



*Damien C. Kurek*

Member of Parliament  
Battle River—Crowfoot

Dear veterans, service men and women, families of serving members, and all those in attendance today,

On Remembrance Day, Canadians honour the sacrifice made by past and present members of our Canadian Armed Forces. Every family has a story of service and is something that has helped stitch our nation together.

For my family one such sacrifice is that of Flying Officer John Earl Stillings, known to the family as Jack, who was in the 1659 Heavy Conversion Unit in the Royal Canadian Air Force during World War II. He was on voluntary redeployment in April of 1945 when the Lancaster bomber he was in was lost over the North Sea while on a training mission. To memorialize great, great Uncle Jack's death, his brother Blake wrote the poem *Ode to Jack*, which I share with you today:

*Your mortal frame must ever lie  
In some deep cavern of the sea  
Unknown to man, by human eye  
Unseen, for all eternity.  
But from that prison dark and cold,  
Unfettered, from its bonds set free  
Your living spirit bright and bold  
Shall soar, to course the sunlit skies  
Where you gave all for liberty.*

This year, as our Canadian allies face war on not only one continent, but two, I am reminded once again of the gravity of the sacrifices made by the men and women of the CAF.

As we witness the challenges our world faces, the sacrifice and work our men and women in uniform should weigh heavy on us. And we must not forget the sacrifices it took to build our nation, and how we must work to remain free.

It reminds me of a quote often attributed to Winston Churchill. "Those that fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it."

Canadians owe our existence to those who sacrificed, from the soldiers who went to fight wars overseas to the CAF members stationed locally at Camp Wainwright, across Canada, and around the world.

On behalf of the Parliament of Canada, and all the people of Battle River—Crowfoot, may God bless our troops, may God bless all those who sacrificed and let us commit to always remember.

Lest we forget.

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