

'Why We Fight' - a poem by Grenon

By THE CANADIAN PRESS

The following poem, entitled "Why We Fight," was written in Afghanistan in 2006 by Cpl. Andrew Grenon of Windsor, Ont., one of three Canadian soldiers who died Wednesday September 3rd in an ambush in the volatile Zhari district. It was re-released Thursday by members of Grenon's family.

Why We Fight

I've often asked myself why we are here. Why my government actually agreed to send troops to this God-forsaken place. There are no natural resources. No oil, gold, or silver. Just people.

People who have been at war for the last 40 plus years. People who want nothing more than their children to be safe. People who will do anything for money; even give their own life.

I look into the eyes of these people. I see hate, destruction and depression. I see love, warmth, kindness and appreciation.

Why do we fight? For in this country, there are monsters. Monsters we could easily fight on a different battlefield, at a different time. Monsters that could easily take the fight to us.

Surrounding these mud walls and huts is a country in turmoil. A country that is unable to rebuild itself. A country that cannot guarantee a bright future for its youth.

Why do we fight? Because, if we don't fight today, on THIS battlefield, then our children will be forced to face these monsters on our own battlefield.

I fight because I'm a soldier.

I fight because I'm ordered.

I fight, so my children won't have to.



Article supplied by
Kent Bradley and Cathy Taylor

Cpl. Andrew Grenon

Navy ship girded by steel from Twin Towers

When the USS New York was christened in Louisiana with a splash of champagne and a hearty cheer, few will overlook its motto: "Never forget." This brand new transport dock ship is bolstered with more than 7 tons of steel salvaged from the wreckage of the World Trade Center.

"This is unique. To my knowledge, I don't know of any other case in which symbolic materials associated with an event of historic magnitude have been used in a Navy vessel," said historian Jack Green of the Naval Historic Center.

"This ship is important to the Navy and important to the sailors who will man it. The USS New York will project American power all over the world, supporting the cause of freedom and doing it in a way that honors the courage of the heroes and victims of September 11," said Cmdr. Jeff Davis.

Securing its destiny has taken time, though. The fire-scoured metal — pulled from the rubble of the Twin Towers shortly after September 11 — was melted down in a Louisiana forge almost five years ago and molded into a great hunk labeled "Unit 1120," which would one day comprise the actual bow stem of the New York. Steelworkers at the Amite Foundry treated the metal with reverence; it was "a spiritual moment," according to press accounts at the time.

"We're excited, but we're humbled by the fact that this ship memorializes 9/11, and the strength and resiliency of the people of New York. As this ship cuts through the water, the steel will be leading the way," said Bill Glenn, a Northrop Grumman spokesman where the ship was built.



The Royal Canadian Legion Cadet Medal of Excellence

This year's Royal Canadian Legion Cadet Medal of Excellence was awarded to Petty Officer First Class Wyatt Attwell by Comrade Doug Smith at the Navy League's Annual Review on Sunday June 1, 2008. PO1 Attwell has been a member of RCSCC Harwood for five years and has exceeded all of the criteria set out for awarding of this medal.

Over the past year, PO1 Attwell has served as a Divisional Petty Officer, responsible for approximately 20 cadets in his division. He has demonstrated highly developed leadership capabilities, while at the same time being a very diligent worker when called upon to participate in that type of role. He has participated in a wide variety of community events and is always eager to volunteer for Legion activities as well as others.

In all ways, PO1 Attwell certainly exemplifies the model cadet and is held in high regard by his superiors, subordinates and peers. He contributes heavily to the development of his subordinates and promotes increased morale within the corps on a regular basis.

On behalf of the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 322 Ajax and all our members, congratulations Wyatt on achieving this milestone.



Report From The Nation's Capital: Legion Of Goodness

Looking over the wreaths placed on the National War Memorial in Ottawa for The Royal Canadian Legion's 42nd Dominion Convention, Honorary Dominion Command Chaplain Rabbi Reuven Bulka made a plea to people to join the organization he called "an army for good."

It was a phrase that would echo several times throughout the June 21-25 convention that brought 1,357 delegates to the Ottawa Congress Centre, situated a short distance from Parliament Hill. "It is fitting that you have chosen to hold your convention here," said Veterans Affairs Minister Greg Thompson during the opening ceremonies. "That you are meeting in the shadow of Parliament Hill, where decisions that shape the very nature of our country are made—where governments of the day have made the tough decisions to send our sons and daughters to war to serve on missions around the world."

It would be under that shadow that the governing body of the Legion gathered to wrestle with its own governance and to set its priorities for the next two years.

Certainly a highlight of the convention was the appearance by General Rick Hillier, the chief of defence staff, just days before his retirement. Hillier entered the hall to a standing salute from delegates. He began with a surprise presentation of the Canadian Forces Medallion for Distinguished Service to The Royal Canadian Legion. The medallion is given by the CDS on behalf of the Canadian Forces "for outstanding service performed by persons other than active military personnel."

Hillier presented the medallion to Frost and then addressed delegates saying, "I speak for 85,000 people in uniform who have said you are incredible people."

He praised the Legion for its work with veterans and with its public support of the troops and their mission. He noted the Legion is often there to greet the troops as they return from the mission and support them with programs while they are deployed. "There are 1,200 men and women in Kandahar where it is often 50 C and we are seeing steady gains. They are at it every day because they believe they are doing something that is seen as valuable. That is courage—to carry on and do the same job—day after day. They could not do it without your support."

The retiring CDS's recognition of the Legion certainly spoke to the belief expressed earlier by Rabbi Bulka during those poignant moments in front of the National War Memorial, that the Legion is "an army for good."