



An official ceremony to commemorate 100th anniversary of Armistice Day in the First World War, entitled "Canadian Medical Missions in Serbia and the Balkan Front during the First World War" was held on 7 November at the Faculty of Medicine of Toronto University, organized by the Consulate General of Serbia in Toronto and the Serbian Heritage Academy of Canada.

The event was attended by representatives of Canadian veterans' associations, members of consular corps, representatives of Canadian SOC Diocese, prominent members of Serbian diaspora, Professors and students from Toronto University, York University, Ryerson University and other guests.

Consul General Vasilije Petkovic paid his respects to and laid a wreath in front of a memorial plaque to members of the Canadian medical corps who treated Serbian civilians and soldiers. The plaque was placed in the 1980s by the Serbian Heritage Academy of Canada in the hall of the Faculty of Medicine of Toronto University. Lester Pierson, a former Canadian Prime Minister (1963-1968), was among the Canadian volunteers and a Nobel Prize winner for peace in 1957 for his efforts to establish UN peace missions.

{youtube}6gzV0qnDVtA{/youtube}

Consul Petkovic pointed to the ties historically linking Serbian and Canadian people that shed light on the participation of Canadian volunteers in the medical corps on the Salonika front.

"These brave and altruistic men and women, including one of the most prominent Canadians, late Prime Minister Lester Pierce, whether on call or voluntarily, left their comfortable life in Canada and came to war-torn Serbia and together with the wounded, lacking food, medical supplies and equipment, went through the Albanian Golgotha and took part in the breakthrough of the Salonika front. Unfortunately, some of them did not survive. They came to treat the Serbian army but got killed or succumbed to the diseases and infections they came to cure", Consul Petkovic said.



Most Canadians are not aware of these historic facts speaking of the utmost humanity of their fellow nationals and ancestors in the First World War. However, the Serbs in Serbia and those in Canada, and the state of Serbia have not forgotten their helping hand and assistance when it was needed most.



On the right, the man in the suit is the author of the book "The Canadian-Serbian Alliance: A History of Friendship and Cooperation" published by Dundurn Press in 2017.

