

HANSARD

NOVA SCOTIA HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

STANDING COMMITTEE

ON

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Thursday, January 31, 2002

Committee Room 1

Juno Beach Centre Association

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

William Langille (Chair)
John Holm
Jerry Pye
Mark Parent
David Hendsbee
David Wilson (Cape Breton East)
John Chataway
Cecil O'Donnell
Frank Chipman
Brian Boudreau

[Jerry Pye was replaced by John MacDonell]

In Attendance:

Darlene Henry
Legislative Committee Clerk

WITNESSES

Juno Beach Centre Association

Douglas Shanks
Associate Director

Emma Robar
Committee Member

Anna Green
Committee Member



HALIFAX, THURSDAY, JANUARY 31, 2002

STANDING COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS

9:00 A.M.

CHAIR
William Langille

THE CHAIR: Good morning. I would like to welcome our guests here this morning. I would ask that you introduce yourselves. Today we have with us Mr. Douglas Shanks, the Associate Director. We have Emma Robar, Committee Member, and Anna Green, Committee Member, for the Juno Beach Centre Association. I welcome you here this morning to the Committee on Veterans Affairs. At this time, I would ask that the members, starting with the member for Shelburne, introduce themselves.

[The committee members introduced themselves.]

THE CHAIR: I would like maybe if you could make your presentation to the committee. I know we are all interested in this very worthwhile endeavour.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: First of all, I will introduce myself. I am Douglas Shanks. I am one of the originals from our area of Nova Scotia, who came out with the Halifax Rifles on August 26, 1939, and I went right through everything, including Sandhurst Military College and ended up with the Grenadier Guards and went right through Europe and back home at 23, on September 28, 1945. I am in my 80th year. In a few months' time it will be my birthday for the 80th. I give you that because I am going to give you a background of why this committee was formed and who are part of it.

The committee was originally thought of in 1995 and it was brought about by a couple of gentlemen in Ontario who belonged to an association that brought Holland children to Canada and Canadian children to Holland every year from that time on. They found that the second and third generation of the chaperones knew nothing about what Canada had done to liberate their country. They thought, well, this is a darn shame. We have been after the governments - all Parties - since 1945 to do something about it and they didn't do a thing so we

decided by 1999 to form this association and get going.

Now in the literature, you will find the board of directors, the associate directors and the sponsor directors and all of those people donated money to start this campaign off. Since then, in 2000 we started the serious campaign, actually on January 1, 2000. They appointed me because of my background in fundraising, et cetera, for communities in Nova Scotia and because our last convention here was so successful that we had at the Royal Canadian Legion. We didn't have it here for 68 years because the people in Quebec, Ontario and Western Canada said we were too small down here but we showed them that we put on the best convention that they ever saw and it was the time of the disaster. We took them down and showed them where the planes went down and where the memorial was. We took them all over the province. They stayed here for the big ships and everything. Now they all want to come back here again, so they realize that we are alive down here too.

Anyway, going along with that, I was appointed for Nova Scotia and P.E.I. They asked me to promise them that I would help New Brunswick and now I have Nunavut under my wing, too. So I have a large mass of Canada that our committee is responsible for.

The program was started after we did a lot of research. The first research we did, the directors wrote and asked all the retail firms in Canada to give them some reason why they could help us and how big they could help us. They came along with \$5,000, \$10,000, \$25,000, \$50,000, \$100,000 and then one day a little fellow by the name of Mario Piloizzi came in and said I am an Italian Canadian. I am the CEO of Wal-Mart Canada and you asked me for a plan and I have a plan for you. He sat down and said, in every cash register across Canada I will sell a paper brick in memory of the fallen and those who served in the Second World War at the area that is designated to Canada on Normandy Beach called Juno, which is the entrance to Courseulles-sur-Mer, the first city liberated in Europe and it was liberated by Canada.

Unfortunately, it was such a nice little city, I guess, all our generals stayed there all through the war. We used to have a little tee-taw about it saying the reason why they stayed there was they were all allergic to bullets. (Laughter) So that went right across Belgium, Holland, Germany and Poland, the fact that these fellows were all staying back there just throwing the messages out what to do and Montgomery and a bunch of them wanted us to go ahead faster than was possible to go. They wanted us to get across the Scheldt Canal, well the Leopold Canal first, and then they wanted to clear Antwerp Harbour, then they wanted to get through Sheldt so that we could get out of Holland and into Germany and so on and so forth. They all wanted it done in weeks and days instead of months and months and winters and everything else. We did succeed in doing that. So that is a quick background.

Now the background of why we are here with you today is that I asked the members of the government to see what they could do to help us with our campaign which we are doing. This was known as the Garrison City in 1939 and we had more units come out of the Maritimes

than the rest of Canada ever heard tell of. We had the navy in force. We had the army at barracks such as Stadacona, which emanated from the First World War and was activated and reactivated very heavily. I started out with the Halifax Rifles with Colonel Ray Colwell of Colwell Brothers. I went with Ray through to the 63rd Armoured Regiment and when we went to England, they broke us up and sent some of our people to the Sherbrooke Fusiliers, to the Grenadier Guards, to the 6th Hussars of Ontario, et cetera, and dissolved our unit altogether to make them up. They only came half prepared and they wanted some help.

So Ray Colwell was made Colonel of the 6th Hussars because they didn't have a colonel there; there was a major running that outfit. I went with them as a W-01 and we were going to really do a job with this unit but 21 days after I was there, Ralston sent a fax to him - or whatever you call it, at that time a telegram - that Doug Shanks was to go to Sandhurst Military College and that he was to be parted from Ray Colwell.

So I went to Sandhurst Military College, and when I came out they said, well you can't go back with Ray, we're going to send you to the Grenadier Guards from Montreal because they need a lot of help. They said, but first of all we're going to send you to Aldershot, England to help train - with your background of infantry and armoured - the reinforcements for all the units. I stayed there until about a month before D-Day, when I was allowed to go to my unit, which was a tank unit. That's the background of that.

Now the program started in 2000, as I told you, and we have covered P.E.I. and Nova Scotia thoroughly. We have the full medium of the Nova Scotia Command of the Royal Canadian Legion and the P.E.I. Command of the P.E.I. Legion. We've been to their conventions, we've presented what we're presenting to you today to them, and we have their full co-operation. I have such co-operation that on their monthly mail-outs to all of the Nova Scotia and P.E.I. Legions, I can put my mailing in their mailing and they'll send it out free of charge. All of that has been organized.

I have the army, as a matter of fact on the 8th of next month I meet with General Mitchell again. I have the navy, the two admirals here, and I met Admiral Buck from Ottawa at the Tattoo last year. He gave me his card and told me, if the admirals don't back you and help you with everything you want, if you want a piece of paper copied, he said, they're to copy it for you. And he said, if you have any trouble with them you just call me and I'll come down and I'll get after their butt. He's about 2'3" high. I can see him now with some of these fellows, they'd grab ahold of him and throw him overboard.

Anyway, the air force, I have Shearwater completely with me now. I'm starting a can campaign through Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and P.E.I. this spring. I was going to have it right after the poppy, but on account of the desperate thing that happened on September 11th, I put it off until January or February. We are starting to put them out in February.

We are well ahead of anybody in Canada with our fundraising. Per population, we're oodles ahead of them, but even in dollars and cents we're ahead of them. Because we have organized it from the top down and I have all of the garrison people, the army, navy and air force helping me 100 per cent. That is why we're so successful. We've approached the people in the proper manner and gotten them from the command to the zone commanders, who look after the branches. That's the way I worked with them. We're having wonderful success.

In Ontario, Quebec, I had Bob Harris from Montreal, who's a lawyer, and he's got the same position in Quebec as I have here. He has stated that he cannot get the Legion to co-operate with him. He was wondering why he can't get the press to put people in the paper for him, or the radio to put his program across. I said, how are you approaching them? I had a press release, just printed, and I said, well, I'll fax you my latest press release and give you an idea of what you should be doing. He's written me since and thanked me very much. He said he put it in the press and he's now getting some action. He approached the press the way I told him, you don't write to them, you go and talk to them. If you don't talk to them, you're not going to get anything.

My head office in Burlington, Ontario sent around to every press in Canada, and they asked me if I had seen anything down here. I said, no, why, did you expect me to? They said, well, what do you mean? I said, anything coming from Ontario, an editor in our province or in our area would just look at it and say, oh, that's just another piece of junk and it would go into file 13. That's why you don't get it. You didn't approach the people properly. That's what we're doing, and that's why I'm here today. What can you do? Well, I'm going to tell you what you can do before I leave here.

Now if you'll open your literature you'll see why the campaign is so expensive. In it you'll find a picture of the museum that we're going to build. That is the thing I want you to look at right now. I'll describe that to you and then you can see why the cost is going to be so high.

The Association of Juno Beach was formed by the Second World War Veterans - there's the point I wanted to point out to you, it's the veterans, it's not the Legion and it's not the government - to tell the world what Canadian soldiers contributed on battlefields during the Second World War. Those battlefields include Dieppe, Hong Kong, North Africa, Sicily, Italy and Europe. The Battle of Britain, for the air force, was a very successful thing. The bombing of Germany was very successful.

So we are covering everything. Their contributions are to be recognized with plans for a memorial museum in Normandy, France. The Juno Beach Centre, located on the Normandy Beach, overlooking the English Channel will open June 2003. In your literature you will read where the opening was in 2002, but after September 11th, we had to update it to 2003 and hoped that things will be settled down by then. We wouldn't want the heads of countries and

the veterans and anybody else who wants to go to the opening to be there and have something happen. We changed it to 2003. If you see 2002 in any of your literature, just update that another year.

[9:15 a.m.]

DAVID HENDSBEE: So subsequently the opening of the facility will now be 2004?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: 2003.

DAVID HENDSBEE: No, that's the opening ceremony.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Yes.

DAVID HENDSBEE: There are two dates in there, an opening ceremony in 2002 and then there is the opening of the facility in 2003.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Every year on June 6th we have something happen on Juno Beach, even when we didn't even have a flag there. In 2001, we had the ground blessed that was given to us by Courseulles-sur-Mer, and we put a Canadian flag there. We put a maple leaf into a tub and placed it on the beach, and said, well, now this piece of land belongs to Canada. Since that, we're going to build, we're starting to build in March, we were going to start in January of this year, but I just got the latest word the other day that the contractor from France is going to start building the structure - I'll mention this - in March. For 2002, there will be a structure there, but it will not be completed with all the computers and everything, I'm going to describe to you how it's going to be operated, and the Web site. That will be done in the fall and winter, and get ready for 2003.

DAVID HENDSBEE: There's a note in here about the unveiling of the memorial brick kiosk at the ceremonies on the site in France, June 6, 2002.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: That's outside, the outside grounds.

DAVID HENDSBEE: That will still continue.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Those kiosks, I'll be mentioning them to you, because on that kiosk there's going to be the remembrance bricks for provincial commands, municipalities, remembering their units that were over there, et cetera. Anybody who has one will be put on there, and they will announce that they're on there that day. The big official opening, they'll all be on there. We're just starting this campaign with the municipalities, the governments and big business firms, to buy a much larger brick, as we'll describe to you in a minute. There's a veterans brick and a donor brick. Then this one here is four times the size and you can put a lot more on it. Like, if you wanted to represent the PLF, Princess Louise Fusiliers of Halifax, the

West Novies of Nova Scotia, the Pictou Highlanders, the Cape Breton Highlanders, et cetera, all on one brick, you can. You will have more space and more lines.

On a veterans brick, there are only 26 digits to four lines, including this unit, as years of service and the battles that they fought in. The bigger bricks are four times that size. You can put a lot more on it or you can put a crest and fewer lines on it. That is coming up.

Anyway, getting back to the picture. Now, if you look at it, the memorial being built is in a pentagon shape, surrounded by a series of multi-level, interlocking sections with sloping walls. There is a reason for that. The lines reflect the shape of the Order of Canada and the shape of a maple leaf. Now, if you look at it, you will see that it is all zigzagged. If you look at it from the air when you are flying in there, you are looking at a maple leaf. The exterior will be painted in colours suggestive of Canada's autumn leaves. It is all the exterior. We are putting as much of Canada on that beach as we can.

An eight foot high bronze memorial sculpture to be titled, "Remembrance and Renewal" is that black item down there. This renewal is composed of four military figures in a circular formation with each individual looking outward towards England into the Bay of Biscay. One figure depicts leadership; another figure, an alertness; while the third looks somber and reflective. Then the fourth advances while assisting a comrade.

Now, I haven't seen the memorial. I haven't even seen the miniature of it, but whether he is carrying him or assisting him, or what, I don't know. But that is the fourth comrade.

The Juno Beach Centre will be an educational facility designed for both adults and children. The schools in Canada are buying bricks. We have a Call to Remembrance in Nova Scotia which was started in Nova Scotia and they are starting to spread across Canada. It is like Reach for the Top. The questions are all on the war and the war battles, so on and so forth. It is done at the junior high school level.

It is in February this year and it is at Somme Branch for the zone playoff here and then your provincial playoff is after that, right after it, after all the areas get theirs in. It is done by zones, by the Legionss.

Last year, we were very fortunate that our area won the provincial. It was from a little school down in Eastern Passage. They beat out everybody else in the province and came on top. We had them on May 1st last year when Smoky Smith was here, the only living member of the VC clan. He was visiting our branch.

Two things happened to him while he was there. First of all, we had him come up to the front with the president and past-president, and a couple of people, and then we snuck in two people in behind them. After they had a little chit-chat about him being there and everything, they said, Smitty, we want to introduce two people to you; one was from Four

Harbours Branch and the other was from Somme Branch. They were two of his buddies that were with him when he got his VC in Italy and he had never seen them since. He was almost in tears. That was one.

Then we took him a little later in the day over to the corner and we sat him down on a chair with all the children from Eastern Passage in their seats with their instructor. The instructor gave them the questions and they answered them. They even answered a question of the battle that he won his VC in, and answered it correctly. He had tears in his eyes again. He said he didn't know that the kids knew so much.

This is the thing. If we don't pass it down we are going to lose all this heritage and that is why, in my heart and in the heart of all the other 80 year olds who are working on this campaign across Canada, is that we are losing our heritage.

We have been after Sheila Copps to do something for us. She hasn't come through with a nickel yet. We have been after Jean Chretien and he hasn't come through.

Now, this little fellow, Mario Piloizzi, is going to raise us \$1.5 million through Wal-Mart. If he doesn't raise it, he is going to give us \$1.5 million. So he said, put us on your books for \$1.5 million. France has come forward with \$1.2 million. Paris has come through with \$600,000. Various other units in Europe are coming through with money but Canada hasn't come through with a cent.

We have met with Chretien on the 13th of May. We have written to him twice since that to ask him if he could at least meet or beat France's donation. We haven't heard a peep from him. We are determined that whether we hear from them or not, we are going to have it built. We are going to complete it and we are going to operate it from Canada. We are going to have some students going over in the summertime with the assistance of DVA to operate it with the French that we are going to have there. This whole interior, and the computer is going to be, push button for French or English, so everybody can get access to it.

Getting back to the educational part of it, for the families, children and adults, the exhibits are being developed to provide a modern educational and interactive computer-based experience. The centre will be accessible on a worldwide basis through a Web site.

Included at the site will be a memorial wall containing veterans bricks. Through the pressure from the Legions and veterans of Canada, as a whole, they didn't want to have a veterans brick here on this part and a couple more there, then someplace else, so they asked if they could have a section in the area for all of their bricks. The directors listened to them, discussed it and then came out on the Web site and everything else, that the veterans bricks will all be on one wall, Legions bricks. The veterans bricks will be all on one wall.

The kiosk outside that you were asking about is new. There is going to be a great big

kiosk outside with very important people. They will be named on D-Day, opening in 2003. They will be read off. They will be recognized by everybody on the outside. There are five or six of them going to be there.

Just to finish off this here press release that I put out last year, last fall, included at the site will be memorial walls containing veterans bricks, donor bricks and a wall for Royal Canadian Legion branches. The centre is being built by generous donations from interested parties as follows: Purchase of a veterans brick; purchase of a donor brick; a cash donation; business and corporation donations. As the saying goes, "if you love your freedom, then help the veterans complete this project by contributing".

[9:30 a.m.]

Now, from that there, my phone has not stopped. My daughter's law firm's fax machine has not stopped. My buddy here, her daughter has given me an e-mail - because I don't have a computer and I am not interested in the computer. The computer was after my growing up was all finished - we have an e-mail coming through and pretty near every other day she is calling me and saying, there are two or three e-mails here. I will bring them up to you. We are getting the word out and we are getting action from it. By getting action from it, we are getting money coming in. That is the way we go.

There is the beautiful museum that is going to represent Canada's heritage. It is going to tell the story of all of our veterans. A great majority of them came from our area, as you will read your history and if you know your own area. Anybody from Cape Breton knows the Cape Breton Highlanders; anybody from the South Shore knows the West Nova Scotia Regiment; anybody from Halifax knows the Artillery, the PLF, the Halifax Rifles, the 63rd Armoured, the Pictou Highlanders, the North Novies, the Black Watch, and then we go into New Brunswick and get over to P.E.I., you have got the same thing. Our whole area here, as I said, was the garrison area of the Second World War. That is something that we should be proud of, from our area, because we supplied the means to the end.

Now, if you want to stop and ask me questions on what I have said so far, I will stop for a minute.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Parent.

MARK PARENT: Two quick questions. One is really very minor but I am intrigued by the antennae with the stylized flower on top. Is that the Order of Canada pin?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Yes.

MARK PARENT: Okay. The other one is, in your budget, you have building costs and museum costs. Did you budget ongoing costs for staffing and for upkeep in future years?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: I can answer that. The original budget was \$3.7 million put up by the architects, the engineers and everything else. When I took over, I put in all my press, \$6 million. They kept asking me, why are you saying \$6 million? Well, I said, I have a son that is in computers. He is a manager for the Maritimes and Newfoundland for IBM. He has worked his way up from the computer college that I put him in - ICI here, years ago, and worked for various firms, including Irving, New Brunswick Tel and everything else, as people bought each other out. Then IBM came after him.

I said, I asked him what a bank of computers putting the information out that we want to put out would cost. I asked him what a Web site would cost us, to bring it back home to you and I, who haven't got time or the monies to go over and look at this thing. He gave me a figure. I added that figure onto what they had which would barely cover the building. It was a 10,000 square foot thing and it is now 15,000 square foot. It was going to be without a basement and now it is going to have a basement.

So now they come out with \$6.1 million, so they caught up with me. The fellows from Ontario don't realize what the costs are today for the high-tech knowledge stuff. So that is why the figures are changing. Somewhere you will see \$3.7 million but the actual estimated figure now is \$6.1 million.

Now to bring you - just quickly, I will jump ahead. We are \$4.6 million in the bank, or promised. Like the \$1.5 million from Wal-Mart, \$1.2 million from France, and \$600,000 from all that added in, we are up at \$4.6 million. So we are short \$1.5 million. We have got until 2003. I can guarantee you, we are going to have that \$1.5 million in, if I have to get into everybody's pocket in Nova Scotia and P.E.I. for a \$20 bill. I am going to see it done.

If anybody has any more questions - if not, I will get on to the new thing that started this year. That is what you were talking about a minute ago, about the kiosk.

DAVID WILSON: How much do you have, actually, raised so far, Doug? How much? Not promised but raised? How much money do you have in the bank?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: We have enough money in the bank to put the building up.

DAVID WILSON: Which is how much?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Which would be, well, I haven't got the exact figure, I have the lumped figures. I haven't got the breakdown but if you just take \$1.2 million plus \$600,000 plus \$1.5 million and take it from \$4.6 million.

DAVID WILSON: I know what you are saying but I am a little bit confused about how much actually you have raised and have in your hands and how much has been promised and what kind of a promise that is.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Well, a solid promise is France at \$1.2 million.

DAVID WILSON: They have committed to \$1.2 million?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: They have committed.

DAVID WILSON: From the French Government?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: From the French Government. Now, they also put a rider to it that other areas of France will be giving money. So along comes Paris with \$600,000. So you have \$1.2 million and then you have \$600,000 - put that down on a piece of paper - then you have the \$1.5 million from Wal-Mart, which is guaranteed.

DAVID WILSON: They guaranteed that \$1.5 million?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: That is guaranteed, yes. Whether they raise it or not, they are giving us \$1.5 million. I work with Wal-Mart every day. I have opened all the new Wal-Marts and every time that we go and open a Wal-Mart for them, they give us \$5,000. I drove to Truro in the fog to open Truro - if anybody is here from Truro. That morning, we got up at 4:00 a.m. We drove to Truro to be there for 6:30 a.m., and for 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. for an opening and I had 28 veterans with a Colour Party of five and a Sergeant-at-Arms in charge of the Colour Party. They couldn't get over it. In Halifax we had 12 veterans. We had a Colour Party for the opening, for the mayor to cut the ribbon, for the mayor and the warden to cut the one in Truro.

At the same time, I had one opening in Summerside, P.E.I. and I had the past-president of the Provincial Command, a very good friend of mine, John MacTaggart, who is my right-hand man in P.E.I., to go over with that and he took a bunch of veterans and a Colour Party to that opening on the same day, November 15th, which I couldn't be in two places at once and Nova Scotia wanted me here because apparently all the high brass from Mississauga, Ontario, were coming down. There were two vice-presidents, a district manager and an area vice-president. We met with all of them before in Penhorn which is my base in Dartmouth, Penhorn shopping centre of Wal-Mart. The three of us met with all of these people. We had our picture taken with them and they were so pleased, they went and made a framed picture of the six of us and then the four men who met, the area manager and the vice-president for Eastern Canada of Wal-Mart. We have been very successful with them. So that money is definite. There is no question about it. If Mario says that you are going to get \$1.5 million, you are going to get \$1.5 million.

So if you take that there and add it together and then take it from the \$4.6 million, it will tell you what cash we have. They tell me, from Ontario, that they have enough cash to pay for the thing without any of that money coming in. We are going to have a snack bar, a place to sell artifacts from Canada and we are allowed, under the French law, to have a tourist museum interpretive centre and we are allowed to charge a fee to come in. Now the British are

there and the French are there and the Americans are there in glory. The Americans are even saying, and they have a plaque down in Cannes, that they were very pleased to liberate Cannes. They weren't even behind us when we cleared Cannes.

JOHN HOLM: They are Americans. (Laughter)

DOUGLAS SHANKS: So we are going to tell the story of who done it for them. We went through Courseulles-sur-Mer, and that's why the mayor said his father and his grandfather told him what we had done to liberate their city. He gave us five acres of land because he wouldn't take no money from us. He also said, we will put the water, the sewer and the electricity out to your site for you. That's our starting contribution to you. They gave us that, and that's what we put the flag on that day I told you we were there.

THE CHAIR: Before we go on I'd like to introduce two more members of the committee, John MacDonell, the member for Hants East, and David Hendsbee, the member for Preston.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: I know David from way back.

THE CHAIR: I believe Mr. MacDonell has a question for you.

JOHN MACDONELL: I'm not usually a member of this committee, I'm a stand-in today. I'm curious, is this the first presentation you've made to this committee.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: The first presentation I've made to the Province of Nova Scotia.

JOHN MACDONELL: Okay, so you haven't written the province, the Premier or anybody.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: No. I had an interview with Mr. Olive at his office, and he suggested the proper procedure to go through is through your committee. That's why I'm here today, and that's how it came to be. That's about five or six months ago that I had the meeting with Tim.

JOHN MACDONELL: You mentioned Sheila Copps. I'm wondering if you've had any response?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: We have co-operation. I'll put it this way, we have co-operation. She is gathering up, through her staff and everything, the heritage of the thing. She's given us material for the Web site and for the computers, et cetera. Cash, no.

JOHN MACDONELL: Did she express a reluctance to offer cash?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: No. There's been no reluctance, just salads, that's all.

(Laughter)

JOHN MACDONELL: Thank you very much.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Holm.

JOHN HOLM: Just a question. Did you provide - because I know in my office I received a package, I think it was last fall - a package of information to all MLAs?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Not to all MLAs, no. That's what I want to find out here today. I didn't approach the MLAs, only yourself, the ones in Dartmouth I approached.

JOHN HOLM: No, this was in Sackville.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: The MPs, the same way. I got hold of Geoff Regan, I have Peter Stoffer, Wendy Lill, in our own area. The same thing in P.E.I. I met with the MP for Prince County or Prince area, something like that, and so on and so forth. Our next trip, John is arranging over there for us to meet the Lieutenant Governor, the Premier, et cetera, in P.E.I. We did have, on the 16th of this month, a very good meeting with the Lieutenant Governor of the province, and she was very pleased. She's going to attend the play-offs of zone 15 in Dartmouth on February 21st for the Call to Remembrance. We're going to have her present for the winning and the runner-up trophies at that time. She has agreed to do that for us.

Now I'll let you in on something that I don't want you to broadcast, I don't want the press to put this in. Is there anybody here from the press?

THE CHAIR: This is being taped. (Interruptions) The press has access to our tapes. If there's something that you don't want the public to know, don't say it.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: It's something that I'll tell you when we're out of here, before we leave.

THE CHAIR: That's fine, thank you.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: What part can you do? That's what you want to get down to the nuts and bolts, right now. What can you do? Well, January 1st we started a new program, as I explained to you briefly, the four bigger bricks. In it there is one, the memorial brick has been of particular interest to municipal governments wishing to honour World War II participants from their local areas, regiments and other local military units. This brick is for the provinces of Canada to be able to purchase a brick. The cost of it is \$2,500. It's a large brick. There is the size of the upper brick, and these here are cut-down ones. That brick would possibly be purchased by the Province of Nova Scotia to represent everybody in Nova Scotia, and name possibly every unit, if you wanted to, on it. (Interruptions)

[9:45 a.m.]

MARK PARENT: Is it \$25,000 for the provincial brick or is it \$2,500?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: It's \$2,500.

MARK PARENT: No, no, provincial bricks listed on the next page are \$25,000.

EMMA ROBAR: It's \$25,000 for the provinces.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: The group memorial brick. I don't believe you have this.

MARK PARENT: The group memorial is \$2,500; the provincial brick is \$25,000, right?

EMMA ROBAR: \$25,000.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: It's not \$25,000, it's \$2,500.

ANNA GREEN: They have the period in the wrong place.

EMMA ROBAR: No, that's the group memorial brick.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Here it is. Built by donations. I have the provincial memorial brick, colored on your papers. That is \$25,000. That brick is the biggest brick of all. The only one bigger than that is corporations that give us \$50,000.

JOHN HOLM: So it is \$25,000.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: It is \$25,000. The figure I gave you first. The Juno Beach Centre will be open on June 6, 2003. It will be built through donations. One key part of the donation program is the provincial commemorative memorial brick that provides an opportunity for provincial governments to recognize and honour the contributions and sacrifices of their citizens and Canada's war efforts. What I say by that to you is all of the units that served from Nova Scotia here. We had the army, we had the navy, we had the air force here. Shearwater is part of us. We had navy pilots, et cetera, which is part of here.

The main thing we had was units of infantry and armoured. We had sub-units of pay masters, the medical corp, the artillery were a major part. As a matter of fact, your old friend, what was his name, the honorary Colonel of Artillery for the Halifax area, Dr. Miller, who worked as a practitioner after the war, right up to and including the position of honorary Colonel. He's very artillery-oriented, and they originated in the Halifax Armouries, right up there by your Commons.

THE CHAIR: I believe Mr. Hendsbee has a question.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Yes.

DAVID HENDSBEE: Just in regard to the cost, how much does it cost for a Legion to buy a brick?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: It costs them \$250.

DAVID HENDSBEE: It's \$250 for every Legion.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Yes.

DAVID HENDSBEE: I was going through the piece of paper provided to us on the Web site, from July 13, 2001, and on that we have three Legions from the province currently donating on that list but I had an updated list printed off as of today's date and it has five Legions, those Legions currently being: Branch 6 in Kentville; Branch 28 in Stellarton; Branch 92 Digby County; Branch 126 Sydney; Branch 152 Halifax. I was kind of wondering, with the Nova Scotia-Nunavut Command, we have 121 Legions in our particular region.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: That is right.

DAVID HENDSBEE: What kind of campaign is going to get out to encourage more of these Legions to get on board?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Well, on September 27th, I met with the Provincial Council of the Province of Nova Scotia and at that meeting, I presented what I am presenting to you now, to the officers and the zone commanders. Fred Mombourquette, the President, had directed that every zone commander was to encourage their branches to buy a brick no matter how small they were. They could have bake sales, they could have raffles, they could have everything to raise the money if they didn't have it in their coffers. That is way out of date. I will give you an example. Tommy Waters, for Halifax, has something like 13 branches and I know that he has already told me that seven of them have bought and the other six, he is right on their tails to buy. So this is happening all over the province. So that is way out of date.

DAVID HENDSBEE: I was asking our research assistant . . .

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Somme Branch bought a brick. Their name is not there.

DAVID HENDSBEE: Because on the Web site itself . . .

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Calais bought a brick. (Interruption)

DAVID HENDSBEE: But on the Web site it doesn't have an updated list that is updated

as of and we tried to find it on the Web site. So the information that is currently on the Web site now today was those particular Legions I just mentioned.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: I have in my file here . . .

DAVID HENDSBEE: I want to make sure. I want to get after my two Legions to make sure they have theirs in there.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: There is the latest that I picked off the Web site and that I put in the folders for them.

DAVID HENDSBEE: I have one that is six months after that, as of today's date, and this has a couple more than you have on there now.

EMMA ROBAR: And it still isn't up to date.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: It still isn't up to date. So that just gives you an example. Fred Mombourquette is pressing, through his secretary on Citadel Hill, with all their mail going out, that each zone commander is responsible for encouraging - I will put it that way - their branches to buy a brick.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Holm.

JOHN HOLM: Just very quickly, how many Legion branches are there in Nova Scotia?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: There are 119 and two in Nunavut.

JOHN HOLM: So even if 100 of them brought a brick, there is \$25,000 right there and if they all across the country bought them, that \$1-something million is very small.

On a different topic, all of this campaign, of course, costs money, to maintain the existing Web site, to produce all this material, even if you get somebody to photocopy it for you, the glossy brochures and I am sure that there is even some professional help having to be employed to put together the graphic work and so on. I am just wondering, how are those costs being covered and what kind of costs are involved in the campaign itself to get the fund-raising and is that figure included in the \$6.1 million for the overall development cost?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: It is, but the thing is that this booklet, this four page thing, put out by MacKenzie's, didn't cost us a nickel. They are printing them as fast as we want them and changing them as fast as we want them. They are putting out a smaller one. I haven't got one right here.

JOHN HOLM: So that is a key thing, of course, in terms of cost. That is being provided.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Now everybody working has no expense account unless they are sent to France - like the architect and the engineers - because everything we do has to be approved by the French, the French architect, the French engineer. We just convinced them that the structure can be supported by wood instead of metal and so on and so forth that they wanted. These come to the conclusion now that the structure and the eaves or what's-its-name can be built and put in and make the roof the way we want it.

JOHN HOLM: But you do have engineering and architectural costs and so on right now that you are incurring?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Our engineer is a director and he doesn't charge anything. Our architect costs us nothing.

JOHN HOLM: It sounds like a good deal.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Another thing I wanted to mention, none of us have an expense account. They tell us now that if I want to go up to their meetings - I haven't been to one yet, I tell them I'm too busy. I said, just send me a copy of what went on and I don't pay attention to half of it because it comes from Ontario and they are way behind me. The reason for that is, that is why we're so successful, we're doing it our way and our way is to approach people. Their way is to send a letter out to somebody and I don't work that way. I never raised money for our community, you know that yourself. We raised money for the community, Somme Branches raised \$5 million. We are having our 75th Anniversary in September and we are one of the original Legions in Canada.

The Royal Canadian Legion, per se, was formed in 1927 and approved by the Queen, in 1958 to be the Royal Canadian Legion but it was the Canadian Legion, the Royal Canadian Legion. When I came back from overseas I even joined the British Empire Service League; that's what the Legions were called. The thing is I pay the hotels, motels, my gas, my expenses. Now, photocopying. If I haven't hit your office, I've hit your partner's office in Sackville. He is sending across Canada now for me in English and French, starting from Quebec right to the West to try to wake those people up for me and for the campaign and to get the thing done. At the federal government's expense, he is going to send material right across Canada to tell them to get on the ball and back this up. He is photocopying everything there at the government's expense and Peter is sending that out, just for your information.

I have the Navy, the Army, the Air Force, I have Kwik Kopy doing things for me for no charge. If I want 500, I go down to our daughter-in-law's in Allsco Building Products. First of all I get paper from Staples or somebody, 5,000 or 6,000 sheets, and I took 500 down to her the other day and said, give me a copy, run these off for me, it is the new brick plan campaign. We used to give a memorial brick made from the Peace Tower and a little paper stamp put on the front as you made a donation to Juno Beach to give to their father, or uncle, or brother, or

sister. That was costing us too much. We had to order them 500 at a time and had to mail them out. When you put a piece of brick into an envelope, it costs you money. We worked it out where we weren't making any money, so now they are making a copy of the plate that is going to be on Juno Beach and send it as a memorial.

We have a new form so I had to get them made up. So I just took 500 sheets down to my daughter-in-law and asked her to run them off for me. She ran them off for me and I had them the next day and that's the type of co-operation I'm getting. My pockets are empty all of the time; I use my own money - so there's your answer - and everybody else who's working does.

[10:00 a.m.]

If the president is asked to go to France to meet, he went to the Canadian Ambassador's dinner with some people from France and Holland, et cetera. He said it was an awful expense to have a dinner with somebody but he went and he presented our campaign to them. Subsequently from that, we got money from Paris, France, and are getting money from the other countries, just through that meeting. So that expense is paid back.

They even told me if I want to fly up to Burlington or to Kingston or to wherever else they carry their monthly meeting, they'll reimburse me. I don't have the time to go, anyway, so they don't have to reimburse me. You must be 200 miles away even to get mileage, if you are going to the meetings. We work on a fairly tight, slim payment out.

When I came back from overseas I said I went overseas to clear the country. When I came back, I didn't want any welfare, I didn't want any unemployment or anything. I never drew unemployment in my life, I never drew welfare in my life. I came back with the purpose of having a family grow up; I had five girls and four boys. I put seven of them through college and I worked hard, day and night and never drew a cent because I didn't want to be a burden to my government. And there's my answer.

JOHN HOLM: You covered it very well. The only point I just make at the end then, if you consider the value of all of these contributions, whether that be for the architect, the engineer, the paper and the photocopying, in reality, that's the same as having, again, many hundreds of thousands of dollars in the bank because for a project that size, for the engineering and the architectural work you're looking at, I don't know what is it, 10 per cent? That's a lot of money.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: We've had quite a bit of expenses, we had \$87,000 in one month but that was to send the architect and the engineers to France to meet with their counterparts over there, get things approved, et cetera. We can't expect them to be flying back and forth across the Atlantic on their own. We do pay our bills every month and we have enough money on hand - I can't tell you the exact figure but they assure me we have enough money on hand -

to put the building up and get along with it.

JOHN HOLM: So I guess the question, Mr. Chairman, is, what do we do?

THE CHAIR: That's correct. What would you like us to do?

DAVID HENDSBEE: Make a donation.

JOHN HOLM: We can't, as a committee.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: The thing is, discuss it. My main job is just to get the word out. I met with some of your very good people who we fought for years through the Legion to get their rights, the mariners, remember? I met with them last Friday over at the Fairview Legion, there were 42 of them there. I told them, you were a part of this. Number five on the computer is going to be the merchant marine story and they didn't know that. They didn't know that they could buy a brick of their own. The next day I got three calls for three bricks right off the bat. I was there on Friday and Saturday and I got three calls for bricks and they said there are more of them going to buy, now that they are a part of it. This is the point, my job is to get the word out.

I have press in Summerside in radio. I have press in Charlottetown in radio. I have press in Sydney in radio. I have press in Halifax in radio. I have press in Yarmouth in radio. It's all free because I approached them as a person, gave them a story, told them I had no money in my pocket but could they help me and I got help; that's the way it is.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Parent.

MARK PARENT: I guess I'm slightly confused. There's the group donation, the provincial donation that you're going to approach the province about, there's the Legion donations. Can individuals donate and buy a brick and what's the cost for that, \$250?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: It's \$250 for a donor brick. I will give you an example. I had one Buster MacDonald who owns MacDonald's Stationery down in Cole Harbour. He came to me. He is a retired Navy fellow with a CD but he didn't join until 1954. His wife died and he wanted to know if he could buy a brick in memory of his wife. I said, you certainly can. So I helped him fill out the brick and everything. When we were talking about it, he gave me a \$100 bill. I don't take money but I know Buster, I know the way he wants to operate.

The next month I went in and talked to him. I go into his store for supplies and things. If I want to put on a raffle I always get something from him. He gave me another \$50. Then the next month I went in and saw him and he said, we had better get this thing made out. He said, here's the other \$50. So I opened my wallet and said, here's your money back. I said, I don't handle money. I was just saving this for you. He laughed like the devil. But he bought the

brick in memory of his wife.

We had a lady at the Tattoo come to us and I helped her fill it out. She had her VISA with her. She owned a firm in Ontario and she wanted to buy a name in the firm's name. I said, well, the best thing you can buy is - you can make a cash donation or you can buy a brick. Oh, I want to buy a brick. So she filled out a brick form and she put it on her VISA, her VISA number, expiry date and everything and we sent it up there. They said, how come you're dealing with Ontario? I said, because you fellows can't do it. I have to do it down here for you. That's what I tell them every time.

EMMA ROBAR: There should be in your folder a cash donation form.

DAVID HENDSBEE: There is also a Veteran and Donor Brick Program form.

On the donor brick you get two lines with 20 spaces per line and on the veteran you get four lines. They have three lines of 20 spaces and a middle line with nine spaces.

EMMA ROBAR: That has been changed to 26 spaces.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: That's updated to 26 spaces on the new form.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Wilson, please.

DAVID WILSON: Well, Mr. Chairman, I suggest that if Mr. Shanks was told to come here by the chairman of the Progressive Conservative caucus, who said to come before this committee, we have heard the presentation and if we support this presentation, and we support what these people are doing, then I suggest that we entertain a motion when they go, with support from us, when they go looking to the government for their \$25,000, that they carry with them a motion from this committee supporting them, endorsing their campaign and urging the government to give them the \$25,000 that they require for a provincial brick.

DAVID HENDSBEE: I'll second the motion.

THE CHAIR: Would all those in favour of the motion please say, Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Thank you for that motion too, Mr. Wilson.

DAVID HENDSBEE: In fact, I even filled out my own donor brick, so I will give you a cheque when I find my cheque book. I was going to ask you about this . . .

DAVID WILSON: Make sure you get the money for that one, Doug. (Laughter)

DAVID HENDSBEE: You made mention about the name plaque and stuff. The form here says, " . . . Canadian History Stone will be sent to the donor recognizing the purchase of a brick . . .", You say you changed that to a plate?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Yes, there is a new form out now. Do you have the copy there?

DAVID HENDSBEE: That's the old form there. That's what I have.

JOHN HOLM: I was just wondering, just on the same topic - like, I mean, you can give one in your own name, that's one thing, but (Interruptions) If you did one, though, in the name of the residents of your community - if, for example, you wanted to say, on behalf of the residents of Lower Sackville, Nova Scotia, or Preston, or whatever, you could just have it worded that way?

EMMA ROBAR: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Would you like to make copies of the new form?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Yes, just a second, I'm going to find it for you.

JOHN HOLM: If it's not here, then maybe you could provide a copy to the chairman and he could provide it. The chairman could then also see that it be provided to all members of the Legislature.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Here is the new reading, for your information. We can make copies of this for you to bring you up to date. The donation of a veteran or donor brick, then down underneath it, under Note, is, "Now available with an additional \$25.00 a full size replica of the brick, will be sent to the donor recognizing the purchase of a Veteran or Donor Brick. Please tick here if you wish to order".

It is now a full-size replica of the brick, what I told you. So if you want to run off some of those copies and give everybody one, that is the newest out.

DAVID HENDSBEE: What is the replica made of?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Titanium, or something like that. It is metal, anyway.

EMMA ROBAR: Titanium.

DAVID HENDSBEE: A light metal.

EMMA ROBAR: Yes.

DAVID HENDSBEE: That is \$25 extra?

EMMA ROBAR: Yes.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: It is a metal that - they took into account that it is going to be on a salt area beach, so it is a metal that will not deteriorate, even on the outside.

JOHN HOLM: So the bricks are a metal brick rather than a - when I say brick, or you say brick, I just automatically think clay.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: No. Well, it is just like Wal-Mart but they are paper brick, you know. It is part of the campaign.

DAVID HENDSBEE: The sheen on the building, the outside material and everything else - like, I look at that and I see a shiny metal exterior stuff. That is all wood?

EMMA ROBAR: It is an all-wood building?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: The building is all wood, yes. If they haven't got enough wood over there, Canada is going to send them some. (Laughter)

DAVID HENDSBEE: Wal-Mart is going to?

EMMA ROBAR: Yes.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Paul Martin and his boss haven't come through with a cent yet.

THE CHAIR: Is there anything else?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Unless you have some questions on it, I think I covered a wide area.

EMMA ROBAR: Thank you.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: As explicit as I could. All I was asked to come was to give you the information and let you people decide whether or not you wanted to recommend - which you have recommended - that the province do something. When you bring that up to the province, tell them that they should be honouring all the units in Nova Scotia that served in the Second World War and in memory of those deceased, the KIA - we call it - killed in action, or have deceased since they came home. We supplied a great amount of force from this province, a real large amount.

THE CHAIR: Mr. MacDonell.

JOHN MACDONELL: Mr. Shanks, we have a little bit of time left. I wonder, would you mind just telling the history of Juno Beach, like, what happened there, if you could?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Well, Juno Beach was the entrance to Europe for the Allied forces. Now, if you look on the back of your folder, I will just run it across with you. There were five armies going in all at once, okay? On your right, number five, you will see, SWORD. That is the British Army. Next to that at four with the red dot is Juno. That is Canada's portion of the beach. That is where we get this word Juno from. That was our code. Number three is GOLD, that is another. So we are hemmed in with two British armies, as well as the Canadian Army.

This is the first time that the Canadian Army operated as an army, too, that landed on Juno Beach, the first time in our history, our small history. You must remember that in 1939, and practically all through to 1945, Canada was a country of 11 million, and we sent 1 million people to war. That is really something. A lot of those 1 million people came from Nova Scotia.

[10:15 a.m.]

The next one is Omaha, and Utah is the other one. Those are the Americans. Everybody couldn't get on that beach at the same time. The Canadians went in first. We lost 383 people, killed on the beach, and 955 were injured, getting in, of the first 14,000 that we sent in. That is the entrance.

We cleared Courseulles-sur-Mer, which is a city right there under the red. We cleared from there through to Cannes. I just wrote a brick for a blind man down in Margaree, whose wife wanted to buy a brick for her nephew who was killed just outside of Cannes on the 27th day of July, 1944. That's all they could tell me. I had to go to the Archives of Canada to get the information for them to fill out the various lines on the brick. I am doing this every day of the week, people are calling me.

I have a lady in Florida, her father was a doctor, he was in the medical corps. He and another doctor were leaving Holland, going into Germany to visit another hospital, and they hit land mines and both were blown up. She wanted to buy a brick in honour of her father. I have a fax into the Archives right now with all the information she gave me through her sister-in-law here in Dartmouth, who's Doug Ritchie's daughter. Anybody who's a PC here knows Doug Ritchie, especially the fellow down there on the left. (Laughter) I have that on the go right now, and I haven't gotten an answer back for her. She wants to buy a brick in honour of her father, who was a medical doctor who got blown up about five days before the war ended.

These things are coming to me all the time. I'll tell you it's beginning to get to me, I'm getting so many of them. I have a little note from this here blind man down in Margaree the other day thanking me for all I've done for him and his wife, and being able to have the remembrance looked after. It was so scrawly and everything else, zig-zagging, but I made it out. He was honest enough to send a letter of thank you. That's what happens. It's happening all the time.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Holm.

JOHN HOLM: First, I certainly want to thank Mr. Shanks and your company for the excellent presentation. We have passed that motion here today. I'm just wondering, rather than making sure it doesn't just get lost in the minutes but to ensure that that motion gets referred on to the appropriate people, just requesting that when the minutes are done that the motion be taken as separate and noting that it's been passed unanimously, and a copy of that motion we passed here be provided to the Premier and to the Minister of Finance, so that those two who are at the top of government and in control of the purse strings in the province certainly will be aware of the wishes of this all-Party committee. It also might be helpful if a couple of the extra brochures that we have here, one be sent along with a copy of that motion to both the Premier and to the Minister of Finance so that they can have the necessary background information.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

THE CHAIR: Okay. Thank you.

JOHN HOLM: That's agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

DAVID WILSON: Agreed. Mr. Shanks this is what we've asked for, this is not a request for money. I hope you'll understand that has to come from you, but we are in support of your request.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: That's what I wanted to ask you.

DAVID WILSON: We're in support of your request. And don't ask for one brick, ask for a few more. (Laughter)

EMMA ROBAR: He will. (Interruptions)

DAVID WILSON: Everybody knows that Cape Breton Islanders were the greatest fighters of all.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Mr. Chairman, I'll give that to your secretary there. That is the new form.

EMMA ROBAR: They all have one.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: You have one.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Hendsbee.

DAVID HENDSBEE: Just a couple of things. In regard to that donation, the request for donation to the province, I am sure that if it was necessary it could be done over a multi-year financing. Since the facility is not opening for a couple more years, perhaps the commitment can be made by the province and the donation be made in one, two, three or four instalments, whatever is necessary to finance it.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Well, the bookkeeping is quite cohesive. We like cash on the line. (Laughter) It's just like somebody asking me the other day, they said, there's five us in the family chipping in to buy a brick, can each one get a slice of the tax receipt. I said, well, it'll be made out in somebody's name and you can all cut it up in pieces, but there's only one. That's the answer.

DAVID HENDSBEE: My last question, if you have a successful fundraising campaign and you exceed your target, what purpose do you intend for the surplus? Are you planning to have it in an operational account to be established?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: We are going to control here from Canada, and any money that is surplus will go into buying the supplies, et cetera, for the grocery store or whatever, the snack bar, and for more artifacts to fill the shelves and everything else.

DAVID HENDSBEE: Has there been any consideration, perhaps, to help with the repairs of some of the other memorials that are already over there. I understand the Passchendaele Memorial is in a state of disrepair, and there are a couple of others that are trying to find resources to get them fixed. I was wondering if your campaign is successful enough, perhaps it could serve as an umbrella to make sure those other monuments out there in the fields be maintained?

DOUGLAS SHANKS: After the fact, we will listen to anything from anybody for memorials. We have to have the cash first, again, before we can do anything to assist them. If there is any way we can, we will. We are still going to be the board of directors, and if you want to know what's going to happen, well, we're all 80, if anything happens to us at the end, we're going to turn it over to the Department of Veterans Affairs, the cash, the money, the bank account and everything, and have them carry it on for future Canadians.

THE CHAIR: Any other questions? Mr. Holm.

JOHN HOLM: The last thing. Turning the bank account and so on over to the Department of Veterans Affairs, I guess if that is going to be done I certainly hope that there are very strict caveats on how that turnover is going to be done, because I'd hate to see - and I don't mean this as a political shot, but when you turn monies over to governments, regardless of who they are, you have to be very careful that that money is going to continue to be used and grow for its intended purposes, not be redirected, for example, to other department activities.

DAVID HENDSBEE: I'm sure a trust fund could be established, but it won't be used for other things.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: I will assure you that the instructions to DVA will be written in the blood of veterans, and that it will be so tight that they can't even take a nickel out of it without accounting for it. It will be used solely for that account. That account is going to be turned over to them, so they have to operate that account. They have to operate that museum over on Normandy Beach. We will make it very explicit to them. As I said, we'll write it in blood if we have to.

JOHN HOLM: I shouldn't be suspicious.

THE CHAIR: On that note, I'd like thank Mr. Holm for his concern and you for your answer. I also want to thank you for coming today. This is certainly an important endeavour, and I wish you all the success and godspeed with this. Thank you very much.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: Thank you. There's one thing, we are going to have it done anyway. I can guarantee you that. We've gone this far, and we're going to get that other \$1.5 million as I said. I told the veterans, the memorial fellows over there, the merchant mariners, I said if I could get my hand in every Canadian's pocket for a \$20 bill, I wouldn't have to be going around everyday talking. I would have enough money to do this thing. But I can't do it. I can't get my hand in everybody's pocket in Canada because I don't have the access to them. The ones that I do have access to, I ask them to contribute.

THE CHAIR: Thank you, again. We have a couple of housekeeping things to attend to. Mr. Hendsbee has the last question.

DAVID HENDSBEE: One last request, sir. Have you made a presentation to Halifax Regional Municipality, because this being the port many of the soldiers left from, I hope that a request is put in to Halifax.

DOUGLAS SHANKS: I have a meeting, again, with Peter on February 4th. I have already discussed it with him. He was going to buy two bricks; one for the municipality and one for himself. But I want him to buy a larger brick now. I told him, don't spend any money until I get back to you, when I got this information. So I am going to see him to buy a brick somewhat similar to what I am talking to you about, for all the units from the Halifax Regional Municipality who served to be included, as well as the municipality, as well as the mayor.

DAVID HENDSBEE: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Okay, thanks.

[10:27 a.m. The committee recessed.]

[10:29 a.m. The committee reconvened.]

THE CHAIR: This shouldn't take too long. Just to bring you up to date with the licence plates, we have a meeting scheduled for February 15th, between Mr. Wessel and Service Nova Scotia. Now, everything looks positive on this date but this is the first time that they have got together for the meeting. So, I just wanted to bring you up to speed about what is going on with the licence plates.

DAVID HENDSBEE: Isn't February 15th Heritage Day?

JOHN HOLM: Whose meeting?

THE CHAIR: Service Nova Scotia. . .

JOHN HOLM: Yes.

[10:30 a.m.]

THE CHAIR: . . .and Mr. Wessel. He's with the Royal Canadian Legion. Steve Wessel has relayed to the committee, through the Clerk, that the meeting between Mr. Goodwin of Service Nova Scotia & Municipal Relations and the Royal Canadian Legion, Nova Scotia Command, will take place on Friday, February 15, 2002. Later on, I will request an update from the meeting.

JOHN HOLM: We're not meeting with them, are we?

THE CHAIR: We're not meeting with them, no; it is the Nova Scotia Command and Service Nova Scotia.

The other - Mr. Chataway was here. He had the request that Fred Skinner, the past President of the Royal Canadian Naval Association, who is from the Niagara Region, Niagara Falls, on the request for tax credits.

Now, we have checked into that and I wrote him a letter at that time. I don't know what he wanted us to do. We received, back from Barbara Childs, from Communications Canada Remembers, Veterans Affairs Canada, Atlantic Region, and there doesn't appear to be much we can do. I will just read you what she had to say.

"Further to your question regarding tax breaks for veterans, I am just writing to confirm what I had indicated in our conversation last week.

The Government of Canada, through the Department of Revenue, does not provide specific tax breaks or reductions for veterans. However, the benefits payable to veterans from the Government of Canada, through the Department of Veterans Affairs, i.e., disability pensions

and other allowances, are not taxable for income tax purposes. Please note that this is a policy of Revenue Canada and not dictated by Veterans Affairs.

Any further 'tax breaks' from the Government of Canada would have to come through Revenue Canada."

Okay, it is pretty explicit there. Go ahead, Mr. Holm

JOHN HOLM: Just one question. The copies of the correspondence to and from, could that be provided to committee members, just for the (Interruption) did we get that? Was that - I don't know if that was. . .

DARLENE HENRY (Committee Clerk): The letter from Mr. Skinner . . .

JOHN HOLM: Oh, okay. I apologize then, okay.

DARLENE HENRY: That is what he sent to the committee.

JOHN HOLM: Okay.

THE CHAIR: The other - last meeting we discussed, Mr. Parent, (Interruption) Well, I'm watching myself very closely with that right now. He made a statement and it was approved, I believe - that we tour Aldershot sometime. If it is still the wish of the committee members, maybe we could have a tour of that sometime after the Legislature closes or adjourns.

JOHN HOLM: So in the summertime.

THE CHAIR: In the summertime.

JOHN HOLM: July or August.

THE CHAIR: July or August. Okay.

MARK PARENT: Could you be more specific, or I will just have to wait.

THE CHAIR: Well, we will leave that up to you.

Anyway, other than that, the Veterans Affairs Committee, during the last while, we have been very effective. We have done a lot of things, accomplished a lot through the efforts of this committee. However, for the agenda, this concludes the present presenters to come in and we don't have any more at this time. Other than that, there won't be a date scheduled for the next Veterans Affairs Committee meeting.

DARLENE HENRY: Unless, of course, we get requests.

THE CHAIR: Unless we get requests, and at that time we will schedule a meeting. Does anybody have any comments on that?

JOHN HOLM: No, just that you did a great job, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIR: That you. We will adjourn.

[The committee adjourned at 10:35 a.m.]