



***Pat Varga***  
***Immediate Past Dominion President***  
***Royal Canadian Legion***

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On Sunday, February 2, 2014 7:08:34 PM, Brenda Fredrickson  
<[brendafred@gmail.com](mailto:brendafred@gmail.com)> wrote:

Hello Comrades Andrea, Brad, Dave, Gord, Pat, and Peter,

Although the Legion continues to be the most organized voice for veterans, I believe one of the very important tasks of the Legion is also to ensure that the individual voices of veterans are heard. Canadians need to hear not only those who represent our soldiers, but to recognize the some of the faces behind the Legion's search for support. Here is a veteran whose eloquent letter needs to be read by the largest possible audience. I am hoping you will assist.

I feel so fortunate that I got to know Debbie last summer in Nipawin at Wounded Warriors Weekend 2013. She is an extremely intelligent, articulate, and talented woman who served for 32 years. She has not yet explored just how far she can go in being a voice for veterans, but she has the potential be a powerful force to reckoned with.

I ask that Dominion Command distribute the following letter by Deborah Kent which she wrote "for widest distribution". If desired, she may be reached by e-mail as stated at the end of her letter. She is a resident of Ottawa.

Fraternally yours,

Brenda Fredrickson  
Saskatchewan

An open letter to my Employees - the Members of Parliament of Canada

Hello Ladies and Gentlemen,

Yes, you did read the subject line correctly. You are employed by me and the other 33,000,000 Canadians living in this fine country.

This is a fact that many of you seem to have forgotten while sitting in your offices on Parliament Hill in Ottawa and in your constitutional offices that are all paid for by the taxes extracted from our meagre wages.

I am not just your ordinary constituent. I am one of those inconvenient "Veterans" who faithfully served her country for 32 years and was medically released because of physical and mental injuries. To say that I am not happy or impressed by the behaviour or the statements some of my employees have been making about me and my fellow Veterans is a great understatement.

Mr. Fantino has shown that he needs to purchase a much better watch, attend time management courses and utilize them. Most importantly in order to continue with his current employment and to hold his current position he must attend anger management, harassment, discrimination and diversity training. These must be done by an outside agency and his attendance be certified by a third party for continued employment. These measures need to be taken because of his past behaviour that he has apologized for but never changed so the apology means nothing. Just like the one yesterday.

Ms Gallant. So disappointed in you. You represent members that live and work on one of the largest Army bases in Canada. You work in one of the cities with the largest concentration of military members in it and you could not even be bothered to find out from members that suffer with PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder/Injury) and OSI (Operational Stress Injury) what it is like for us to come forward and the repercussions of doing that. "The widely held belief among soldiers that admitting to post-traumatic

stress can jeopardize their careers is little more than a figment of their imaginations", MP Cheryl Gallant told the House."

Have you not learned by now that the mandarins you are surrounded by do not tell you the truth? They tell you what you want to hear or what they want to have put into policy, not what is really happening. Then you stand up in the House of Commons and open your mouth without checking the facts because you trust these people – so, how often are you going to insert that feces covered foot in your mouth?

I want to give you a dose of reality here about why we, as members of the military, do not readily stand up and self-identify as having PTSD or OSI or any other medical condition. The standard of care really depends on what branch of the military you are with and what base or unit you are posted with. For the most part there are not enough Doctors, Social Workers, Psychiatrists or any of the health professionals available to work with the amount of members needing the help so you are lucky if you get an appointment once or twice in a year.

Now, here is the kicker - when you go in and self-identify that you have PTSD, OSI or a major physical injury you are put on a "Temporary Medical Category" for six months. You are only allowed to have two of those before you must be (no option allowed for the Doctor) put on a Permanent Medical Category - which means you have just started your exit out the door. Your career is over. So, remember, I told you, you are lucky if you get to see a health care professional twice in a year on most bases, a Temporary Medical category can only be stretched out over a year before you are basically on your way out.

Now, Ms Gallant, tell me again, the stigma about our career ending because of PTSD is all in our head. Go, get out of your office, and talk to any mental health care professional and they will be able to tell you that two sessions over a year will in no way begin to help any person start to cope with PTSD or OSI. It wouldn't matter to you because after 6 years in office you have a gold plated pension for life but for those of us willing to DIE for our country, we have to serve for a minimum of 25 years now to get a 50% annuity of our best 5 years. Also if we are kicked out before 10 years all we get is a return of contributions – if and when they get around to it. Thanks for showing up, now that you are broken and we don't want to spend any time letting you heal properly, out the door you go –be somebody else's problem.

So, now with closing of Veteran Affairs offices across the country you want us to go into Service Canada offices when most of us have extreme issues dealing with crowds, noise, anxiety, small areas, our backs to open areas, trusting people that we do not know and calmly sit and discuss extremely personal issues in open spaces. Well thought out plan here.

I suggest that you Ms Gallant and Mr Fantino invite myself and a few others of my fellow Veterans who deal with PTSD and OSI to sit down with you in an office for an hour and you can experience first-hand what it would be like. I am pretty sure that you would quickly realise that your “good idea” isn’t such a great one.

If you would like to hear from someone who would tell you the truth and is willing to work with people to come up with viable solutions please contact me. I am a reasonable employer, I want people to be able to see their potential and work into it. But I also realise that if there are people who will continually stonewall others to stop them from reaching their best then they must be dismissed.

You can reach me at this email address [debbiekent@hotmail.com](mailto:debbiekent@hotmail.com) or [mysprainedbrain@gmail.com](mailto:mysprainedbrain@gmail.com) for follow up discussions. I hope to hear from you because you have proven you really do need to be educated by someone who will not lead you astray.

Deborah Kent.