



THE HISTORICA-DOMINION INSTITUTE MOURNS THE PASSING OF JOHN BABCOCK, CANADA'S LAST GREAT WAR VETERAN, CALLS FOR STATE FUNERAL

TORONTO -- February 18, 2010 – The Historica-Dominion Institute mourns the loss of John Foster “Jack” Babcock, the last veteran of the Great War, and urges the government of Canada to offer his family a state funeral.

“We honour his service to Canada in the First World War,” said Andrew Cohen, President of the Historica-Dominion Institute, “and we extend condolences to his family. The burden of remembrance now passes from Mr. Babcock’s generation to ours. We must ensure that we never forget the service and sacrifice of the 600,000 Canadians who served in the First World War.”

Mr. Babcock was Canada’s last living link to the Canadians who served in the First World War and the more than 60,000 who died between 1914 and 1918. His story is told in the Institute’s [Memory Project Digital Archive](#).

On November 21, 2006, the House of Commons unanimously passed a motion to hold a state funeral for the last veteran of the First World War. The motion was a response to an online petition asking the federal government to offer a full state funeral to the family of the last Great War veteran in Canada. Over 90,000 Canadians signed the online petition in three weeks.

“With the passing of Mr. Babcock, we urge the federal government to honour the motion. As the highest honour the Government of Canada can confer upon a Canadian, a state funeral would be a fitting tribute not only to Mr. Babcock, but also to the more than 600,000 Canadians who served in the First World War, and especially those who died. We also call on the government to declare a National Day of Commemoration to allow Canadians to mark the passing of a generation of brave men and women.”

The Institute also expresses its condolences to the family of John Babcock.

The Institute initiated its call for a State Funeral on behalf of the veterans who volunteer with its Memory Project. The Memory Project Speakers’ Bureau is the largest of its kind in Canada, comprised of some 1,500 veteran volunteers who have addressed more than one million young Canadians since 2001. The Institute conducted an informal survey of this group in 2006 and found that more than three-quarters supported a state funeral to the family of the last Canadian Great War veteran.

The Historica-Dominion Institute is a national charitable organization that was launched on September 1, 2009 through the amalgamation of two existing organizations: The Historica Foundation of Canada and The Dominion Institute. Its mandate is to build informed citizens through a greater knowledge and appreciation of the history, heritage and stories of Canada. Some of its signature programs include Encounters with Canada, Passages to Canada and The Canadian Encyclopedia. Visit www.historica-dominion.ca.

-30-

For more information, please contact:

Andrew Cohen
President
613.875.2576

acohen@historica-dominion.ca

Marc Chalifoux
Executive Vice-President
416.602.9721

mchalifoux@historica-dominion.ca