

THE ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION



LA LÉGIION ROYALE CANADIENNE

THE PRESIDENT

LE PRÉSIDENT

86 AIRD PLACE
OTTAWA, ONTARIO K2L 0A1

28 March 2012

File: 61-4

Mr. Jack Harris
Member of Parliament
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Harris:

We would like to thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on the text of Bill C-217, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (mischief relating to war memorials).

The Royal Canadian Legion strongly supports the intent of Bill C-217 to include incidents of mischief against a war memorial or cenotaph or an object associated with honouring or remembering those Canadian men and women who paid the supreme sacrifice in the service of Canada during war and on subsequent operations since Korea.

Our membership is strongly in favour of recognizing the serious nature of these incidents and in consideration of the feelings and emotions expressed by all Canadians against such acts. We do however feel that the provision of appropriate penalties suitable to the individual particulars of an incident should reflect the nature of these acts and there should be latitude in assessing the gravity of the situation.

The punishment should fit the crime and although no incident of this nature can be condoned, there should be provision for restorative justice measures with a mandated dialogue between veterans groups and the offenders. There should be provision where offenders are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions, to repair the harm they have done, by apologizing to a group of Veterans, or with community services. It provides help for the offender to avoid future offences and provides a greater understanding of the consequences of their actions.

Once again, thank you for inviting The Royal Canadian Legion to comment on this very important issue to Veterans.

Sincerely,

Patricia (Pat) Varga
Dominion President