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NEWS RELEASE

Review of New Veterans Charter Requires Structure and Identification of Parties to be Included

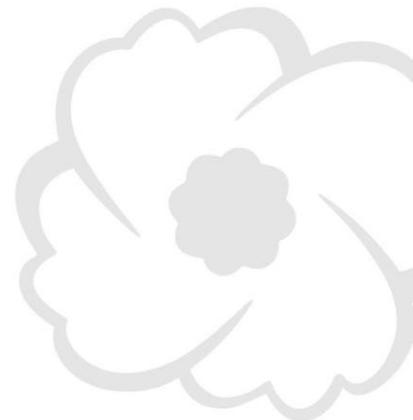
Numerous recommendations to government and Legion resolutions must be considered as first steps

OTTAWA, ON, SEPTEMBER 27TH, 2013 – The Royal Canadian Legion is pleased to hear that Veterans Affairs Canada will open the New Veterans Charter (NVC) to an extensive review, but echoes the comments of the Veterans Ombudsman (OVO) that no clear plan has yet been presented on how the review will proceed, what it will examine, who is to be involved, and what objectives are to be met.

“The government has numerous recommendations from its own Senate and Parliamentary committees, from Veterans groups and the Legion’s own resolutions dating back to 2008 on making improvements to the NVC,” says Gordon Moore, Dominion President of The Royal Canadian Legion. “The Minister of Veterans Affairs has all the information needed to outline a course of action for improving the NVC and it is action all Veterans must now see. A solid action and implementation plan is urgently needed,” says Moore. In a news release of 5 April 2013, the Legion agreed with the OVO report *Improving the New Veterans Charter* (<http://bit.ly/175fZAY>). Once again the Legion is looking forward to the OVO next report on 1 October and will be on hand to hear it presented.

The government was required to conduct this review as per the New Veterans Charter Act – section 20.1. For the Minister to be claiming this as a ground breaking announcement is inaccurate. The Legion along with the affiliated 17 organizations of the Veterans Consultation Group have regularly written to the Minister of Veterans Affairs specifically asking for this review to take place along with several other outstanding issues Veterans are facing. This group’s latest letter to the Minister in May 2013 has gone unanswered.

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ABOUT THE LEGION

Established in 1926, the Legion is the largest Veterans service organization in Canada with more than 320,000 members. Its mission is to serve all Veterans including serving Canadian Forces and Royal Canadian Mounted Police members and their families, to promote Remembrance and to serve our communities and our country.

The Legion’s Service Bureau Network provides assistance and representation to all Veterans including serving CF and RCMP members, and their families regarding their disability claims, benefits and services from Veterans Affairs Canada and the Veterans Review and Appeal Board. In communities across Canada, it is the Legion that perpetuates Remembrance through the Poppy Campaign and Remembrance Day ceremonies. With more than 1,450 branches, The Legion supports programs for seniors, Veterans housing, Long Term Care, youth leadership, education, sports, Cadets, Guides and Scouts. We will Remember Them.

“It is welcome news that this review will be conducted; we and our colleagues in the Veterans Consultation Group have been asking for it for many years,” says Moore. “What concerns me is the Minister’s statement that he looks ‘forward to working with Parliamentarians and the Ombudsman on this upcoming review’. “Veterans must be a part of this review,” says Moore. The government said in the Federal Budget it will continue to work with the Legion and the Senate Sub-Committee on Veterans Affairs recommended the development of a closer network with the Legion. As the country’s largest Veterans organization, the Legion is a powerful voice for all Veterans and looks forward to playing a key role in the review of the NVC.

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