

## **Dominion Command**

I write to you today to address several issues which are inter-related and while they may on the surface be masked simply as a matter of “optics”, they are in fact, serious issues. These relate to the disintegration of the level of esteem that the Royal Canadian Legion is held in. What sets us apart from other community based organizations is our commitment to those who serve our country and our head of state. This issue disregards our past and the desires of our membership.

The first issue is the removal of the oath from initiation of new members. There was no consultation on this item and it was never brought to Dominion convention which is the forum of governance for the Royal Canadian Legion.

### **To quote Justice Karen Weiler’s decision at the Ontario Court of Appeal in 2014**

“The oath to the Queen of Canada is an oath to our form of government, as symbolized by the Queen as the apex of our Canadian parliamentary system of constitutional monarchy...applying a purposive and progressive approach to the wording of the oath, with regard to its history in Canada and the evolution of our country, leads to the conclusion that the oath is a symbolic commitment to be governed as a democratic constitutional monarchy unless and until democratically changed.”

The last line of this quote stands out based on the fact that the oath was removed from the initiation procedure for new members through a non-democratic process. Senator Eugene Forsey who was a constitutional expert said it best. "The Crown is the embodiment of the interests of the whole people, the guardian of the Constitution, ultimately the sole protection of the people if MPs or ministers forget their duty and try to become masters, not servants."

I acknowledge that Dominion Council has the authority to make decisions on behalf of the membership between our conventions. These decisions should be limited to daily running of our organization, items that are not time sensitive and non-critical in nature. The decisions as described here in do not fall into this category and directly affect branch autonomy. Dominion Council is giving the appearance of forcing change to membership parameters without the endorsement of convention. These changes in our policies and procedures have created significant opposition by the membership and

I request the oath of allegiance of new members be reinstated until such time as it can be taken to convention which has supreme jurisdiction and the removal of the oath be voted on should Dominion Command still wish to pursue this course of action. Should this not occur I would have to draw a parallel with the late Senator Forsey’s statement and question what Dominion Command is trying to achieve by removing the oath. In conjunction with this, the application form should also revert to the previous version where queen and country were both shown.

I would remind Command at this time that the Royal Canadian Legion exists by an act of parliament and while the word “Royal” was not added to our name until 35 years after our charter was issued, the original charter was issued through an act of parliament which was approved by the crown’s representative in Canada, the Governor General, who is also the Commander-in-Chief of the Canadian military, under whom our veterans and members of the military serve and to whom they took an oath as required by 6.04 of the Queens Regulations & Orders.

A related issue to this is the steady decline of the use of our proper name on forms and letterheads. The removal of the name Royal Canadian Legion and the badge is almost a misrepresentation to the public in an attempt to gain members and downplay the fact that we are more than just a social club. While it is understood that public facing information contain a easily recognized logo such as the 2013 filed logo (“Legion” followed by image of poppy), inward or organizational facing forms, documents and letterhead should contain the proper name of this organization should be maintained.

When I joined the Royal Canadian legion it was a conscious choice. I did not join an organization because it had a cute logo, because it had cheap beer or because it didn't ask me to make a commitment. I chose to support an organization with a proud history that supported our military, its members and our institutions. I understand that change is necessary for any organization to grow. These erosion's do nothing to aid in the survival of our organization and are merely window dressing. If Dominion Command is truly interested in increasing membership they would be better served by listening to the membership and better engaging active and retired members who currently see no use for "the legion".

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Branch: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_

If the oath to the Queen was good enough for our Veterans it should be good enough for the Royal Canadian Legion who are sworn to protect them and their interests.

**6.04- OATH TAKEN ON ENROLMENT: "I ..... (full name), do swear (or for a solemn affirmation, "solemnly affirm") that I will well and truly serve Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth the Second, Queen of Canada, Her heirs and successors according to law, in the Canadian Forces until lawfully released, that I will resist Her Majesty's enemies and cause Her Majesty's peace to be kept and maintained and that I will, in all matters pertaining to my service, faithfully discharge my duty. So help me God."**

Other Comments

**Please Send to Command**

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