

# **HANSARD**

**NOVA SCOTIA HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**

**STANDING COMMITTEE**

**ON**

**VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**Thursday, February 13, 2003**

**Committee Room 1**

**Royal Canadian Legion**

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## **VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

William Langille (Chair)  
Frank Chipman  
Mark Parent  
Jerry Pye  
Brian Boudreau  
John Holm  
David Wilson (Glace Bay)  
David Hendsbee

In Attendance:

Darlene Henry  
Legislative Committee Clerk

## **WITNESSES**

### **Royal Canadian Legion**

Fred Mombourquette  
President, Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command

Vic Barnes  
First Vice-President, Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command

Jack Hatcher  
Honorary Treasurer and Chair of Veterans Services Committee



**HALIFAX, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2003**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**9:00 A.M.**

CHAIR  
William Langille

THE CHAIR: If you gentlemen are ready, we can start. Being 9:14 a.m., we will start our meeting. This morning we have with us the Provincial Command, Royal Canadian Legion, Province of Nova Scotia and Nunavut. We have President Fred Mombourquette, Mr. Vic Barnes and Mr. Jack Hatcher. Good morning, gentlemen. I believe you know everybody around the table, but I would ask that everyone introduce themselves to you.

[The committee members introduced themselves.]

THE CHAIR: Mr. Mombourquette, I believe you have a presentation. Would you like to start?

FRED MOMBOURQUETTE: Thank you very much, honourable chairman. I'm sorry we're late, but I guess there's not very much we can do about the traffic this morning. We were all up around 7:00 a.m. this morning, and we were going to start walking but it was a little too cold. So we got in the car and we finally got here. We appreciate the fact that you waited patiently for us. Thank you again, and good morning to all the members of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs for the Province of Nova Scotia.

This morning, members of our Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command of the Royal Canadian Legion, and Veterans Services and Seniors Committee would like to make a presentation to your committee, but first I would like to introduce our committee members, although you have just introduced them. Jack is on my left, and Jack is not only on this committee but he is also a part of the Group of Nine that the Legion has a representative on and Jack is that member. To my right is our 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President, Vic Barnes, who, in a few short months will probably - not only probably - will become our next President of Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command.

[9:15 a.m.]

I would just like to make a few remarks before we start off. This will be my sixth year on the Veterans Services and Seniors Committee, and since my term as president will be ending in May of this year, I would like to express not only my gratitude but that of our Command committee for the co-operation we have received over the years from this committee.

Many of the issues we've brought before you on behalf of our veterans, our seniors and our Legion members have been implemented, such as the renaming of a section of Highway No. 102 as the Veterans Memorial Highway, the establishment of a compulsory high school Canadian history course, which by all reports in our newspapers is being well accepted by our high school students, and also the implementation of the two-minute wave of silence, the assistance with the bringing home of the tomb of the unknown soldier, and the instituting of our veterans' licence plate in honour of all our veterans in the Province of Nova Scotia. By the way, we're the first province in Canada to have a veterans' licence plate.

These and many other issues we have dealt with speak very highly of the co-operation between both committees for the benefit of our veterans, our seniors and our Legion members. We look forward to continuing with this co-operation in the future and for as long as there is a need. With those few words, Mr. Chairman, I thank you very much, and I will now turn the meeting to Comrade Jack Hatcher.

THE CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Mombourquette, for those kind words. Mr. Hatcher.

JACK HATCHER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Comrade Fred. Gentlemen, this is my second year on this committee, and it's been a pleasure and an honour to serve. I'm certainly looking forward, if re-elected in May, to continuing to serve on this committee.

Mr. Chairman, I would also like to thank yourself and the committee members for their assistance over the past years and look forward to your guidance in the future. I would like to take this opportunity to address two items which are of great concern to this Command.

Number one, self-serve and full-service gas stations. Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command has received a number of calls from veterans and senior citizens who are experiencing problems locating full-service gas stations to fuel their vehicles due to the declining number of full-service stations in the province. It is important to keep in mind that a number of the more than 83,000 driving seniors over 65 years of age in this province cannot operate a fuel nozzle or fuel their own cars because of various health reasons. It is the request of this Command that your committee support our request that the gas companies be restricted on the number of self-service stations in any one area. We do have a number of areas, gentlemen, in the province that do not have full-service stations, and our seniors have to go quite a distance in order to obtain full service.

The other item that I have is the new smoking regulations. Before I go into this, I would just like to mention that we do know that it is new and there's a lot of problems to be ironed out, but we are running into some serious problems with this new regulation. It has been brought to our attention that the inspectors visiting our Legions are leaving conflicting messages with regard to the interpretation of the regulations. For example, the total building must go non-smoking if persons under the age of 19 are in the building, regardless of what type of ventilation system they have in place.

These are regulations in place given to all Legions. I understand that there are also guidelines being used by the inspectors that are not available to the Legions. I can just elaborate on that. In two different cases this past week, inspectors have visited two different Legions and told the Legions that they had to go totally non-smoking or close their doors.

THE CHAIR: I didn't hear you. What was that again?

JACK HATCHER: They have to go totally non-smoking or close their doors.

DAVID HENDSBEE: Could you clarify which Legions those were?

JACK HATCHER: Yes.

JOHN HOLM: Do you know the branches?

JACK HATCHER: Yes.

JOHN HOLM: Can you share that with us?

JACK HATCHER: Sackville being one of them, and the other one was in the Dartmouth area. When an inspector was questioned with regard to the regulations, he didn't say that, he said, these are our guidelines. When the president of the Sackville Legion, in this case, asked for a copy of the guidelines, he was told he could not have a copy of the guidelines and was given a 1-800 number to call, which ended up at the Department of Health. The lady at the Department of Health told him, that is what our lawyers tell us to do.

FRANK CHIPMAN: Do you know the name of the inspector?

JACK HATCHER: No, I don't have that with me. I can get that.

MARK PARENT: There are very handy little guidelines available. We should get them to you, then.

JACK HATCHER: We have the regulations, but whatever these guidelines are that the inspectors have are different than the regulations. (Interruptions)

JOHN HOLM: That can be handled by a motion after the presentation.

JACK HATCHER: It is our request that this committee guide Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command in meeting with the appropriate authority to instruct us in the proper answers we may give our branches when they come in for information. This meeting could take place at the Command office or boardroom at the convenience of the authorities in question. Thank you, gentlemen, for your continuing support.

THE CHAIR: Thank you for that presentation. I'm going to open up the floor, but before I do I would request that we deal with the first item and then we will go to item number two. Mr. Holm.

JOHN HOLM: I was going to be on the second item, about the smoking regulations.

THE CHAIR: I guess we could do it in reverse, it doesn't matter. We will cover them both anyway.

JOHN HOLM: I was going to suggest, Mr. Chairman, that you, on behalf of the committee, write a letter to the minister to ask that the guidelines referenced in the third paragraph, under item two, be provided forthwith to the Legion Command and that the requested meeting be arranged immediately. It's not very good wording, but you can understand the intent.

THE CHAIR: The intent of the motion by Mr. Holm is that the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs sends out a letter to the appropriate ministry, which would be the Department of Health (Interruptions)

JACK HATCHER: Hon. Rodney MacDonald is actually the minister responsible for the enforcement.

THE CHAIR: Department of Health, and Mr. Hendsbee advises that this section now falls under the Minister of Tourism and Culture, who is also the minister of that part of the program regarding smoking which comes under the Department of Health.

JACK HATCHER: Health Promotion.

THE CHAIR: And that in the letter we request the guidelines on the smoking policy be provided to the Legion so that they can comply.

JOHN HOLM: And also that a meeting be set up forthwith, with the appropriate Command members, with the authorities to explain those guidelines so that everybody knows what song sheet they're singing from.

THE CHAIR: We have the motion and rather than me trying to go over it again, is there

any further discussion on this issue?

DAVID WILSON: Mr. Chairman, is this a meeting with the minister or is this a meeting with department officials?

JOHN HOLM: The officials, but we write to the minister to get the guidelines sent out immediately but then that the meeting be with the appropriate officials to explain how they operate and what they mean, as Jack said, so when they're talking to other branches, they know what the rules are and can explain them more clearly.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Parent.

MARK PARENT: I think it's a great idea but I just don't know if there are guidelines different than the regulations. Can we not just state that material relating to the enforcement of the smoking bylaw be sent out?

JOHN HOLM: We can say guidelines and regulations.

MARK PARENT: I have no idea, I've seen documentation and I didn't look at what it entitled. Whatever the department has on that should be given to the Legions.

JOHN HOLM: We'll have regulations plus guidelines.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Hendsbee.

JACK HATCHER: Mr. Chairman, are you going to second the motion for debate?

MARK PARENT: Sure, I'll second it with that, if you're willing to (Interruptions)

JACK HATCHER: Mr. Chairman, if I may, it was my understanding from talking to the two different Legions that the inspector had different guidelines than what the actual regulations read and that's what we're looking for.

THE CHAIR: Actually, I was going to bring that up after going through with this motion and then make another for those two particular Legions. (Interruptions)

JOHN HOLM: Together, that covers it.

THE CHAIR: We have the motion. Are you ready for the question?

JOHN HOLM: Well there's some discussion on this.

JERRY PYE: I just wanted to know, Mr. Chairman, this does not prevent someone from the department sitting down and speaking with the Legion representatives on this particular

issue, does it? (Interruptions) I certainly hope so because I think there is where the ambiguity lays is that in fact people don't understand the guidelines and the regulations.

THE CHAIR: I think what we are all looking for here is clarification and that's what we will be following. Mr. Hendsbee.

JACK HATCHER: Mr. Chairman, I would have to share the concerns expressed by the comrades with regard to the enforcement of the regulations being interpreted differently or if they have different materials that are readily available. I know that on-line you have the regulations, the legislation, information and also the information pamphlets, they are all available on-line also and I'm hoping that the inspectors are using the same materials. If they have a different set of rules or a different piece of paper or a different set of guidelines, I think that should be shared, not just with the Command but also shared with other authorities and I think that would include the MLAs.

THE CHAIR: Further discussion? So we have your motion, Mr. Holm. Could you read the motion back?

DARLENE HENRY: It is to write to the Minister of Health Promotion in reference to the presentation that a request for a meeting be set up immediately with department officials to provide the guidelines and regulations that the inspectors are using to enforce the non-smoking regulations. Do I have it correctly?

JOHN HOLM: The whole package of guidelines and regulations that are being used.

JACK HATCHER: Can I ask one question, Mr. Chairman? It comes under the Department of Health but do the inspectors come under the Department of Health? My understanding is that they are Gaming.

JOHN HOLM: Some come under Gaming.

DAVID WILSON: Mr. Chairman, that's correct the way it's read because I think the motion says Rodney MacDonald, Minister of Health Promotion. He's also the minister responsible for the inspectors, is he not?

THE CHAIR: Yes, he is.

JACK HATCHER: Okay, no problem. I didn't understand.

DAVID HENDSBEE: If I may, Mr. Chairman, for clarification for our guests, there are apparently 75 inspectors from the various government departments: Agriculture and Fisheries, that do the restaurant checks for food establishments; there is the Alcohol and Gaming Authority; there's the Department of Health; there is also now with the Health Promotion, the



advisers there. So there are 75 different inspectors from various aspects that enforce the regulations.

[9:30 a.m.]

DAVID WILSON: It sounds very confusing, just like the legislation.

THE CHAIR: After those comments, Mr. Wilson, we will continue with the question. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

JOHN HOLM: Can I just ask a question? Would it be possible for that letter to go out this week?

THE CHAIR: Yes, certainly. I'm just thinking, this is Thursday but you can send it to me and I'll read it and then you can sign it for me, okay?

JOHN HOLM: A copy, of course, provided to our friends.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Mombourquette, exactly. The item on self-serve and full-service gas stations. Could I ask for comments on that?

JOHN HOLM: That is a serious problem for a lot of people, certainly for seniors, for those in the disabled community, and for a lot of people who just don't like pumping gas. I don't know what the answer is, I think there has to be some way to ensure that at least we have a fair blend. Everybody seems to be trying to turn them all into convenience stores with self-serve gas pumps. I don't think that is serving the broader needs of the community as a whole, seniors and others that it's just not convenient for.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Pye.

JERRY PYE: Mr. Chairman, I just want to thank the members of the Legion for bringing this issue before the Veterans Affairs Committee. It's a very, very important issue and twice I've had the opportunity to speak on this issue at the Halifax Regional Municipal Council level, particularly to the community councils. A number of service stations have redesigned themselves and through the renovation process have gone to total self-serve, rather than full-service stations or a combination thereof.

What has happened over time is this proliferation has prevented citizens from communities who normally would have the opportunity to use those full-service stations to use them. I've argued that this is a responsibility of the municipal government, that they can set into place bylaw, the structure of these service stations, the hours of operation, and they can also determine what the consumer is going to be benefiting from as a result of that. However,

the city council has said it is not their business to set regulations for government, so government hasn't done anything about it.

It's a very, very serious issue, as my colleague said, with those individuals who are disabled, those who are single parents and fill up at the service station and must leave their child in the back and for one minute, if they leave their child in there and someone steals their car while they're in paying the bill, then they're gone, the children are gone and there is a whole serious host of problems that emanate from that.

I have to tell you that I also had representatives in from the petroleum industry in my office, some from Petro-Canada, some from Esso, none from Irving - Irving did not represent - and so on. A few of those individuals said to leave it with them because they were going to bring it up at their annual general meeting, with respect to this whole issue around full-service stations.

One thing I think you can do - and we can certainly do it and I do know that I put a resolution in the Legislature with respect to this issue as well - is you can certainly send a letter off to the petroleum industry and those individuals who are, in fact, promoting this kind of a consumer venture, simply because they believe the consumers want this and that they're making it convenient for the consumer. I can tell you, hundreds of individuals have actually called and there are people who are now protesting about that very thing that you bring forward to us.

If we, as the Veterans Affairs Committee, can send a letter off, Mr. Chairman, to the industry and find the appropriate people to send a letter off to, indicating that it has come as a concern through this committee, then I think that we can certainly all get together and make sure that those who provide to the public provide a balanced level of service to the public. This, to me, is shutting out so many people who are consumers, through no fault or no right of their own, and they don't have a choice anymore in saying, since this is a resource that people use for transportation and can't get out of it, I think that we, as citizens, have an obligation to inform them and let them know.

I want to thank you very much because this is really a contentious issue with a number of seniors and those who sit on the group. I can very well tell you that this has probably been discussed with the Group of Nine, as well as other committees across Nova Scotia.

JOHN HOLM: Was that a motion, that you want the letter sent?

JERRY PYE: I never made it as a motion. I said, Mr. Chairman, I would hope that you would consider sending a letter. I'm not - well, I can make the motion and I would so move.

THE CHAIR: Can we have further discussion and then come back?

JERRY PYE: Sure, absolutely.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Hendsbee.

JACK HATCHER: Mr. Chairman, my colleague, the member for Dartmouth North, has made some valid comments. I think the letter should be written to the Nova Scotia Retail Gasoline Dealers Association. I think they are the ones that have to deal with the issue in regard to staffing requirements.

There might be an opportunity for dialogue with the province in regard to possible - you know, the talk about student employment, whatever the case may be, PEP assistance, whatever the case may be, for hiring a particular individual to make sure they have a manned booth. I think it is important that we do have some service stations that are available to help either the seniors that can't pump gas or those persons with disabilities or other reasons.

I don't know if people have been watching the news lately but there has been a phenomenon happening in the States about the static electricity ignition of gasoline fumes in some stations, of people getting in and out of their cars and the gasoline fumes get ignited because of electrostatic sparks that people have getting out of their vehicles, while pumping gas. It hasn't been a phenomenon much here in Canada but it has been happening in the States with the newscast on it.

I think other safety precautions about leaving a child in the car, briefly, and losing a vehicle is another fear factor there, and everything else. I think those things are valid concerns and ought to be addressed somehow by the industry.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Parent.

MARK PARENT: I would agree with everything everyone said and would support a letter. Also, Mr. Pye's suggestion that you get your members to write and say, listen, you know, this is important for us.

VIC BARNES: I was just going to ask for the address, where to write.

MARK PARENT: We'll supply that for you.

THE CHAIR: I think this is something we will have to find out, just exactly who to write. Now, Mr. Hendsbee has said the Nova Scotia Retail Gasoline Dealers Association but (Interruptions)

JOHN HOLM: And the minister.

JERRY PYE: Actually, my contact is the petroleum industry and I can certainly provide you with a name, who is the President for the Atlantic Region, because he has been in my

office, along with an address.

MARK PARENT: But I have a question, because in my riding, there isn't a single gas station that doesn't have full-serve option. I'm wondering, is this geographically an issue, more in certain areas than other areas? Are you aware of where these gas stations are clustered?

VIC BARNES: Well, the main one in Berwick and the main one in Kingston, both have gone, there is no full service at all.

MARK PARENT: So it's not just confined to the HRM service?

VIC BARNES: No.

FRED MOMBOURQUETTE: I think it's becoming more prevalent. To answer your question, right in Pictou County, it seems that there are four or five and as the week goes on, somebody else adds to it. They seem to be getting in line with it and it is growing. If it hasn't been to your area yet, it probably will be very shortly.

MARK PARENT: It's not as if it is confined to the urban centers and not a problem in the rural centers. In fact, it may be the other way around, that it is starting in the rural centers. (Interruptions)

THE CHAIR: Can I go in order here? Mr. Chipman - I'm sorry, Mr. Boudreau is next.

BRIAN BOUDREAU: Mr. Chairman, I'm just wondering, this is a major issue. I know it is an issue right across the province. I have more concerns than in regard to what the Legion has brought here, but every one of their concerns, of course, are accurate. It is also decreasing summer employment opportunities here for college students as well and although they are low-paying jobs, I know in my part of the province they are very important, a lot of young people obtain employment at these service stations. I would remind the committee that each service station has a licence, and there's a licensing division that the government provides. They apply for their licence and each service station has a licence. So the government should, obviously, have some kind of view of the area before they issue these licences.

I would suggest the letter be written directly to the minister who is responsible for issuing these licences, and that some type of community or area review be done by his inspectors before a full-service licence is issued. It seems to be that this industry - it doesn't surprise me but there's nobody watching it. If there's no watchdog watching it, then it's going to do what it wants to do itself. We see the same thing with insurance industries and other industries. This is an issue that the government can control. I worked in service stations for 20 years, so I know a little bit about this industry. The government can deal with this issue, if they take it seriously.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Chipman.

FRANK CHIPMAN: This is just a question for Mr. Barnes. There are three service stations in Berwick, you said - I know of three in Berwick. You have the Petro-Canada and the Irving - are the three of them self-serves? There is one within half a mile down the road on Highway No.1.

VIC BARNES: The only one I'm thinking of is the Petro-Canada, I always go there. It's not full-service anymore. It's the same with the one in Greenwood.

FRANK CHIPMAN: Right, but you can go right across the street to the Irving, and then just half a mile down the road . . .

VIC BARNES: Yes, I don't know what is there. I would believe they will follow pretty quickly. It's going to save them money, isn't it?

FRANK CHIPMAN: Oh, I know it is. They're saving the companies money, and of course it allows the savings to go on to the consumer in discounted gas.

VIC BARNES: But it is spreading. There's no question about it.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Holm.

JOHN HOLM: I have just a couple of things. One, it seems that a lot of this switching over takes place when they do the renovations on the stations. I don't know how many years it is. The tanks, for example, have a life expectancy, and they have to replace the gas tanks every so many years. Do you know what it is?

THE CHAIR: It's 15 years.

JOHN HOLM: Every 15 years. Pretty well - you might as well say - all of the stations out there are one flag or another, whether it be Petro-Canada or Esso or Ultramar or even Wilsons, although they may be independents they are really a large flag as well. When they go through their renovations, as their budgets permit and as they go through the cycle, then they basically seem to be eliminating all of the full-service. Esso now has what is called the speed pass, where you don't even have to go inside. You just flash your little thing in front of the tiger, and then you fill up your gas and you don't even need to go in and see the clerk inside.

I think Mr. Boudreau has a good point, if the government does - and they certainly do - the regulations, and I would be inclined to say at least 95 per cent if not more of the stations are really a flagship, we would have the ability as a government to at least require, if they wanted to, some kind of blend to ensure that there would be so many full-service pumps within certain geographical areas. I think the opportunity is there.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Pye.

JERRY PYE: I just think that we ought not to look at this as an employment issue but as a public safety issue and a delivery of service to the consuming public issue. Those are the two issues we ought to look at this from. The fact is that many of the service stations or many of those in the industry will say that they are providing the level of service to the people. So within a particular radius they will say that we do have a number of full-service stations. What happens in local communities, where people have lived for a long period of time, is when they convert these service stations over, they all go to self-serve. Those people have lived in that community and served that service station for a number of years and who were the consumers of that station now have to move out of that community and into another area where one is located.

[9:45 a.m.]

There is a comment from Petro-Canada, and Petro-Canada does state that if you're disabled they will fill your tank up for you, all you have to do is let them know. Often there is not a sign in a window or a door or anything, so most people don't know. The other service stations, like Esso and Irving and even Wilsons, for example, if you will note, most of them do not provide anything. I will say in fairness to Irving that if you do look at the Irving service stations across this province, most of them still continue to have full service provided to the citizens. Primarily this is Ultramar, Esso and, in fact, Petro-Canada that seem to be the major components who are providing the full self-service around here, and many of them will say that there is no need to provide that service because the people can drive that extra kilometre and so on and so forth for it. (Interruptions) I think John is telling me to shut up. (Laughter)

Anyway, I just want you to know that the most important thing around this issue, as far as I'm concerned, is consumer service and public safety, and to serve all citizens. Most of the people, as I've said, who are older find that they can't do it themselves. As a matter of fact what some of them are doing is they are having their sons or daughters go out and fill up the car when they're there in order to get their gas, so that they won't have to go through that kind of service. That in itself is unfair to those who like to be independent at a certain age.

THE CHAIR: Thank you very much, I believe it's Mr. Wilson's turn.

DAVID WILSON: There's a couple of concerns that I have. One is that perhaps we need some more information before we proceed any further, as to the level of service that's provided in each area. You're saying that full service may not be available at one station but may be available at another station down the road or across the street or whatever the case may be. Mr. Boudreau has made an excellent point of perhaps directing our attention towards the licensing division of the government as to what level of service is provided.

It's not just a convenience factor, there are safety factors that are involved, as everyone

has pointed out here. But it still boils down to a level of service that's provided to consumers. If consumers are complaining about this level of service, then I would think that the companies would be paying attention. If, indeed, as Mr. Pye has suggested, there are policies in effect by the gas companies that say we have an unwritten policy that says we will pump your gas if you're disabled and you pull into the pumps, that policy perhaps should be posted by the company itself, and perhaps recommendations could be made to that effect.

I just want to be careful that we don't get in the business, as a committee, of trying to tell private companies how to run their show. If they are finding in different areas that there's a certain level of service which is demanded, and I'm sure a lot of people are demanding self-service gas stations or else they wouldn't be putting them there to begin with, that we remind them - our job here would be to remind them and remind them through the government department that's responsible, in this case I guess it would come under Access Nova Scotia, under the licensing division.

All we can do is remind them, let's remind our guests here of that, that we can't force them to do anything. We can give them a little reminder that there are concerns out there, not just from seniors but from disabled persons in this province as well. I've had a few calls from seniors at home who were complaining about self-service gas stations, but when I did check into them I found out that perhaps just up the street there was a gas station that provided full service. Now those seniors didn't want to go to that gas station because for umpteen years they had been loyal customers to one particular gas station.

There are a lot of factors here and I just want to be careful, Mr. Chairman, I guess, in the way we word the motion that is on the floor now. We need some more information as to what level of service is already provided in the province, I think, before we can start recommending exactly what should be there.

THE CHAIR: Thank you for your comments. Mr. Chipman.

FRANK CHIPMAN: Mr. Chairman, I concur with what we have said here already. I know there is a self-serve station in my community and I don't use it. I go to the other one because it is a co-op and there is a 3 per cent discount but I don't like pumping gas, myself. I did it when I was a kid and I had my fill of it.

I guess one of the things that concerns me - and I listened to Mr. Boudreau speak - there is another issue here, you know, it is a safety issue and somebody has to be responsible for the driver. When you go into a full-serve you have to shut your engine off, you can't smoke within so many feet of the tank and it is probably a liability issue here too. I think those are concerns that should be addressed too because there is nothing to stop or prohibit anybody from coming up to a self-serve, leaving their engine running and smoking a cigarette and those are prohibited, if you go into a full-serve but no one is there to regulate the self-serve.

THE CHAIR: If I may comment on that, under the regulation, they have signs posted at the gas pumps.

FRANK CHIPMAN: I realize that.

THE CHAIR: Attendants can refuse to pump gas but they are certainly not enforcers. I don't think we should be getting into what signs are there and not at this point. I don't think that would be our function. The signs are in place. I mean, that is regulated.

FRANK CHIPMAN: I wasn't talking about the signs, I was just saying it is an issue with self-serve they don't have with the full-serve.

THE CHAIR: Yes, okay. I have to go in order here again. Mr. Parent.

MARK PARENT: Do we have a motion put because if we don't I would be happy to make a motion that we write the petroleum representatives, encouraging them to take this issue seriously and that we have had representation about it from representatives of the veterans groups in the province, and to copy that letter to the appropriate government body. But I think I would concur with Mr. Wilson and my other colleagues that it should be the petroleum industry that we encourage to take steps to provide a good mix and also where there are opportunities for disabled people to get their gas pumped, if it is a self-service one, to encourage them to post it. We should really direct it that way.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Pye.

JERRY PYE: I just want to tell you that when the sniper incident was happening in the United States, that those were self-service stations in which some of those people were actually killed, I believe, in the sniper incident. I just wanted to bring that to your attention.

The important thing is this, that the industry means that there ought to be full-service, as far as I am concerned. The people I have been talking to, the senior citizens, the disabled and so on, if a service station builds a service and it is self-service, there should be a tank for full-service as well. I mean, I don't care if the industry tells me that because I am a disabled person or a senior, that I must go two miles up the road to use a full-service when they are providing a convenient level of service for someone who lives in my community right next door. I think that I should be entitled to that level of service as well.

What I am saying is that if, in fact, service stations are being built to provide the consuming public, then I am a consumer and, therefore, if there is a self-service tank there, then there should be a full-service tank as well. I am saying, anything less of us to do, would be to cave in to the industry and say that, yes, you are providing a service so what is the problem?



THE CHAIR: Mr. Holm.

JOHN HOLM: I really just wanted to respond to the comments from across that, really, it is an industry decision alone. They have to figure out how they are going to deal with it.

This wasn't an issue 10 years ago. It was after deregulation. The industry was deregulated and government gave up its ability or its right to regulate the industry, permitting them all to decide if they do or don't wish to go self-serve. At that time, the argument was, of course, the industry is going to want to still maintain all kinds of full-service stations because there will be those who are going to want that service. Well, what we are seeing is, in fact, what a lot of people at that time predicted would happen and that is, that the bottom line is more important. If you can make more money by getting rid of full-service stations and automate them as much as possible, then your profits go up. Yes, you may lose a few customers or a few customers may be inconvenienced but the bottom line continues to grow.

I just go back and I say, government did deregulate it, government set up the climate or the scenario under which we are currently operating so government does have the opportunity to go back, if it wishes, if it so chooses - it may not have to go to full regulation again but even the clout that is there, if the government wishes to speak firmly with industry and say that this is a serious problem and if you aren't prepared to address it, then we will be forced to address it, then maybe there might be a higher spirit of co-operation.

THE CHAIR: Okay. Now, the presentation from the Legion, if I may, at this point, they are concerned that 83,000 drivers are seniors over 65 years of age who cannot operate the fuel nozzle or fuel their own car because of various health reasons. Their request is that our committee support their request that the gas companies be restricted on the number of self-serve stations in any one area. Now, that is the request. I don't want to get side-tracked on other issues and certainly not on regulations because I don't think that is part of this committee.

JOHN HOLM: Well, with the greatest respect, Mr. Chairman, this committee can make suggestions. We can't make regulations. It is not being side-tracked. It is not beyond the purview of this committee. This committee can recommend whatever we want. Whether government chooses to accept what recommendations we put forward is up to them. But we do have the ability to say to the minister, say to the Premier or whoever will listen, that it is something that we think they should consider if the industry is unprepared to address the issue. We have got that power.

THE CHAIR: Yes. Mr. Boudreau.

BRIAN BOUDREAU: Mr. Chairman, to begin, I would just like to say that I want to second Mr. Parent's motion, if that is okay. Do we have a seconder on that motion?

JOHN HOLM: Well, I thought there was one on the floor.

THE CHAIR: Well, I thought that we started off with Mr. Pye's and then we were discussing his motion.

JERRY PYE: No, I didn't make a motion.

THE CHAIR: Oh, you didn't make a motion. Okay, we have a motion on the floor. The motion is on the floor.

MARK PARENT: The motion was directed towards the appropriate petroleum producers in the province, to - I don't know if you got the wording - let them know that this is a strong concern for seniors in our area brought to us at this meeting by representatives of the various Legions across the province and we would encourage them to provide a good mix of options, and also, where they have opportunities or where they have policies that people can, even in self-service lanes, request assistance, that those be promoted as fully as possible.

THE CHAIR: Does everybody understand the motion?

JOHN HOLM: That's pretty weak.

BRIAN BOUDREAU: Well, Mr. Chairman, I believe . . .

THE CHAIR: Mr. Boudreau, is this further to the motion?

BRIAN BOUDREAU: No, just speaking on the motion.

THE CHAIR: Go ahead.

BRIAN BOUDREAU: I believe in the original motion that Mr. Parent indicated the request was that the industry take this concern seriously.

THE CHAIR: Could we have - this is hard to follow.

MRS. HENRY: Yes, I have, that the committee send a letter to the appropriate petroleum representatives stating that this has been brought before the Standing Committee on Economic Development, and to encourage and to take this issue seriously.

JACK HATCHER: Veterans Affairs.

DARLENE HENRY: Oh, sorry, Veterans Affairs. I have another committee on my mind. To encourage them to take this issue seriously.

THE CHAIR: Just before going on, I would just like to read this in for the record. The people responsible for this are the Retail Gasoline Dealers Association of Nova Scotia, 4327 Prince Albert Road in Dartmouth. Mr. Holm.

[10:00 a.m.]

JOHN HOLM: I guess just two points, if the mover of the motion is agreeable. I think we should be indicating in it, if we do, we should be saying, and that the Veterans Affairs Committee shares their concerns. So I would suggest that we indicate in it that we agree with what has been said about it being a difficulty and secondly, that a subsequent letter be sent to the minister with a copy of the letter and ask that his officials work with the industry to try to find ways to address this growing problem.

MARK PARENT: Being the mover, I agree with the first one. The second one, I think, should be a different letter.

THE CHAIR: That's what I was going to say, should we not be sending two letters or do you want it all in one?

JOHN HOLM: I said, and a subsequent letter, an additional letter go to the minister, with a copy of the first letter, requesting the minister have the appropriate officials within his department work with industry to address this issue.

JACK HATCHER: I trust a copy of today's transcript will be accompanied with those letters?

MARK PARENT: I would feel more comfortable as the mover if the first part, yes, that we share the concerns, which we do, obviously and that that letter be copied to the appropriate minister but then in a second letter, the wording should really come out of a second motion it would seem to me.

JOHN HOLM: However.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Chipman, is this to the motion now?

FRANK CHIPMAN: Yes, just to what you referred to earlier, the wording of what you said earlier and I'm just adding this as a much simpler and easier to understand motion about the 83,000 seniors, about the way it is worded in this document you read off. I think that's very clear and unless you want to add something to it, that's fine. I just think it's a much clearer, more defined motion, that's all.

THE CHAIR: So what you're saying is that the Provincial Command's presentation in dealing with the 83,000 seniors be added to that motion.

FRANK CHIPMAN: Right.

THE CHAIR: Okay. We have a motion on the floor. Can we have that motion read back?

DARLENE HENRY: I don't have the full motion, sorry. The Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs write a letter to the appropriate petroleum representatives stating that this issue has been brought before the committee, encouraging them to take this issue seriously, then a copy of that letter going to the Minister of Access Nova Scotia, or whatever, stating that his officials should work with the industries to . . .

JOHN HOLM: No.

THE CHAIR: No, that's going to be another motion.

JOHN HOLM: That will be a separate motion. But also it was going to say share the concerns. (Interruptions)

THE CHAIR: We have the motion and the motion was read. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

THE CHAIR: For the second motion, do you have a motion, Mr. Holm?

JOHN HOLM: I guess that I would like to make a second motion that a letter be written to the minister responsible, said letter to include a copy of the letter to the gasoline retail people. In that letter to the minister we indicate that the committee considers this to be a serious issue and request that he have the appropriate officials within his department work with industry representatives to try to find ways to address these concerns.

THE CHAIR: Has everybody heard the motion?

DAVID WILSON: Who is that going to, again?

JOHN HOLM: Now it would be Mr. Christie, I think.

THE CHAIR: Service Nova Scotia.

JACK HATCHER: I will second the motion.

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

BRIAN BOUDREAU: I have a question, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIR: Go ahead.

BRIAN BOUDREAU: I would like to direct my question to Mr. Mombourquette,

through you, of course. I am just wondering if you approached any other organizations such as the Senior Citizens' Secretariat, with your concerns?

JACK HATCHER: Mr. Chairman, this matter has been discussed through the Senior Citizens' Secretariat and it also has gone through the Safe Driving Committee, which comes under the Senior Citizens' Secretariat and they have also written the minister on this issue.

BRIAN BOUDREAU: Thank you.

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

The motion is carried.

There was certainly a lot of debate, I must say, on that issue. It's nice to hear everybody's points of view. Mr. Mombourquette, do you have anything else?

FRED MOMBOURQUETTE: Comrade Vic Barnes has a presentation, Mr. Chairman. Would you like to present that now, Vic?

VIC BARNES: It is a pleasure to have this opportunity to join you again. Some of the items I will be sharing with you today are concerns that I have raised in the past but as they are ongoing concerns, I trust you will bear with me. I thought that today, in order to make these concerns more real, I would share with you stories of seniors in Nova Scotia. These are not individual cases that require your intervention, rather they are representative of issues that are prevalent across the province and they require systemic changes so that these stories do not keep repeating themselves.

Our first stop brings us to the home of Mrs. Bell. Mrs. Bell has lived alone in the family home in Guysborough County since the death of her husband two years ago. Mrs. Bell was always active in the community and has a wide circle of friends. Her concerns about driving in snowy weather and at night, coupled with the increased cost of insurance and gas, have made her a prisoner in her home this winter. Her sister, who lives in Halifax, has a volunteer visitor drop by to relieve the loneliness but there is not a similar program in Guysborough. As a result of her isolation, Mrs. Bell has become very depressed and has recently gone on medication in an attempt to pull her out of the doldrums.

Issue 1. The need for a province-wide transportation program for seniors and persons with disabilities.

While the Province of Nova Scotia provides partial funding to support accessible transportation, the current formula favours areas that have a high-density population. The current government funding formula disadvantages counties with large geographic areas and

sparse populations. Those counties become responsible to raise the additional funds required to provide the service and this is frequently difficult, as many of these areas are also economically disadvantaged.

Issue 2. The need for province-wide funding to initiate and sustain volunteer programs for seniors.

Certain parts of the province have funding allocated to volunteer services that serve seniors. Parts of the western region, for example, have a process by which non-profit sponsors can access funds from continuing care in the DHA. This has proven to be very effective in developing and supporting volunteer services for seniors. Unfortunately, many places in rural Nova Scotia have no available funds for programs of this sort and so, this cost-effective way of preventing loneliness and depression is not an option.

Mr. Short is caring for his wife of 50 years. She was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease two years ago and today she requires constant supervision. Mr. Short has help for a couple of hours, three times a week, through Home Care. One day a week, Mrs. Short attends the adult day program in nearby Amherst and Mr. Short has a full day to himself. This is the day that he meets his old friends for lunch and visits the grandchildren. This is the day that allows him the break that energizes him to provide the constant care for which he is responsible the balance of the week.

Mr. Short pays to have his wife transported to the program. He pays a small daily fee for her participation. Every Christmas, Mr. Short gives a donation to the adult day centre because he knows that his fee doesn't begin to pay the cost of this valuable service.

Issue 1. The need for a range of respite options for family caregivers.

Across this province, family members are caring for their loved ones. These people often leave jobs and incur significant expenses to fill this role. The Province of Nova Scotia does provide limited respite through Home Care, however, the amount of respite and the options for its provision are very limited.

Issue 2. The need for sustained funding of adult day services.

The current government promised in its election campaign that adult day services would be brought into the continuum of care. At this point, some adult day programs are receiving limited support from the province but this is provided on an inconsistent and ad hoc basis. Once again, we urge you to bring this valuable service into the continuum of care as promised four years ago. This will ensure that programs will be established around the province and that the programs can count on sustained government support.

Mrs. Black lives in a small fishing village. She has lived for 40 years with a husband

who beats her. When she was young and healthy, she could tolerate his abuse. Now that she has developed arthritis, the pain of his physical abuse stays with her for days. The thing that her friends don't understand is why she stays in this relationship. Mrs. Black knows why she stays. She has always stayed at home and cared for her family. In fact, her family is everything to her. She doesn't want to leave the income, the family home, the community, the good times that bring everyone home, the garden or her church. A friend once called adult protection to see if they could help but they apparently only intervene if the senior is not mentally competent. Mrs. Black is as sharp as a tack.

Issue. The need for programs that address the unique needs of older people experiencing abuse.

The Province of Nova Scotia currently provides funding for adult protection but it offers services to only a very small portion of the seniors who are experiencing abuse. We need unique programs that empower the senior who is experiencing the abuse and seeks to change the family dynamics in homes where abuse occurs.

Mr. Stillwell is devastated. He farmed all his life in the Truro area and now that he has passed the farm on to his daughter, he and his wife live on a limited income. Mr. Stillwell was just diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. He knows how difficult this is going to be for his family. His wife doesn't drive and she depends on him to do the yardwork and home repairs. He doesn't want to miss all the wonderful things he has been anticipating in his retirement. He can't imagine being a burden to his family.

The thing that disturbs him most, however, is that there is a drug that can slow down Alzheimer's disease but it is not in the provincial government formulary. This means that he will have to pay more than \$200 per month out of the limited income that he and his wife were living on. Heading out of the doctor's parking lot, he imagines how much easier it would be on his wife and family if he just had an accident on the way home.

Issue. The limitations in the drug formulary and the impact on the lives of seniors.

The formulary needs to be reviewed regularly in light of the impact that the access to certain drugs may have on the quality of life of older Nova Scotians, and the cost to families and the health care system if the drugs are not made available. There need to be counselling services available to persons who have received a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease and their family members. While the Alzheimer's Society has wonderful printed resources, nothing replaces a relationship with a person who can help you to navigate the range of options available to those affected by this disease.

There are two things about aging that scare the heck out of Mrs. Bennett, a long-time Yarmouth County resident. She does not want to go into a long-term care facility and she doesn't want to die in a hospital. Unfortunately, her worst nightmare is coming true. She has

known for a while that she does not have much longer to live but as long as she can make her meals and make it to the bathroom, she insisted on staying home.

[10:15 a.m.]

Home support workers currently come for four hours a day and she gets a nursing visit every second day. In addition, she gets regular visits from friends and a palliative care volunteer. However, even with all this support, Mrs. Bennett is alone for about 12 hours a day and she realizes that it is just a matter of time before she has to give in and go to hospital.

Her two children have offered to come home to help her but she would rather that her son, a lawyer in Toronto, and her daughter, who teaches in Regina, visit her closer to the end. She wants them to come home for her final days. She knows that they will have to stay and settle all her affairs. They can't afford to take any more time from their work and families. If there was just a unit in the hospital that was not so sterile, or a nice, homey place that she could go to die.

Issue. The limited options available to dying persons in Nova Scotia.

While there are some excellent palliative care programs in Nova Scotia, they are provided in a very inconsistent manner with some areas having optimum programs while other areas have very limited services. It is documented that most Nova Scotians would prefer to die at home and, yet, most are still dying in hospitals, many of which are ill-equipped to meet the needs of dying persons.

A complete review of palliative care services in this province is in order with immediate attention paid to the most underserved areas that currently include Kings County and Yarmouth County. It is recommended that the government partner with community groups that are currently working to address the needs of dying persons. This would ensure that the services are community-responsive and built on an existing base.

All of the stories that I have shared with you are representative of the types of concerns that we hear from older residents of Nova Scotia every day. They are not the kinds of issues that can be addressed in a piecemeal fashion. These concerns require sustained commitment to systemic change by the provincial government. We are willing, as a community partner, to work with the government to bring about these changes but it is worthy of note that time is running out. We will soon have almost one-quarter of the population of this province in their senior years. Planning cannot be delayed and the issues that I have shared with you today cannot be ignored. Thank you very much.

THE CHAIR: Thank you for that presentation. I would like to open up the floor for comments. Mr. Parent.



MARK PARENT: I just wanted to thank you for raising the issue of a hospice or some form of palliative care. There is work being done on a hospice for the Annapolis Valley area, situated next to the Valley Regional Hospital and the need is very great. There is need and there is opportunity coming together and I just want to thank you for raising that issue, among the many other good issues that you raised, but that one in particular is one that is close to my heart.

VIC BARNES: Yes, sir. That will be the first hospice, I think, in the Maritimes.

MARK PARENT: In Eastern Canada.

VIC BARNES: In Eastern Canada. I have been invited next week to a meeting with an organization that is looking into this. They are looking for the Legions' involvement and they are going to get it, as we are involved with every aspect of all of these things that I have mentioned today. I believe what they are looking for from us - and they are going to get it - is a \$40,000 commitment. In other words, they want us to supply one room and they will get it from the Legions, from Annapolis to Windsor. I see no problems with it.

MARK PARENT: I want to commend you for that.

VIC BARNES: We are involved and we care. All the Legions in the province are involved. We would just like to see the government get in line with us a little more.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Pye.

JERRY PYE: Mr. Chairman, I don't know if this is in order or not but I would so move that this presentation be sent to the Senior Citizens' Secretariat, the Group of Nine, to provide some input into this report, this presentation. I think it would be very important. Many of these issues that have been presented here - as a matter of fact, all of them - have to do with seniors. Some of them fall into the Health jurisdiction, some of them fall into other governmental jurisdictions, and I think the appropriate place for this to be ironed out would be at the Senior Citizens' Secretariat, the Group of Nine.

JOHN HOLM: I have a question on that motion, when you get a chance.

THE CHAIR: I have two people in front of you. Mr. Boudreau.

BRIAN BOUDREAU: Mr. Chairman, I have a couple of questions. Was the Senior Citizens' Secretariat involved in your discussion of these issues as well as the other issues?

VIC BARNES: Not with me they weren't. I work a lot through the Legions. In our area we're very involved with the VON in a lot of things, and we're involved with the hospice, we're involved with the adult day centres. The Legions are putting quite a bit of money into these

things, and these are our concerns.

BRIAN BOUDREAU: So this is basically a committee report, addressing these concerns?

VIC BARNES: These are the Legions' concerns. These are the concerns of all Legions across the province.

BRIAN BOUDREAU: I'm particularly interested in the Alzheimer's comments. Does the Legion have a position on this particular disease?

VIC BARNES: Not the Legion in particular, no. We're working with other health organizations, talking about this, all the time. We're involved in fall prevention. Just about every facet that you can think of, we're involved in some way with it.

BRIAN BOUDREAU: But the issue with Alzheimer's right now is that there is apparently a new drug that can help.

VIC BARNES: Yes.

BRIAN BOUDREAU: And it's not part of the . . .

VIC BARNES: It's not available here. You can get it, but you have to pay for it.

BRIAN BOUDREAU: Does the Legion have a position on that particular issue?

JACK HATCHER: Mr. Chairman, if I may, through the Group of Nine, we are addressing the limitations of the drug formulary at this time. It's an item that's in progress right now.

BRIAN BOUDREAU: Mr. Chairman, this is, as you're aware, a very important issue throughout Nova Scotia. I'm just wondering if the Legion could submit a letter to the committee indicating their support for this issue and, of course, giving the Alzheimer Society a copy of that supportive letter.

VIC BARNES: Through this committee?

BRIAN BOUDREAU: Yes. Would that be acceptable?

VIC BARNES: Sure.

THE CHAIR: We have a request, which Mr. Boudreau read. The Legion is prepared to honour that request, is it, with the letter?

FRED MOMBOURQUETTE: Yes, we certainly will.

BRIAN BOUDREAU: And may I ask that a copy of the letter be provided to the Alzheimer Society as well, please?

THE CHAIR: Can we just hold on a minute, I just want to go through this. Did you not cover the Alzheimer's in your request here? (Interruptions) So, would a further letter serve any purpose, if it's already covered in your presentation?

BRIAN BOUDREAU: I would prefer to have the letter, Mr. Chairman, for my own personal . . .

THE CHAIR: Then you would like the letter written to you? (Interruptions)

BRIAN BOUDREAU: To all the committee members.

VIC BARNES: I don't think we have any problem sending a letter with our concerns, because our concerns are very broad.

THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. Mr. Hendsbee.

JACK HATCHER: Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank Comrade Barnes for bringing this presentation to us today, as well as the concerns that are representative of many seniors across this province. I would also like to commend the work the Royal Canadian Legion is doing in regard to bringing service not only to its own membership but to the seniors of the province at large. I am prepared to second the motion that Mr. Pye has put on the floor in regard to sending this information onward to the Senior Citizens' Secretariat for their information and action. I'm prepared to do that. Once again, I want to thank you for the information here today, and best of luck in all your endeavours.

THE CHAIR: Before we do that, is it proper procedure - I know Mr. Wilson wanted to say something before we go on with Mr. Hendsbee's seconding of the motion.

JOHN HOLM: Well, you can second the motion and then still debate it.

THE CHAIR: Okay. Mr. Wilson.

DAVID WILSON: I think Mr. Holm was next.

JOHN HOLM: First of all, I just want to echo the comments David made. These are important issues. It's certainly not the first time we've heard them, but they are ongoing issues. My point here is that in terms of the motion that was made, one, we're sending the report to the secretariat, but I'm wondering, what are we asking for in return?

I think that we should not only send the report to them, but we should ask them to report back, or request that they respond back to this committee some time this Spring on steps or efforts that are underway to address or try to address some of the issues, just so that we can find out what actually is being done in these various areas. For example, as my colleague pointed out, the new money that is coming from Ottawa for health, some of that will be intended for home care. They're talking about drugs as well. Maybe there will, hopefully, be some improvement in a few of the areas. But there are all kinds of others, whether it be transportation, whether it be counselling services, a whole range of things.

It would be nice and it would be helpful for us and, I would suggest, for our friends to have at least some kind of response back to indicate where things are in the process or the evolution to provide the level of services that are needed. I'm just asking if, as a friendly amendment, we could ask that they respond back to this committee on the various concerns that were raised in the report.

JERRY PYE: Not a problem. We could make that a friendly amendment.

THE CHAIR: Does that have to be an amendment . . .

JOHN HOLM: No, as a friendly amendment in terms of the understanding, as a letter. (Interruptions)

THE CHAIR: Okay. Mr. Wilson.

DAVID WILSON: Mr. Barnes, thank you for your presentation today. I've listened to you on a number of occasions, and I have to comment that your writing is improving. (Laughter) It was a compliment actually, that's what it was. (Interruptions)

The fact that you have all these cases to document, I think, speaks volumes about what's happening in this province in regard to seniors' issues. If everything was okay, you wouldn't be writing these stories and presenting them to this committee. I also think that it's important, speaking on the motion, that this letter go to more than just the Senior Citizens' Secretariat, I believe this letter should be sent and hopefully read by every Cabinet Minister in this province, including the Premier, and that a copy of this letter be sent from this committee to each individual Cabinet Minister and to the Premier, so that they can review this letter and see exactly what veterans are talking about in regard to seniors' issues in this province. If I could make that amendment to Mr. Hendsbee's motion . . .

JOHN HOLM: Send it to all MLAs.

DAVID WILSON: . . . and indeed we can copy the letter to all MLAs in this province, all Members of the Legislative Assembly. That's not to say - I know members from this committee do go back to their caucuses and they do report on this committee. We can add on

that in particular all members of the Legislature and the Leader of the New Democratic Party, and the Leader of the Liberal Party should all get copies of this letter. I think it's a fairly important presentation that has been made to us today.

The veterans in this province speak on behalf of a large number of seniors in this province. I would assume that they would have a good handle on seniors' issues, as we've heard in this presentation. So, could I make that amendment to Mr. Hendsbee's motion, Mr. Chairman?

JACK HATCHER: Mr. Pye's motion.

DAVID WILSON: Mr. Pye's motion - sorry.

[10:30 a.m.]

JERRY PYE: Mr. Chairman, the letter is going to be sent out to these individuals, but unlike the letter that is being sent to the Senior Citizens' Secretariat and the Group of Nine, where we're requesting a response, are we requesting a response back from all of those individuals? So we should just copy the letter to them. (Interruptions)

THE CHAIR: Okay, we have the motion.

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

The motion is carried.

Is there anything else, Mr. Mombourquette, that you would like to bring up at this time?

FRED MOMBOURQUETTE: No, I think there is quite a bit on the plate now. We will be sending a letter out to our branches concerning the issue about the service stations and we will be asking our branches to write the individual companies, as well as our Command, and we'll apply as much pressure as we can from our point of view.

I think there is quite a bit in the seniors' letter that Vic presented, that if we can somehow shake people up enough to even implement some of the issues. We are coming into an era now where our baby boomers are becoming seniors. We, in the Legion, over three-quarters of our membership now are seniors and they're not all World War II veterans, they're citizens who have joined the Legion and are working on behalf of the community. A lot of our work now is dealing with the community.

Our veterans are well looked after and we have service officers doing that particular job but we find in our communities that the requests that we're receiving from some of our seniors, we don't have sufficient funds to look after them. We don't have the volunteer man hours that we once used to have. This is becoming another issue with not only the Royal

Canadian Legion but other service clubs.

We're trying not to discourage the members that we do have and when we see something done on behalf of your committee for us, that gives us a little lift and we're able to go out and say it's worthwhile to present these things and to work on their behalf.

With those few words, I certainly would like to thank the committee, as well as the chairman. As I said earlier, this is a well-working committee and I hope it will continue for years because this, to us, we can write all the letters in the world that we want but when we get the kind of support that we get when we come here, we go away and are rejuvenated and are able to pass that on to our members and they feel just like we do. I want to thank you very much and I don't think we have anything else to say.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Wilson.

DAVID WILSON: Mr. Chairman, I thought if we had some extra time, just in case any of the members had some topics that weren't covered in your presentation and one of the ones that I had - and we only get to see you so often, maybe once a year, twice a year - I have had a couple of enquiries back home about the veterans' licence plates. I'm wondering, what has been the reaction from your members and what's your feedback on the licence plate issue?

FRED MOMBOURQUETTE: It has just been overwhelming. We have issued a thousand already and they're coming in by the hundreds during the day. As you know, the application form is sent in by the veteran, there are certain qualifications, it comes to our Command office with a copy of the honourable discharge. This is stamped, sent back to the veteran and he takes it to the motor vehicle branch in the area where he lives and once that stamp is on it, then the licence plate is issued.

The satisfaction that you see and hear from the veterans who now have the privilege of putting this licence plate on their cars, it's just a wonderful feeling. They really feel now that the fact that they have been in the theatre of war, that they do deserve this licence plate and makes them feel very good to see that licence plate on the backs of their cars. Again, the committee is to be commended for that, the program is certainly going over well. We expect that within a year or so there will probably be at least 20,000 plates on cars.

DAVID WILSON: Have you had any complaints about the \$5 charge?

FRED MOMBOURQUETTE: No, just at the beginning there was a misunderstanding.

The \$5 charge is only applicable if the licence plate is not due. If you want to wait until your licence plate is due and go on, there's no \$5 charge. It's just the extra handling. At the beginning there was some, but we got the message out, the fact that the licence plate is worth more than the \$5 to our veterans and for the few that did complain it wasn't worthwhile

mentioning.

DAVID WILSON: In closing, Mr. Chairman, I just want to congratulate Mr. Mombourquette on the job that he has done in his role. If we have an incoming president, that means we have a retiring past president soon, do we?

FRED MOMBOURQUETTE: You do.

DAVID WILSON: Congratulations on the many times that you've been here, Fred.

VIC BARNES: We're not letting him retire too far.

DAVID WILSON: Yes, I don't think you're letting him go, I think we'll be hearing from him again. So, congratulations on your time in office.

FRED MOMBOURQUETTE: Thank you very much. (Applause)

THE CHAIR: I would just like to say that I had the pleasure on Tuesday to go to New Glasgow and MC the presentation to Mr. Mombourquette on his first licence plate, and for those who haven't seen it - and that was the first time I saw it - the licence number is AAA 01. It was pretty impressive when I first saw that licence plate, and you are to be commended for being the first one to have it registered and the first presentation. I commend you for that. And well deserved too, I might add.

FRED MOMBOURQUETTE: Thank you very much.

THE CHAIR: Is there anything else? Mr. Holm.

JOHN HOLM: I can't help but make this comment. Certainly I echo the comments about appreciation and congratulations on all that you have done. But on the licence plate, I just can't help but say I wish I had a number so simple to remember now because every time I pull into a place and they ask me what my licence plate is I always have to trudge out into the parking lot to try to figure out what it is.

Just one other thing, if I could, just going back to the point where you indicated you were going to be contacting the various branches and asking them to write letters to the various companies about self service, and my suggestion might be that if a letter is going to be sent to the company, it's often, at least my recommendation, that you elevate the request by letting them know that others know about your request, and you put something, maybe in the political arena. All I'm suggesting is that what you may wish to do is have copies of those letters sent to the Premier and to both Opposition Leaders. Then it puts it in a file, so that they know somebody else is hearing about it and at least it's worthy of a thoughtful response. I always recommend that when someone is complaining to government or whatever that you send copies

of letters to the Opposition as well. It's just a way of elevating the attention.

FRED MOMBOURQUETTE: Good point.

THE CHAIR: Is there anything further? Mr. Hendsbee.

JACK HATCHER: Mr. Chairman, I was hoping to also make the comments that my colleague, the member for Glace Bay, has also made, that Comrade Fred Mombourquette, you have certainly served your Command well during your term, and I'm looking forward to your participation in the future as past president. As you pass the torch on to your successor, I'm sure that Mr. Barnes will also carry that torch high.

I was grateful for my participation, whenever possible, in this committee. I think it's one of the very few committees that I really enjoy working for, especially for veterans' issues. I think our province stands probably alone as being the only Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs in this country. It just shows the respect that we have for our veterans. I think the respect comes through the work that you do, not just for your members but for society and the community at large. I want to thank you once again for your leadership, dedication and commitment.

FRED MOMBOURQUETTE: Thank you very much.

THE CHAIR: Well said, Mr. Hendsbee. That being all, we thank you very much for appearing before this committee.

[10:40 a.m. The committee recessed.]

[10:49 a.m. The committee reconvened.]

THE CHAIR: We have one housekeeping item on the agenda. What you've been provided with is a little booklet of what we've been doing to date regarding the proclaiming a day in Nova Scotia as Peacekeeping Day. What I'm going to request of the committee is that sometime in the next couple of months you look through this, apprise yourself of it, and we will probably - if it's the wish of the committee - in May or so, invite these people in after we do some more research on it, to do a presentation at the committee.

JOHN HOLM: I'm certainly not opposed to having them come in and make a presentation before us, but with the motion that I see before us, I don't have any difficulty right now saying we should endorse it.

THE CHAIR: Well, there's more to it than this. There's the timing of the day and so on. Take your time in the next while, and I will get back to you. If you just look at the booklet, you will understand further.



MARK PARENT: I would support taking the time to look at it. The reason why I mention it is because I was part of a meeting - there was already some sort of proclamation that was made this year. Mayann Francis from the Human Rights Commission and the Premier were involved, and one would want to make sure you didn't have the same things in competition with one another, and it was centring on the issue of peace. I would want to check out further what the status of that was. It was various people from the religious traditions across the province who brought thoughts, and it was held in the Red Room.

THE CHAIR: Normally we wouldn't have had this done up, but Darlene took it upon herself to have it ready for today's meeting, just so that you could look at it.

MARK PARENT: I think we should look at it, and we should talk to Mayann Francis and see what that day is too, to make sure that we're not reinventing the wheel.

THE CHAIR: If there are no other issues, a motion to adjourn . . .

JACK HATCHER: So moved.

THE CHAIR: The meeting is adjourned.

[The committee adjourned at 10:52 a.m.]

THE CHAIR: Good morning. We still have one person to come, and he will be over shortly, but we are going to start. At this time I would ask that the members introduce themselves, starting on my left.

[The committee members introduced themselves.]

THE CHAIR: This morning we have two guests here involved in peacekeeping: Richard Ross from Glenholme, and we also have Mr. David Lightburn, Director of Special Projects of the Lester B. Pearson International Peacekeeping Centre. We will start with you, Mr. Ross, you have a presentation. We also have a couple of guests here too, Margie and Jane.

Dave, if you would just introduce yourself.

DAVID WILSON: Sorry, Mr. Chairman. I apologize for being late. Dave Wilson from Glace Bay.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Ross, if you would start your presentation, please.

RICHARD ROSS: Good morning, Mr. Chairman, and Veterans Affairs Committee members. I will give you a short record of my military service. At 17 years of age I joined the Canadian Army from high school. From 1948 until 1951 I served in Ontario. From 1951 to 1953 I went to Europe with the first troops to serve in NATO after the war. From 1953 to 1955

I served here in Eastern Command. From 1955 to 1957 I was stationed in Fort Churchill, Manitoba. From 1957 to 1965 I served at Camp Gagetown. From 1965 to 1966 I was with the UN in the Middle East. From 1966 to 1969 I was posted to the Proving Grounds in Ottawa. From 1969 to 1972 I served at base maintenance here in Halifax. I took my release from the Canadian Forces in 1972, retiring with the rank of Warrant Officer. My unit was the Royal Canadian Electrical Mechanical Engineers.

I have a letter here from the president of our national association and he writes:

"TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I have the honour of serving as the National President of the *Canadian Association of Veterans in United Nations Peacekeeping* (CAVUNP). With 21 Chapters spread across Canada along with our National Headquarters in Ottawa, CAVUNP serves as Canada's largest and pre-eminent Peacekeeping Association. Four of our Chapters are located in the Province of Nova Scotia.

These four Chapters represent only a small population of the many service personnel, police and civilian of Nova Scotia who have served Canada in the Service of Peace. Throughout the years 109 service personnel have sacrificed their lives for Canada - and many others carry the physical and mental wounds from service in areas of strife. They should be so recognized.

To this end, a number of Canada's Provinces have recently Proclaimed the 9<sup>th</sup> of August as Peacekeepers' Day. Not to be confused with United Nations Day in October the 9<sup>th</sup> of August specifically honours the 109 Fallen Peacekeepers those who have served and continue to serve. Although not a civic holiday, it is a day 'designated' by the Provinces reminding Canadians of the sacrifice paid by their Service personnel, police and civilians who serve in the 'Service of Peace' in contentious areas throughout the world.

We ask you to consider the same initiative for the Province of Nova Scotia.

Thank you.

Respectfully yours,

Donald S. Ethell

Colonel (retired)

President"

I had received information by newsletter from the peacekeeping association in Ottawa, where I am a member, about different chapters approaching their governments to see if they would proclaim August 9<sup>th</sup> as Peacekeeping Day. As I noticed that no one had approached our

provincial government, I sent an e-mail to the President of the CAVUNP to see if it would be appropriate for me to approach the government in Nova Scotia and the answer was go for it.

I approached my MLA, Bill Langille, who I knew was the Chairman of the Veterans Affairs Committee in the Legislature. He asked me to forward all the information I had to him and he would bring it forward to his committee for discussion. I was very pleased to see the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre lend their support to the initiative to promote an annual Peacekeeping Day in the province.

August 9<sup>th</sup> was chosen for Peacekeeping Day, as that was the day we lost nine peacekeepers by a SAM missile over Syria. The CAVUNP mandate is to remember comrades who lost their lives and to educate the public about peacekeepers. To this end, the association envisioned a day of recognition for peacekeepers and asked that August 9<sup>th</sup> be proclaimed Peacekeeping Day. It is a chance to promote the good work of peacekeepers in their community. It also honours those who have served both Canada and Nova Scotia through their work helping maintain peace. As of this date, the Governments of B.C., Manitoba and Alberta have proclaimed August 9<sup>th</sup> Peacekeeping Day. The Provinces of Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia are currently being asked to proclaim the same date. Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Ross. Before we ask questions, I would ask that we have the other presentation now by Mr. David Lightburn.

DAVID LIGHTBURN: Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, I'm pleased to be here today to support the work of this committee and to support the work of the association and indeed we at the PPC applaud this initiative. I want to do four very quick things. One, I will say a few words about myself, as my colleague has done, also a few words about the centre here in Nova Scotia, a few words about the initiative itself, and then a few words of where we might go with this initiative that would be helpful.

Like my colleague, I have a military background, a 30-year military career in the Canadian Armoured Corps, involving some UN peacekeeping. I spent 13 of the last 15 years at NATO Headquarters in Brussels as a civilian where I founded and headed the NATO peacekeeping section, and for the last two and a half years I've been at Cornwallis, Nova Scotia, as part of the staff at the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre.

The PPC is an institution involved in preparing Canadians and indeed others for the complexities of modern peacekeeping. We are very pleased to be associated with this initiative. The centre is proud to be based here in Nova Scotia. It is a national centre, and it is recognized by the United Nations as an international centre, but I can assure you that all of those who come to the centre from around the world leave with very fond memories of this province. We have had representatives from over 140 countries here in this province, training at the Pearson

During a perceived decline in Canadian peacekeeping, which is where I think we are

at the moment, the Pearson Centre is still out there in the world. We have a team in Bulgaria, at the moment, training. I just came back from some training in Kenya. Indeed, we will be going to other countries later this year.

[9:15 a.m.]

With respect to the initiative, we are pleased that the association - and we would urge the province in relation to Peacekeeping Day that they acknowledge all of those who are involved in peace operations. Here, I particularly stress the fact that our police and many civilians, many from the judiciary, many from the corrections services, and individual Canadians and individual Nova Scotians are working with international organizations in the Balkans, in Sierra Leon and other places around the world. The initiative, and as the association does recognize, should include all of those who are deployed in the service of peace.

We would also urge that, despite the focus on UN peace operations, those who are involved in other peace operations under the lead of NATO and the lead of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and so on also be engaged because, at the end of the day, these are all UN mandated peace operations.

With respect to how we might further implement this initiative, one of our suggestions has been to, perhaps, use August 9<sup>th</sup> in the future to recognize individuals who have recently returned from peace operations. In that regard, the Lieutenant Governor has, on several occasions, presented peacekeeping medals at the Pearson Centre. One might consider, in the future, looking at August 9<sup>th</sup> as a day to present such medals and other recognition to individuals, and perhaps including the participation of the Lieutenant Governor of the province.

For our part, at the centre, we would be pleased to offer the centre as a venue for activity or activities or the hosting of something on August 9<sup>th</sup> in the future. We have a small problem with this calendar year, not to say we rule it out, but the centre is there perhaps as a focal point in the province with peacekeeping in the title. We also have people who could work with various chapters of the association or with this committee of the government in an advisory role on themes for a particular day or people who could go out as speakers to various groups in support of members of this committee or the wider Legislature.

Finally, it is a small caution, the summer is a great time in Nova Scotia and the summer brings in lots of tourists. That is a plus, if we properly promote Peacekeeping Day. It also means, however, that some of us might find it difficult in that month to be fully engaged, so I think we have to really look at our calendars, particularly members of this committee and members of the Pearson Centre and the associations, and take care to, in the future, block August 9<sup>th</sup> to be able to support this very worthwhile initiative. Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. Before I open the committee up to questions, I would ask that we rotate questioning. Our last meeting was hard for the recording, we have

blanks because people were not going in order. I'm going in order and ask for Mr. Holm to start.

JOHN HOLM: I'm interested in the comments about the blanks. Some people say that when we speak, we shoot blanks sometimes, but I will leave that one aside. I really don't have any questions, more I guess an observation or a comment I should say and maybe a suggestion because, quite honestly, to me this is almost like a no-brainer. I mean it's just common sense.

Canada certainly has had and still does have, but I wish that our Armed Forces had some more modern equipment and more manpower, mind you, to assist them in doing their jobs, but that's for another day. We certainly have had a very proud record of service around the world and going into many hot spots and have provided tremendous leadership. Certainly the Pearson Centre has been providing a great deal of leadership as well in terms of training people to be able to go in and do that kind of assistance. I like the notion that was suggested that it be really all-inclusive, that it would include not only the women and men who serve in the military full-time or as reservists, but also the many others who have gone as you have pointed out, like police officers, civilians, and so on.

In fact, some members of this Legislature have gone to different countries after the wars have concluded and have been assisting the people in those areas to try to develop a judicial system, trying to develop constitutions and so on. In fact, two of my colleagues, the members for Halifax Fairview and Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage, have been in what we call the Balkan areas on a number of occasions trying to assist in doing that.

I guess really all I would suggest as I conclude my comments, and I think that the request that is being brought forward is an extremely reasonable one and that this committee, before we rise, should have a motion on the floor, and I would suggest to the Premier, it wouldn't be really all that difficult a thing in terms of actually getting the declaration done. That could be done by a resolution, for example, introduced in the Legislature with all-Party support or even I'm sure it could be declared if the government wanted to do it on its own, just declare it, although I would prefer it to be an all-Party supported resolution declaring August 9<sup>th</sup> to be Peacekeeping Day in the province.

I don't know that we can commit in terms of what the Lieutenant Governor will be doing in terms, obviously, of making the presentation of medals on that day, or some of the other kinds of activities that would be going on, but I think that it's pretty easy for the government to make the commitment to have that proclaimed as a special day to remember and honour all of those who have served humanity in peacekeeping capacities over the years and who will continue to do so. With those brief remarks, Mr. Chairman, hopefully I didn't shoot too many blanks, but that's all I really have to say.

THE CHAIR: No, no, you're following procedure very well this morning and I thank

you for that. Mr. Hendsbee.

DAVID HENDSBEE: I will second the motion.

THE CHAIR: Maybe we will ask questions and give your comments and then make a motion.

DAVID HENDSBEE: I believe the honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid made the eloquent remarks and I'm glad to see that we have at least three associations, in looking through the literature, in Greenwood, Port Hawkesbury and Sydney that are affiliated with the peacekeeping veterans association. Are there plans for any more to be established in the province?

RICHARD ROSS: There is one in Dartmouth forming now.

DAVID HENDSBEE: Did they all work closely with the Royal Canadian Legions and Army, Navy, Air Force branches?

RICHARD ROSS: I would hope so.

DAVID HENDSBEE: I would just like to support the endeavours and go forward from there.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Chataway.

JOHN CHATAWAY: Certainly I very much appreciate what has been said so far and certainly we feel very honoured to be here to discuss this because it's very, very important to Canada because I think we are known worldwide for the peacekeepers we put in all over the world and I think the reason that they keep on saying here, Canadians, you come in here, is because we do a good job and it's a very fair job and it's a very responsible job. You said 109 died on August 9<sup>th</sup>. How many peacekeepers have we lost over the years?

RICHARD ROSS: It's 109.

JOHN CHATAWAY: It's 109 since World War II. It's a very important date. I understand that you mentioned B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan have adopted . . .

RICHARD ROSS: No, Manitoba. Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia are in the process.

JOHN CHATAWAY: So there's five.

RICHARD ROSS: B.C., Manitoba and Alberta have proclaimed August 9<sup>th</sup>. Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan are in the process.

JOHN CHATAWAY: What's the reaction of the federal government? I would think it would be very wise for the government in Ottawa to declare it right across Canada, just say okay. What's the reaction?

RICHARD ROSS: That's what they're hoping for.

JOHN CHATAWAY: How long has this suggestion of August 9<sup>th</sup> been put forth to provinces and put forth at the federal level? How long has this been going on?

RICHARD ROSS: I'm not really sure. I would think probably right from the start, when they started forming the difficult peacekeeping chapters.

JOHN CHATAWAY: So this has been going on for many years.

RICHARD ROSS: I would think so, yes.

DAVID LIGHTBURN: I think I read, in researching this on the Web site, that Manitoba was the first province, and I think they actually proclaimed it in 2001. In point of fact, while there may have been a lot of background work going on, I think it is a relatively new initiative and has growing momentum.

JOHN CHATAWAY: The Canadian Legions, do they support this date of August 9<sup>th</sup>?

RICHARD ROSS: I know ours does.

JOHN CHATAWAY: But across Canada, has it been discussed on the federal level, when all the Legions get together on an annual basis?

RICHARD ROSS: I can't answer that, I don't know. I would think they would have. We go to the schools in our area.

JOHN CHATAWAY: I think it would be very important to get the Legion to support this. It would be very important and very encouraging, because they speak for the people who died during war. At the same time, the people have gone abroad and done great service and peacekeeping things. The reason they did is because they wanted to avoid war, and they had to go out there and do that great work. It is dangerous, it certainly is dangerous.

I think it would be very wise to get the national Legions and the national peacekeeping association, peacekeepers, to come out nationally and say it should be done. Just one more question. Was there any consideration for November 11<sup>th</sup>, because, of course, on November 11<sup>th</sup> we remember people who have passed away in World War I, World War II, the Korean War. I know at the Legions that I attend that many people talk about it, in fact they just put peacekeepers on the monument. So we remember that, many people do remember that on November 11<sup>th</sup>.

RICHARD ROSS: August 9<sup>th</sup> has always been the day. The main reason was that we lost those many men on that one single day. That's why it was chosen.

THE CHAIR: Mr. O'Donnell.

CECIL O'DONNELL: I don't have questions, but I want to thank Mr. Ross and Mr. Lightburn for coming in this morning, for your presentation, and say that I do agree with your suggestion of having August 9<sup>th</sup> as Peacekeeping Day.

RICHARD ROSS: Thank you.

[9:30 a.m.]

DAVID LIGHTBURN: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Mrs. Baillie.

MURIEL BAILLIE: My questions were answered. Like John, I was a little bit interested in the history in the provinces, but that has already been answered. I just want to say that I also support the idea, and it's nice having you here this morning.

RICHARD ROSS: Thank you.

DAVID LIGHTBURN: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Wilson.

DAVID WILSON: Mr. Chairman, just a couple of questions, gentlemen, if you don't mind. One, I'm left wondering a bit about the involvement of, for instance, Scotia Command of the Royal Canadian Legion, are they in support of this proposed date for this proposed day?

RICHARD ROSS: I can't answer that, I don't know.

DAVID WILSON: So, Mr. Ross, you're representing what Legion?

RICHARD ROSS: Cobequid Branch.

DAVID WILSON: So this is an idea that comes from just one branch of the Legion?

RICHARD ROSS: It just comes from me.

DAVID WILSON: On behalf of the peacekeeping association?

RICHARD ROSS: Yes.



DAVID WILSON: And has there been any kind of discussion or any kind of contact whatsoever with Scotia Command of the Royal Canadian Legion?

RICHARD ROSS: Not from me, no.

DAVID WILSON: Do you plan on discussing it with the Royal Canadian Legion?

RICHARD ROSS: Well, we can, yes, sure.

DAVID WILSON: All I'm asking for is because it seems to me that I think, as my colleague said, it's pretty much - for lack of another term - a no-brainer that we would honour peacekeepers. My brother, who is a peacekeeper, would kick me out of the family if I didn't vote for something like this and I don't want to deal with him, other than to say I did it and keep peace in the family. (Interruption) No, he doesn't need any more reasons, let me put it that way. What I'm trying to get at is to make sure we have one big happy family here, that no one is standing on the outside looking at this as a negative thing. I can't see how they would.

RICHARD ROSS: I really can't see how they would come to that conclusion.

DAVID WILSON: I'm hoping you're right, but stranger things have happened, let's put it that way, but just to make sure. The other one is the administration of the actual day and that sort of thing would fall within the Canadian association of the peacekeeping association itself?

RICHARD ROSS: Yes.

DAVID WILSON: Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, I am in support of the motion that's before us right now, but I would suggest as well that perhaps we, as a committee, could make the necessary contact with the Royal Canadian Legion on our behalf saying that we have this presentation before us and that we're in favour of it. Perhaps we could look towards their support with our motion going towards the Premier, whatever the case may be. Just an added thought towards the motion. Perhaps maybe we can follow up on that as well. In conclusion, I thank you gentlemen, I'm in full support of your proposal before the committee.

THE CHAIR: Just for the record, I had a meeting with Fred Mombourquette, the President of the Provincial Command, Royal Canadian Legion, last week on another matter. At that time I did bring up that we'd be meeting with the gentlemen here this morning and he's well aware of it. On that point, I think that this is something that we should go forward with this morning. We'll have to do it by letter and a resolution, as Mr. Holm stated. That's the proper procedure and the Legislature is sitting now and if we want to get this through this sitting of the Legislature, it'll have to be done quickly. Mr. Hendsbee wants to speak.

DAVID HENDSBEE: I just want some points of clarification on the information that we have received here. Of the four chapters now that are established for the Canadian

Association of Veterans in United Nations Peacekeeping in Nova Scotia, two of the chapters are in honour of someone, for instance, the Greenwood chapter is known as the William C. Hall V.C. and in Sydney we have the Major General Lewis W. MacKenzie Chapter. Could you tell me if the Port Hawkesbury and Dartmouth chapters are going to be commemorative of anyone, be named after anyone?

RICHARD ROSS: I really don't know.

DAVID HENDSBEE: Is that sort of a practice that the association is trying to do in regard to designating these chapters after significant individuals who had participated in peacekeeping missions?

RICHARD ROSS: I would think so, because out West one was named after an engineer who was killed in mine-clearing operations, in British Columbia it's named after him. There was a General Crabbe, I think it was, retired, who has a chapter in Alberta.

DAVID HENDSBEE: Also the information, further to the answer you provided to Mr. Chataway, saying there were 109 deaths and looking at some information here that came from the Manitoba Web site of the Canadian Association of Veterans in United Nations Peacekeeping, it says there were 111 military deaths in peacekeeping history. I was wondering if there was a record being maintained by the association of all those memorials, of who had lost their lives while in the service of providing peace. I wonder if that could be clarified for our records.

Also, further to that, lower on the page, I will just refer to it, under this Web site of [cavunp-manitoba.com/news.html](http://cavunp-manitoba.com/news.html), there's a paragraph in here which I'm finding a little confusing and which I thought might need clarification. "While British Columbia, Manitoba, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick recognize Aug. 9 as Peacekeeping Memorial Day, set aside . . ." For some reason they are saying that Nova Scotia recognizes it already. I want to know if we could have that clarified for the record. Perhaps we should notify the Manitoba Web site in regard to what our intentions and ambitions are here in this province. I see that Manitoba's Resolution 83 - Peacekeeping Day, first sat in their House on August 8, 2000, and a year following the Manitoba Government proclaimed it as an official day of recognition. I'm just hoping that we could have those few points clarified for us.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Holm.

JOHN HOLM: I will just pick up on the last comment of David's first. It's something that we obviously would have to get clarified, if by some chance, unbeknownst to any of us, the province somehow did already declare it as Peacekeeping Day, then one of the first things that we have an obligation to do is to notify the gentlemen before us and others that it already is a day. I am assuming that the proper research has been done and that the Manitoba Web site is incorrect. Maybe they are looking at the fact that it was something that they're trying to do

here and they've jumped the gun, expecting that we will have, by then, done the common-sense thing and actually done it.

Just a couple of comments, briefly, again. One, the discussion about the Legion being in support, certainly that is important, and I don't say this in any way to offend those Legion members, but this goes beyond just the Legion. As was pointed out, there are many others who have made tremendous sacrifices and provided excellent service, who are not and were not members of the military. We're being asked now, for example, to assist in Iraq. There's some suggestion that we may have police, RCMP and other police officers, going over, trying to, for example, establish a police force and to help train. That's a pretty dangerous and a pretty major commitment. They're peacekeepers. It may not be under a UN mandate, but they will be doing a tremendous service. I think Pearson has been asked to be involved.

The other thing is that it's not only the 109 or 111 people who have lost their lives who have made tremendous sacrifices, the ultimate sacrifice. There are many who go who come back with physical scars and, as we have learned, and we learn more all the time, about the very real and often devastating emotional scars and so on that those who have gone off to serve come back with and they also deserve our extreme gratitude and support for what they have done for us.

So I would request, Mr. Chairman, that if we are going to be sending this letter in, and the resolution doesn't have to be introduced by the Premier by any stretch of the imagination - you will have to get, obviously, his approval and Ron Russell's approval - but it could also be introduced if we have the agreement by yourself on behalf of this committee in the Legislature to proclaim it. Who does it is really not all that important, it's a matter of having it done. It's not something that, if the government is in agreement with, should take all that long. The resolution can be crafted within half an hour, I'm sure, a very thoughtful resolution and introduced and passed very quickly and we probably won't be there much more than, by my calculation, two and a half weeks for the Financial Measures (2003) Bill and a little bit longer if we really want to turn the screws. We won't get into that now.

THE CHAIR: No, we're getting off track here.

JOHN HOLM: Another blank?

THE CHAIR: I'm going to ask Mr. Ross if he wants to say something and then Mr. Lightburn.

RICHARD ROSS: This is a letter from the national president and he says this specifically honours 109 fallen comrades. And that's definitely a mistake, that thing from Winnipeg about Nova Scotia.

DAVID HENDSBEE: Perhaps we should have Manitoba's Web site corrected.

RICHARD ROSS: Yes, but the list of fallen comrades is on the Internet, it lists their names, when they were killed and where they were killed.

JOHN HOLM: Does that include Afghanistan?

RICHARD ROSS: No, I don't think unless there are Canadians killed. Oh, Afghanistan - I was thinking of Iraq for a minute. I'm not sure if they would be on there or not, I haven't looked in the last month.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Lightburn.

DAVID LIGHTBURN: Just to support Mr. Holm's comments about civilians, as I speak, we have some 30 civilians at Cornwallis today being prepared for peace operations. More than half of these are Canadians, but we also have international civilians present, including officials from the United Nations in New York. I would also add that one of our focuses is to build capacity in the rest of the world and somebody referred earlier to our reputation out there, we believe we have a lot of knowledge that we can transfer to assist in building capacity in nations that want to do peacekeeping and at the moment we have a large program in francophone West Africa and we are just beginning to have a team there, in fact today. In Ghana we're beginning another three-year program for the government in central Africa.

On the business of the Web site and the mention of Afghanistan, I suspect Afghanistan is not there because technically speaking it wasn't - the Forces that were deployed there were not involved in a UN mandated peace operation. There was a security force doing other things. On the Web site question, I think it perhaps is just a case of somebody drafting a piece of information for the site to promote this and somebody got carried away with the number of provinces that were thinking about it. As to the numbers, I think we should stand by the list that is on the site and if it's 109, it's 109.

THE CHAIR: Did you want to say something, Mr. Chataway?

JOHN CHATAWAY: Certainly I think the committee should consider supporting the motion in principle, but I would very much like I think, before we support this in principle, but I would like a reaction of the Legion of Ottawa to say, because obviously August 9<sup>th</sup> is August 9<sup>th</sup> and the Legislature is not staying in business until August 9<sup>th</sup> or even to then, I wouldn't think anyway, but basically I think we're all very impressed with what we have been talking about, but the thing is I would like to get the reaction of the Legion of Canada, or at least in writing from them.

THE CHAIR: If I could just interject, Mr. Chataway. We'll probably get their reaction after we proclaim it. I think we have the authority to proceed now with this and I'll speak on it, and I think today we should make the motion and move on with it. It's regarding peacekeepers,

it's not the Legion; this is a peacekeeping initiative. We'll move on this today if it's the wish of the committee.

DAVID HENDSBEE: Mr. Chairman, I'm sure we will probably be looking at the other resolutions that the other Legislatures across the country have moved in regard to assisting with the drafting. I hope we're not going to use the eight "whereases" that Manitoba had used and also the recognition of Hiroshima and the atomic bomb. I think that those are significant events that I don't think we need to include in our resolution. We have a long military and proud tradition of military service and peacekeeping service in this country and I think we should recognize the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre in the Valley somehow throughout the resolution.

[9:45 a.m.]

THE CHAIR: The proper procedure would be to write a letter to the Premier from this committee requesting the day for peacekeeping.

DAVID WILSON: A question, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIR: Go ahead.

DAVID WILSON: We're not drafting a resolution here today?

THE CHAIR: No, we're not.

DAVID WILSON: So, can we hear the motion again?

THE CHAIR: We haven't gotten to the motion.

DAVID WILSON: Do we have a motion on the floor?

THE CHAIR: No, we don't have it. We're coming to that, that's why we're asking the question. We're going to come to the motion. Mr. Holm, do you want to make the motion?

JOHN HOLM: Okay. I guess very simply, that we draft a letter to be sent to the Premier within two days requesting that the government proclaim, by resolution, August 9<sup>th</sup> as Peacekeeping Day in Nova Scotia and that we ask that be done during this Spring sitting of the Legislature. So, let's just get that taken care of.

This isn't part of the motion, but in terms of the drafting, we've got all kinds of craftspeople who can pull it together to say it with the appropriate words and so on; that's not something we have to concern ourselves with.

DAVID WILSON: Is it peacekeeping or peacekeepers?

JOHN HOLM: Oh, peacekeepers, I'm sorry.

RICHARD ROSS: Peacekeeping.

JOHN HOLM: Oh, peacekeeping, is it? Yes, that's what I said first.

DAVID HENDSBEE: I second it.

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

The motion is carried.

Is there anything else before we adjourn?

Mr. Lightburn.

DAVID LIGHTBURN: Mr. Chairman, I just repeat my offer at the outset that we would be pleased to continue to support the association and/or any of its chapters here and this committee and the province in any implementation that is deemed appropriate, by giving publicity to this activity either closer to the event or in advance, and so on, so we remain available to this group.

THE CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Lightburn. Mr. Holm.

JOHN HOLM: In keeping with that, and in terms of promoting the whole tradition and so on - and it's not something for the committee to consider today, but maybe in the future - we now have a Veterans Highway and as something that is out there as a constant reminder, and someday it mightn't be a bad idea for this committee to consider - and there would have to be consultations done, but thinking about having a section of highway named the peacekeeping . . .

DAVID HENDSBEE: Highway No. 101, going towards . . .

JOHN HOLM: Yes, absolutely, The Peacekeeping Way.

DAVID WILSON: How about a peacekeepers' licence plate?

THE CHAIR: We'll go one step at a time here. That certainly is a well-thought-out initiative. I know you didn't just come up with that now. Anyway, is there anything else, any other comments?

RICHARD ROSS: I might add it's on one of your letters you sent to me, the Provincial Command sat in on your committee, so they knew all about it.

THE CHAIR: Well, I did discuss it with Mr. Mombourquette too.

JOHN HOLM: And he didn't object?

THE CHAIR: No objections, no.

JOHN CHATAWAY: Is that before the whole Nova Scotia Legion or just a conversation you had . . .

THE CHAIR: Just a conversation I had. Is there anything else?

RICHARD ROSS: Before you go, I'd like to thank you very much before you go for supporting this.

THE CHAIR: I thank you for bringing it to my attention and I thank the committee for their co-operation in this. I would like to see us get this through in this sitting and I can't speak for the government, but I personally don't foresee any problem with it. It's nice to see Margie here too, by the way. Motion to adjourn.

DAVID HENDSBEE: I so move.

THE CHAIR: We stand adjourned.

[The committee adjourned at 9:51 a.m.]