



Embassy of the Republic of Serbia

*Mrs. Anne Dube, Chairman
100th Anniversary WWI Internment Camps Committee
Serbian Heritage Museum
6770 Tecumseh Road East
Windsor, Ontario N8T 1E6*

Ottawa, August 20, 2014

Dear Madam,

The Embassy of the Republic of Serbia in Ottawa warmly acknowledges and supports your effort that is made to mutually commemorate the centennial of the legislation of War Measures Act and its implementation through the creation of interment camps, by unveiling 100 plaques in 100 different places in Canada.

22nd of August 2014 is the date that marks the 100 years since the adoption of War Measures Act during the First World War, which was used to imprison people of dozen nations and ethnic groups, among them many Serbs, whose human and civil rights were deprived during the period 1914-1920.

We will never forget, that in the period of WWI around 10,000 immigrants were interned as "enemy aliens", in the 24 camps in Canada, where some remained until 1920.

We will never forget the crucial role that The Serbian National Shield Society of Canada (Srpska Narodna Odbrana u Kanadi), established 1916, played in liberating most of Serbs who were held in interment camps. Majority of them were released, and number of them fought as volunteers in various fronts during WWI on the side of the Allies. In that respect we are welcoming the establishment and activities of the Serbian Heritage Museum in Canada.

During WWI Serbia sustained demographic disaster, having 28% of the total population wiped out. In that period around 1500 Canadians served in the Mediterranean region, mostly in the Salonika Front, healing the patients suffering from battle wounds, including many Serbian soldiers and fighting like brothers in arms. This alliance was confirmed throughout the WWII, by fighting against the common enemy - Nazism.

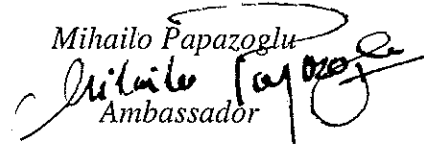
But today, by commemorating together with the Government of Canada the ill fate of our compatriots, being internees in the Canadian internment camps, we are saving their sufferings from being forgotten. This commemoration is evidence that no history lesson is too late to be told and learned.

Today we, as Canadians, as Serbs, as members of some dozen nationalities, we are paying our tribute and our debt towards our compatriots and injustice that was done to the Canadian internees of the WWI.

Last we forget.

Long live Serbia! Long live Canada!

Sincerely,

Mihailo Papazoglu

Ambassador