

*Income Tax Act*

There are also military decorations, and I am thinking mostly about the Distinguished Service Order, or DSO, to which is attached a small monetary award of 10 pounds sterling, or about \$40, which is not very much. However, for those who have been given this decoration, this monetary award is a matter of pride in what they have done. It represents much more than the money as it confirms that they have served their country, Canada. Churchill said: "Never have so many owed so much to so few." I believe that Sir Winston Churchill said those words after the battle of London, and I think that such deeds should be emphasized in our history books so that this generation and the ones to come will understand that there were great acts of bravery and courage during the Second World War.

Mr. Speaker, you have to know some of the veterans to realize that most of them live at about the poverty line. I am not speaking about those who receive pensions, and even in their cases, pensions and allowances do not mean much, since, especially in the case of allowances, every Canadian becomes eligible for the income supplement at the age of 65. As veterans' allowances are given as supplements, those who receive them simply change over to the system provided for all Canadians at the age of 65.

This morning, we had the privilege of welcoming the Association of Former Prisoners of War. We heard some of the stories these people had to tell, Mr. Speaker, and it is enough to make your hair stand on end. It is impossible to imagine that men and women can have suffered so long during the war and not receive anything in return except our sympathy. As for me, I believe that those who came back, who were not wounded, who were not prisoners of war, who were able to rebuild their life, perhaps a very ordinary life, should receive something tangible in return. Some may say: this is impossible because of the high costs involved. Mr. Speaker, if those people had not been where duty had them at the time, I think it would have taken our country much more than just money to give those veterans a new sense of hope, a new sense of pride in belonging to this country for which they fought, for which they defended the freedom enjoyed by all those who lived in Canada at the time. People can obviously take pride in mentioning in their income tax return that they are veterans, and once again, we have to understand them, understand that they are proud to have served in the wars, and that they genuinely deserve a reward.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to take up too much of our time. I believe my motion is quite straightforward. It is not cast in concrete. There is room for improvements, and maybe we will be pleasantly surprised tonight to learn that consideration has been given to veterans in the tax reform, though I do not know anything about that, but I believe that it is of the utmost importance that this generation show consideration for the generation of those who suffered for us.

Mr. Speaker, I said earlier that veterans have always been considered as a group. Of course, some minor efforts are

presently being rewarded on an individual basis a specific segment of those veterans, and I am referring the VIP program, or Veterans Independence Program through which veterans who were wounded or live on some pension, instead of being isolated in hospitals, clinics, or foster homes, are indeed able to stay at home, to stay within their communities, to say where they spent all their lives, where they have been happy. I therefore submit that this program should be extended to other categories of veterans. It is an encouraging sign, but once again, I think we should read, and maybe all Hon. Members should do so, the terrifying and totally amazing stories of what those veterans went through during the First and Second World Wars.

I recently had the opportunity to visit France with a few of my colleagues. We were entertained in Reims and in Châlons-sur-Marne, and in a number of other places in France, in the south, in Avignon, in Nice and I can assure you that we always got a very warm welcome from those who entertained us, but all their speeches were along the same line, they would thank us for the huge services we rendered to the Allies as well as to the French families during the two World Wars.

Mr. Speaker, when you see those valleys, those fields of poppies, you are constantly reminded of all the war movies. That is why we have to give a kind of new faith to those who fought and, naturally, honour them. The Department of Veteran Affairs wants to honour their memory by building monuments. During the centennial year of our national parks, in 1985, the Department erected about 12 monuments in parks. Nice things can be engraved on steles, reminding us of those who gave their lives, who are buried on various continents or in the seven seas. But for the survivors, there is only bitter memory of lost years, lost income and of the one thing they won like everybody, freedom. It is up to us to add something to that and I think that what I propose in the motion is worth considering, if not in total, at least in part.

I have always had a lot of respect for veterans. I saw one yesterday who spent 14 years in the Royal Canadian Air Force. He had to get out because of various personal problems, but after 14 years, Mr. Speaker, he has no pension, nothing. In 1938, he was making \$33 a month, he fought throughout the war, but he got no pension, no veteran's allowance after the war because he did not have 20 years of service. He was in the regular forces and now he must rely on social welfare. He is frustrated as are many others, not because he fought to give us a future, but he is frustrated when he realizes that Canada is not very grateful for what they did.

Mr. Speaker, I know that much has been done for veterans. However, I think that the tremendous service they rendered Canadians will always exceed all services which could be made available to them at any cost. I hope the House will pass this motion which obviously is not binding on the Government since it asks the government to consider the advisability to do something in accordance with the substance of the motion.