

physical and mental injury have been well cared for as a result of the hospital care, pensions and other benefits that have been provided. We have now established the principle of giving a veteran the benefit of the doubt if the benefit he is seeking is regarded as a borderline case or even if a significant doubt exists. Although much has been done we must strive for more. We must remember that times change as well as circumstances and that new problems arise. A veteran may now be applying for compensation for a war injury which occurred 40 years ago. The reason for this is not difficult to understand. A young man in his early 20s thought little of a minor wound or injury; yet time has an ugly habit of magnifying what were originally minor injuries resulting in more serious consequences as the years go by. The benefit of the doubt principle has helped many who applied for pensions many years later, but I believe it does not go far enough. I believe that a veteran is entitled to special consideration by virtue of the fact that he or she is a veteran. I should like to see the principle adopted which would shift the burden of proof in pension applications from the veteran to the Pension Commission. This would mean that any veteran applying for a pension would automatically be entitled to favourable consideration unless and until it was proven that he or she was not so entitled. I do not criticize the people administering the pension legislation because they must abide by the present legislation even while they are, as we know they are, sympathetic to the veterans.

Canada has done much for its veterans, but we must recognize that new circumstances have arisen and will continue to arise, and that there are gaps in our present benefits and in the manner of their application. I mention this today because I believe that those of us who served in the Canadian forces in wartime and suffered no ill effects, as well as all other Canadians, have an obligation and a responsibility towards those who were not so fortunate. This is especially true in what might be called hard cases, and by that I mean cases where it is difficult if not impossible for the applicant to prove that his condition is the result of war service.

Recently Donald M. Smith, the Agent General of Nova Scotia in London, brought to my attention what appears to be an injustice towards Canadian veterans living in England. In that country there is an association known as the Canadian Veterans Association of the United Kingdom. Mr. Smith, a veteran himself, is president of that association. This association believes—and I think rightly—that Canadian veterans living in England should be entitled to the same benefits as veterans residing in Canada. Yet, this is not the case. Apparently, before a Canadian veteran can draw War Veterans Allowance, he or she must reside in Canada for one year. Why there is such a regulation I do not know. To me, if a Canadian veteran is entitled to any benefit, he should receive it regardless of where he may reside, even if he has never resided in Canada. This is a matter which I hope will soon be corrected so that all Canadian veterans will be treated equally.

Honourable senators, I have digressed from speaking strictly about Remembrance Day. May I conclude by saying that, on this coming Remembrance Day, we will remember, and we

[Senator Macdonald.]

will remember with pride as well as with sorrow, those who suffered and those who died while serving in the armed forces of Canada. They made a heroic contribution to making Canada a nation—a nation strong and free. Let us never forget them.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

● (1430)

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Léopold Langlois:** It is very important for me to associate with Senator Macdonald to remind our colleagues that November 11 will be Remembrance Day.

I was myself reminded of this date a few weeks ago when I had the opportunity to accompany Senator Murray and a group of veterans who had been invited to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the liberation of Belgium. We went with a group of some 44 Canadian veterans. We visited all the cemeteries where our soldiers have been buried in that country.

I was deeply touched by the gratitude of our Belgian friends. It did increase the pride I myself and all of us already take as Canadians in the heroic actions of our fellow citizens, not only during the Second World War, but also in the one before that and the conflicts in other parts of the world, such as Korea where Canadians also bravely fought and even gave their lives.

I would like to join Senator Macdonald and all honourable senators in reasserting that, on Remembrance Day, we must honour the debt our nation owes to its veterans, not only those who fell on the battlefield, but those who came back with injuries from which they will never recover.

We must not forget also the families of our glorious dead and wounded, which themselves have trouble surviving after losing a father or a brother.

I have oftentimes had the opportunity to visit Quebec area hospitals where veterans have been cared for since World War II. All these families who visit their loved ones in their sickrooms must carry the double burden of living apart and assuming increased financial costs and our hearts go out to them.

A few months after being elected for the first time as a member of the House of Commons, I had the honour of sitting on the committee who drafted the so-called Veterans' Charter. That non partisan committee, made up exclusively of veterans, was chaired by the Hon. Ian Mackenzie, the former member from Vancouver who was Minister of Veterans Affairs at the time.

I remember how strongly united that committee was. Its proceedings were entirely free of partisan considerations. Its only concern was for the families of all those who suffered more than we did during the last world conflict. I am aware that, in spite of all its efforts and dedication, the legislation it drafted was not perfect. It must be updated to reflect the new circumstances of today.

In addition, the other day in Belgium, I met Mr. Smith whom Senator Macdonald referred to earlier. He made the same representations to me concerning the extension of ben-