are doing things in the public eye, there is a chance that you will be getting an Order of Canada. What I have said is that they have watered down. A Distinguished Service Order now is No. 13 below these various other Orders of Merit which are now given for administrative functions. I must say that they are for armchair generals and so on. Again, I say this to my friends and I hope they are still my friends but I say there is something here with our values and the demonstration of our values which probably needs to be looked at. I feel a little bit ashamed that General Georges Vanier had gradually been watered down to this lower position and all of these other people are of a higher rank of order.

Also we did a lot of other things. There are a lot of things on our current list and by the way, the Privy Council passed an Order in Council 2307 in 1990. The point is that a lot of the awards that were given and are still on the same listing of priority, made a distinction between the people who were officers and people who were other ranks. This was wrong. The British had the same thing. I tell you that people I have served with and who served with me, who were members of the dam-busters, which you may know a bit about, there was a very famous raid of WWII with Lancasters. One of the people who was a pilot and a survivor of that, Ken Brown, got a Distinguished Conduct Medal and that is about 31st down the line of awards.

In recent years the British have done something which I think probably we should have a look at. They said, look, I don't care if he is a private, a corporal, a sergeant, or if he is a general, if he does certain things he deserves the same order of recognition. So what they have done is done away with this distinction so if you do a certain thing they give a certain award. In Canada, we have done nothing of that nature. I don't know if anybody has thought about it or mentioned it but when I look at my comrades, veterans, and there are a mixture, we made no distinction of being an officer or someone else, you know, we all have the same feeling.

What I am saying is, there is a political lack of awareness about some of these

things. I am not just talking about the past, I am talking about what one should do about the future to make this more reasonable and fair in all respects to the people who are in our Services and who go on peacekeeping missions or whatever they may be, there should be no distinction. But the distinction is still there if we make these awards in our Canadian system. I would like to see it changed.

On occasions, on Remembrance Day, I think that people do try to reflect a little bit on what has happened in the past and a little bit on our values, our national values, about a sense of responsibility to our country.

[10:00 a.m.]

I am going to reflect for just one moment. When I told you I joined the Air Force in 1938, more came along, all these people from Canada, young people at the ages of anywhere from 18 to whatever, they did not stop, at that time, none of us stopped and sort of tried to understand all of the higher values of life, the morals of this and that, and freedom and tyranny and so forth. We went, I suppose because there were two things. It was the thing to do because people said it was the thing to do, go and join the forces, go and fight for your country, but as for understanding it in a profound sort of way, philosophically, that is not true. We went because there was a sense of adventure, challenge and all these things that youth responds to, but the decision to put these lives, many, many lives of our countrymen at stake was a political decision so people depend upon the right decisions to be made by our political governors.

That is an extremely serious decision and today it comes to us very often through, should we be doing peacekeeping here or not? As I said earlier, we have conflict all over the world, quite often it is not peacekeeping; it is peacemaking, if one can, and one cannot do this alone in the world today. It has to be done in a unified way with alliances and so forth, the United Nations and so on.

I really think there is no real award or ongoing recognition other than we will try to take care of you medically, to a veteran. I don't think there is. I have never had any sort of trip anywhere, I have never had anything to do with my service as a travel somewhere or something and I don't want it. I have been to reunions of some of my old people and organizations. I pay my way because I can afford to pay my way. A lot of veterans cannot. I think it would be generous and thoughtful if our country could find some way for some of the veterans in their later years to have the financial ability to travel or have their families come to visit them. Families are spread out across the country. This is a togetherness in the later years. Some little generosity of this sort would be very meaningful. There is not much.

I also suppose I have a little bit, not of cynicism, but amusement. During the war

if you were overseas, there was no income tax. Mind you, that didn't mean much to me anyway. It wouldn't have come to a hill of beans but at the same time there was no income tax. I am wondering, too, again, in diminishing years and diminishing disposable income, which most of our veterans are in that situation, if probably some measure of income tax credit wouldn't be a thoughtful thing to do. We are not going to be here for much longer, so it wouldn't break the country. I think there are some things that could be done to show in a meaningful, positive way some appreciation for the people who in the past, and in our current life of peacekeeping activities and so on, probably deserve a little bit.

I have a Distinguished Flying Cross. Again, forgive me, this is not that I am looking for any credit, but the reason I have it is because a lot of people did things for me that allowed me to do things for them so I carried the can for certain things. That was all right, but, you know, a Military Cross, a Distinguished Flying Cross, Distinguished Service Cross, these are various awards and Distinguished Flying Medals and so on, all these kinds of medals, if you apply, they will give you \$50 a year. They should scrap this on the books, this is an insult. I do not know anybody who had ever applied for it. This sounds like a scold, I don't mean it to be like that. I hope this is informative as to kind of what we should be thinking.

I am now going to probably tell you that there are two concerns that we need to watch. One is how we spend the Veterans' Affairs budget. It is very difficult to know how much is going on administration and how much is going in the final bit to the person who needs the care, whether it be in a care situation or in money that comes out of pocket for injuries or some sort of thing of that nature. It seems that as our numbers diminish and possibly the cost of looking after us increases at the same time so I don't know where the balance is but it seems that the administrative overhead keeps going up. To find out exactly what best use is being made of this money, I think we really need to be better informed. It is very difficult to get the information in specific, easy-to-understand terms.

In the province you have a very specific responsibility and that is that although the federal government largely finances the health care of the veterans, as in such places as the Queen Elizabeth II-Camp Hill, the province is responsible for the delivery system. That, I think, one has to watch fairly carefully. There are things in it that probably the province can perhaps make better use of and advantage of, I don't know, I think the experts should look at this very carefully.

In this matter of, for instance, veterans' beds, every now and again there are a few more needed. The federal government says the provincial government provides them and they divide them out around. I would encourage people to be very conscientious when things like this happen. You want to make sure that we put aside at least, as best possible, political influences because we all want to serve our own neighbourhood, our own

communities and our own constituencies, this is natural and everybody is aware of this. When these things are happening and the looking after of such things as veterans' beds, I think you should be very careful that people sort of say, yes, there are so many veterans in a part of Cape Breton, where is the best place to put beds so their families can come and visit with them on, at least a daytime basis, or down in western Nova Scotia.

At one time it was all at Camp Hill here and it was very difficult. People had to come down here from all over the province to see their father, brother or whatever it may be in Camp Hill, it was a lot of travelling. I know coming down today I left at 6:00 a.m. and tried not to break the speed limit and arrived here very late, which I have said I am sorry for, but not all people can do this in today's world. If you had to come down even for the day from a place like Antigonish, it is going to cost you \$200.

Another thing is, as you know there has been a bit of a protest very recently in the last week or so about the parking fees in parking lots of hospitals. At the Aberdeen Hospital, the veteran and the Legion people have protested this. It is something, I think, that needs to be thought about very carefully because a lot of the people see this as another tax and see it as constraint in access to a public institution. One of the persons who was speaking to me about it said, when I go in I have to go in twice a day and at this time, if they proceed as they are intending to, it will definitely be \$2.00, but we know that over time this escalates.

Also, I am not too sure but that this kind of thing may do a form of harm in a community, and the Legion, this is what they were concerned with. The zone commander there spoke to me about it, and that is that the hospital has to have a sense of community belonging, of being part of our structure, in the community, that we relate to. I sit on the Aberdeen Hospital Foundation Board and we managed, by squeezing people and going around and wringing out their pocketbooks and so forth, to get together about \$7 million in a trust fund. It has been well spent. It has been well looked after, putting equipment in at the hospital and so on that they need, but I am not too sure that the response in the community is going to be enhanced when they go out to look for more donations. People are going to say, you know, this is another institution. It alienates them from their sense of involvement, I think, in this institution.

These kind of things, I think, people want to reflect on very carefully. Instead of having the responsibility, a large sense of responsibility for our own welfare and taking care of our own institutions as much as we can locally, they start to say it all belongs in Halifax; it is their responsibility. This was a further parking, an alienation.

I have gone on long enough, Mr. Chairman. I hope I haven't bored you to tears yet.

I have written on various aspects of Remembrance Day over the years, and I had the great honour one time of being the parade commander in Ottawa, in the national parade. Parades, I always think, should be enjoyed. When the dog comes out to bite you, well, you know, that's part of it. As the parade commander on this occasion - I was an Air Force officer and I know behind me was a mile or so of Army people and Navy people, and other Air Force people - in front of the parade, by precedence and protocol, at the very front was the veteran of the earliest conflict still alive and he was a veteran of the Boer War. So as we struck off from the Cenotaph to go past the saluting base, he put on his most reaching pace, which was about 20 inches, so I, behind, was marking time for about a quarter of a mile, and I am sure there were probably 1,200 people behind me saying, who is that idiot of an Air Force officer up here who thinks he can lead a parade, but I think it was quite proper that this gentleman, he made it past the saluting base and saluted the Governor General and so forth, and I thought good on you. You know, that's great.

We don't want to be sour about everything, criticizing. So I believe that we have to watch these things, the creeping things, that infect our society. I have a little note here. I think I wrote it in the early morning, when I sit down with my pencil, and sometimes write things, and I wonder whether I should really put them in the fire or the wastepaper basket occasionally but I happened to keep this one.

What I have said, and I hope you won't be offended, is: The ever-continuing enemies to our society, the enemies of intolerance, power seeking, self-interest and connivance in all its forms, are with us as a malignancy to high moral principles and cohesive ethics of a free society. They can be equally destructive as the most violent tyrannies of despots. You will honour the remembrance of our veterans by your commitment to confront these evils of every day.

I would like to leave that with you. Thank you very much for listening to me.

THE CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Baudoux. What we usually do now is open up to the members for questions.

Mr. White.

RAYMOND WHITE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to relate to you a little story I think that reflects some of the observations you have made this morning. I want to say it has been the most interesting presentation I have heard in a long time and it is one that has come from the heart.

EVERETT BAUDOUX: Thank you.

RAYMOND WHITE: I can remember a few years ago when the referendum was

on in Quebec and there was the large rally held in which Canadians from all over the country in their own particular way showed what Canada meant to them. As we were walking up to the large assembly where the stage was and all the speeches would be held, I observed sitting on one side near a cenotaph two veterans who were there very proudly wearing their medals, indicating the contribution they had made for our country.

I thought it was important to get their perspective of what was happening to our country. The observation that one of the gentlemen made was, little did we believe that today we would be fighting again for our country after all the sacrifices we had made. I can think of no other group than the Legion as a cornerstone of what it means to be a Canadian and why we who did not participate in the wars have to be ever vigilant. I think you conveyed that very clearly to us today, again, reinforced. As a former educator and working 25 years with the Boy Scouts of Canada, one of the phrases we use is Duty to God and Queen. I have always used the Legion, its members, and what you represent here today, as the best example of duty to God, Queen and country.

Having said that, I just want to share with you my thoughts personally of the respect that I have, and I am sure many Canadians do, for what you have done for our country but I think, more importantly, is we need someone like yourselves to remind us from time to time that being Canadian is more than just saying we are a Canadian, that you have to be able to make that commitment and for the challenge that you give to each of us individually. As legislators, I think it is important from time to time to have a reality check with someone like yourself.

I want to flip over to one of the concerns, if you don't mind, Mr. Chairman, I think it is important to share with you just some of my personal thoughts. You mentioned about the allocation of veteran beds throughout the province and I know there is a new wing in what used to be the Sutherland-Harris Memorial Hospital. I think when the allocation was made, it tried to focus on the number of veterans that were in the Pictou County area. It is my understanding, I think in Sherbrooke and other areas that I represent through Guysborough County, there are designated beds that try to reflect the number of veterans in an area. What you are saying is that instead of letting small 'p' politics, or whatever kind of politics play, we should do an evaluation of where the veteran concentration is and make sure that we allocate the beds in such a way that it meets those needs. Is this the point I think you are trying to make?

EVERETT BAUDOUX: Yes, indeed. I think it can be done in a very objective and analytical way. I don't think it is difficult. May I just enlarge just one wee little bit. It is only a few short years ahead and we will have no veterans to fill those beds. I think now is the time where the people who make decisions as to what happens to these facilities in the future, they should start to decide if there is to be some special designation of use for these things. We should start to decide now. We should confer with

the Legion people and not have this become objects of a little bitter contest and growing irritants as time goes on because they will become available. They are excellent facilities. There probably are people in our society who deserve some special final care. I think people should sit down and start to address themselves to this problem now, not until it festers later. Pardon me for that interjection.

RAYMOND WHITE: One final comment, Mr. Chairman. You define in a certain way what you considered to be a veteran. You were talking about a group that you are associated with. How does that relate to the Legion's description of veterans in a larger context?

EVERETT BAUDOUX: I belong to the Legion. I belong to the Air Force Association and, you know, the way it relates really is by almost personal contact. We get to know each other in our area and we attend each other's functions. We support each other and so on. That is probably the best ideal. It is probably the original thing that put the Legion together. Now, I suppose there is only a relatively small percentage of veterans in the Legion. This is demographics, which is just telling us we are falling by the wayside. I attended a service for ex-Mayor Ernie Jordan of Pictou the other day. Ernie and I went to school together and played football together. We are old friends. All of that group of people there, there were some from the Army and some from the Navy and some from the Air Force. We all knew each other, but the Legion itself has been a contributor when you look at what they have contributed in dollar value to their communities. I can tell you, for instance, the Pictou County Legion gave the Aberdeen Hospital fund \$50,000. That is significant. I have not answered your question well, I am sorry, but in a general way I hope.

RAYMOND WHITE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it is a fitting tribute to mention a person such as Ernie Jordan because he is an example of how a Legion member comes back and continues to contribute to our communities in many ways.

HYLAND FRASER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank you for your presentation. It was wonderful. You had talked about the awards, I guess, the Order of Canada and various medals and distinguished awards that the country has presented through the years. If I read you correctly, you feel that some of those that were awarded years ago are being devalued now because of other people jumping in and doing different things. Was there ever a thought given to sort of, say, freezing those and then rather than having others come over and devalue them, to put them here and say, there will never be any of those again and leave them on a plateau of their own and let others go that way?

EVERETT BAUDOUX: I think there has been some discussion. What has to happen, I believe, is that the Chancellery makes the decision on these things, in Ottawa, and I think that this requires probably a query from the Privy Council or something like

this to review this whole matter. Remembrance Day will go by and the poppies disappear for another year, but you are quite right. The sort of things that perhaps they could consider is that they would say that all gallantry awards, whether they be military or civil, on some of the things like - our top award is a Cross of Valour. These are where people have put their lives on the line. Perhaps gallantry awards, awards for that sort of thing, whether they be military or civilian, perhaps should be worn on the left side or wherever it may be and all the other things, which I think are quite proper but are indications of service to one's society and country in other forms, perhaps should be on the other side. Perhaps the distinction is there and then we don't water down things like I said. It was Governor General Georges Vanier's thing that kind of disturbed me when I saw that number one man and as you said, it has been watered down and down. There is a whole series of awards. The Victoria Cross has to be won in conflict. The George Cross can be won in various ways, like some of the people who did bomb disposal. It wasn't conflict, but believe me, they earned it. Then you go down as you go through the whole series of things, down through the Orders of Companions, and Order of Canada, Order of Military Merit, and so on, Order of the Bath, Order of St. Michael and St. George, and so on. You go down, the next award given below the Victoria Cross, earned in conflict, is the Distinguished Service Order. That is what Governor General Georges Vanier had.

As I said, humbly I hope, I have one too, but you know, most of us, I think, believe that individuals on occasions rise above things and they get a Victoria Cross or whatever it may be. Most of us who have been honoured in any way have done it through the involvement of a lot of people, not ourselves. This is a recognition of greater than individual merit in my mind. Still, it has been watered down.

HYLAND FRASER: And I guess that is my concern. I have to apologize, because you don't think of things like this until people like you come forward. I guess I am just a reflection of society . . .

EVERETT BAUDOUX: It can't be a daily concern for everyone, we all know this. But at the same time . . .

HYLAND FRASER: I think there has to be a focus sometime, and as I said, there is never a better day than today to do things. I don't mean it in area of time, because when people become conscious of things, you either push them off and say, well, I won't worry about it this year, I will do something next year, or we do something about it. Well, that is in your mind. This is the time of year when it is either time to fish or cut bait, and if we leave it go, the awareness goes away and so do a number of your numbers go away, between now and next year. Eventually, it will just all go away.

EVERETT BAUDOUX: It is a time to question, I think.

HYLAND FRASER: Thank you very much for coming in.

EVERETT BAUDOUX: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Mr. DeWolfe.

JAMES DEWOLFE: Mr. Baudoux, I just want to say how delighted I am that you were able to address us today. I told my colleague and chairman, on the way over here this morning, that he wouldn't be let down by your address, and I was right. It was straight from the heart and certainly appreciated. I want to commend you for your accomplishments in your work that you have done on behalf of your fellow veterans, not only in Pictou County and Nova Scotia, but indeed in Canada. I know the work that you have done in support of providing us with the Veterans' Home in Pictou, where my father was among the first group to pass through that facility. I know Ernie Jordan was on the board of that facility, and I have attended services with him. In fact, he has a cottage just a couple of places away from my home.

At any rate, you brought up a couple of concerns that are current. The one on the parking is certainly current, and I have talked with zone commander on this Saturday past. I think you are right that it is the mindset in Pictou County that all of a sudden, it is not our hospital anymore if we have to start paying to use it. It was always our hospital. We are proud of our hospital in Pictou County, and certainly the community contributed so much to that facility through the years. I think that your comments on that are bang on, and without a doubt, fund-raising is going to become more difficult. The whole exercise is going to backfire on that.

I don't know if I asked you a question, but I guess I just made some comments and wish to thank you again for your address. I am looking forward to sitting down and talking with you more, on a more private basis some day on this subject.

EVERETT BAUDOUX: Thank you. It suddenly occurred to me, something that we have talked about very recently, and it is back on medals, I don't want to dwell on this but I think I should. It is simply this, we were having a discussion among some of the veterans in the county and one of the things that came up was somebody said, look, this is not right, it is part of our heritage and that is that the first Victoria Cross winner in our part of the world was a black gentleman by the name of William Hall. I don't know if there is another black person, certainly not from our country, who has ever been awarded the Victoria Cross other than William Hall. He was awarded with the Navy Victoria Cross which was quite unique because it had a blue ribbon up until about 1903 or 1904. But we have been trying to see if people can find out where William Hall's medal is because it should be a part of the Nova Scotia heritage. This was just something worthwhile. Sorry, if you let me go like this there are digressions all over the place.

[10:30 a.m.]

JAMES DEWOLFE: An interesting point.

THE CHAIR: Mr. MacDonald.

CHARLES MACDONALD: I just want to add my thanks to you for sharing with us today as well. My dad was overseas during the war, he was in the Navy and served on that side. He served on convoy duty during the war years and he never did speak a great deal about the war, he found out it hurt.

EVERETT BAUDOUX: I find that, Mr. MacDonald, is a common comment. People come to me and say, my father, my brother, my uncle, whatever it may be, they have never said much about what happened. It was something they never probably felt comfortable with because it was that traumatic over the years.

CHARLES MACDONALD: For him it was very difficult. Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Any further comments or questions? Mr. Baudoux, on behalf of the committee I certainly want to thank you for coming here today. As Mr. DeWolfe indicated on the way over, he said, I wouldn't be let down and I certainly was not. Just one comment though, I do believe you are very modest in your accomplishments in life and I hope, as Canadians, we will never face another war. We have to be ever reminded of what people, such as yourself, have done for us and our children and for their children. I think your modesty in your accomplishments is reflective of a true Canadian.

Just on a side note, you may or may not be aware, but we are proud of this, this non-partisan committee, through a member who is not here today, Mr. Balser, initiated the thank you postcards that are going to be sent out to all the veterans across this province, 13,000 cards are being sent out. It is quite a project and he worked on it for two months, he and his assistant. Essentially what will happen is that each veteran in this province will receive a thank you card from a Grade 6 student.

EVERETT BAUDOUX: That's nice.

THE CHAIR: You mentioned about going to the schools and speaking about this subject and I think it is very important that we make sure that our young children are well aware of what sacrifices were made for them, not for some of us but for all of us. It is projects like this that will keep the memories alive and it will keep it in the minds of our children exactly what has been done for them.

Again, I would like to thank you for taking the time to come here today. I found it very interesting and this committee is formulating a report for the House and out of that

report there will be recommendations made. Certainly, the recommendations that you have made here today will be taken into consideration and you will get a copy of that report when it is formulated. So again, thank you very much and we look forward to hearing from you in the future.

EVERETT BAUDOUX: Thank you for your attention and your kind comments. We sow the seeds and wait for things to grow.

THE CHAIR: Is there a motion to adjourn?

RAYMOND WHITE: I so move.

THE CHAIR: The meeting is now adjourned.

[The committee rose at 10:34 a.m.]