

CONFIDENTIAL

# 10 DOWNING STREET

THIS FILE MUST NOT GO OUTSIDE 10 DOWNING ST

FILE TITLE:

Policy

SERIES

HISTORIES

PART:

2

PART BEGINS:

7 May 98

PART ENDS:

19 December 98

CAB ONE:

== Part Closed ==

Labour Administration

PREM 49 / 354

CONFIDENTIAL

**PART**

**CLOSED**

Series : HISTORIES

Title : Policy

Part : 2

Date	From	To	Subject	Class	Secret
24/11/1998	PS/HMQ	Cab Off	Home Front Memorial	U	0
25/11/1998	Cab Off		Home front memorial	R	0
26/11/1998	FA/APS		Letter to John Burton: Home Front Workers: Meeting with the Northe	R	0
26/11/1998		FA/APS	Brief - home front workers	U	0
02/12/1998	Cab Off	FA/APS	Home Front Memorial	R	0
02/12/1998	Cab Off	FA/APS	Home Front memorial	R	0
03/12/1998	PM		Letters to various Church leaders - Home Front memorial	C	0
08/12/1998	Cab Off	FA/APS	Home Front Memorial	C	0
08/12/1998		PM	Chief Rabbi - National Memorial to the home front	U	0
10/12/1998	Archbishop of Canter	PM	Home Front	U	0
10/12/1998	Archbishop of Canter	PM	Home front Memorial	U	0
10/12/1998		PM	Kathleen Richards - Home Front Memorial	U	0
11/12/1998		PM	Home Front - letter from Rev Finlay MacDonald	U	0
14/12/1998	Cab Off		Home Front memorial : Meeting at Coventry Cathedral	R	0
15/12/1998	Cab Off	SOC	Home Front Memorial	R	0
15/12/1998	SOC	PM	Official Histories Programme : The Development of North seas oil an	U	0
16/12/1998	Cab Off	FA/APS	Home Front Memorial	R	0
17/12/1998	EA/PS	SOC	Official Histories Programme : The Development of North Sea Oil an	U	0
17/12/1998	MAFF	fa/	Women's Land Army	C	0
17/12/1998	Cab Off	FA/APS	Home Front memorial : press Release	R	0
18/12/1998	FA/APS	PM	Aycliffe Angels	C	0
18/12/1998	PM		Alex Salmond - Home Front	U	0
18/12/1998	PM		David Trimble - Home Front	U	0
18/12/1998	PM		Dafydd Wigley - Home Front	U	0
18/12/1998	PM		Paddy Ashdown - Home Front	U	0
18/12/1998	PM	LEADER/OPP	Home front	U	0
18/12/1998	FA/APS	PM	Aycliffe Angels	U	0
19/12/1998	FA/APS	PRESS	Home Front Memorial: Final Press Release	C	0
07/12/1999		PM	Letter from Lord Janner of Braunstone: Commemorating the Holoca	U	0
07/12/1999		PM	Letter from Lord Janner of Braunstone: Commemorating the Holoca	U	0

fax (immediate) Hilary Goffman (home)

✓ Peter Wilkinson (home)

Mark Goveall (c/o Myrabella)

Revised version - please

ignore earlier one.

file

PRB

19/12

## HOME FRONT MEMORIAL: FINAL PRESS RELEASE

Philip 18/12

The Prime Minister, Tony Blair, today announced plans for a National Memorial at Coventry Cathedral to commemorate the part played by those who worked on the Home Front during the Second World War.

During the War several million people were engaged on the Home Front in the United Kingdom, but the vast majority of them have received no official recognition of the part they played in the war effort. The Prime Minister is determined to put that right.

They worked in explosives or armament factories, in the dockyards and shipyards, in iron, steel and chemical factories, down the mines, in transport and on the land. They faced very considerable hardship and dislocation of their lives and in many cases danger from explosions or bombing. Meanwhile other people played their part maintaining the essential services of daily life in town and country.

Mr Blair believes that a National Memorial will highlight for present and future generations the spirit of self-sacrifice and service of all those who worked on the Home Front from 1939 to 1945. It is hoped that a senior member of the Royal Family will attend the unveiling of the memorial, together with political leaders.

The Government is also discussing with Church leaders how the unveiling of the Memorial can be linked with commemorative services throughout the country, and it is looking at the production of a memorial brochure to celebrate the achievements on the Home Front. It is hoped that all these events can go ahead between the autumn of 1999 and the spring of 2000.

The Prime Minister has been made aware of the tremendous debt which the nation owes to those who worked on the Home Front by representations to him from the Women's Land Army and Women's Timber Corps, from Bevin Boys and from many munitions workers, including those employed at Newton Aycliffe.

Earlier today, the Prime Minister met two women who worked at the Newton Aycliffe munitions factory during the Second World War. He told them: "Many thousands of people in Britain, like you, still have first-hand

experience of war work, and I am determined to do something to commemorate their selflessness and sacrifice that properly recognises the tremendous debt the whole nation owes them."

**1**  
**FAXED** - 12/12/98 (1850)  
fax Alison Blackburn 238 6553

We spoke. Final version.

Philip Barker 18/12

## HOME FRONT MEMORIAL: DRAFT PRESS RELEASE 2

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\* Note to Editors: The Prime Minister has received representations on this issue from different groups including the Women's Land Army, the Women's Timber Corps, the Bevin Boys and from many munitions workers, including those employed at Newton Aycliffe.

file  
PAB  
21/12

**From:** Philip Barton  
**Date:** 18 December 1998

**PRIME MINISTER**

**cc:** John Holmes  
Alastair Campbell  
Hilary Coffman  
Roger Liddle  
Melanie Moses

### **AYCLIFFE ANGELS**

You are meeting two Aycliffe Angels, together with the *Northern Echo*, at Myrobella on Sunday afternoon. You will be able to tell them where we have got to with our efforts to recognise the contribution of all those who worked on the Home Front. There are three elements:

- a national Home Front Memorial – Coventry Cathedral are signed up for this. The Queen is likely to attend, but this is not yet in the bag;
- commemorative services around the country - the Churches are sympathetic (but not completely enthusiastic). The Dean of Durham is, however, strongly in favour and will say so to the *Northern Echo* if asked;
- a memorial brochure – the Imperial War Museum are looking at this, although we will probably need to find sponsorship to fund it. The *Northern Echo* are also keen to produce a supplement.

You wrote to Opposition leaders on Friday informing them of this initiative. We will put out a press release at the time of your meeting (attached). I suggest you draw on this in talking to the Aycliffe Angels. You should be careful not to go



beyond it, otherwise we will get into trouble with one or other of the parties involved (the Palace, churches etc).

The *Northern Echo* will report all this in detail on Monday morning (they are now completely on side - John Burton and Mark Covell have done a good job in turning them around). I doubt it will get much coverage elsewhere, given Iraq. But we can always re-launch it nationally at a later stage once we have sorted out more of the details (date etc).

*Philip*

**PHILIP BARTON**

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The Government is also discussing with Church leaders how the unveiling of the Memorial can be linked with commemorative services throughout the country, and it is looking at the production of a memorial brochure to celebrate the achievements on the Home Front. It is hoped that all these events can go ahead between the autumn of 1999 and the spring of 2000.

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10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

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bc 12  
BG

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THE PRIME MINISTER

18 December 1998

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Some of the War workers have made strong pleas to me to be awarded the Defence Medal. As you may know, this was issued in 1945 on a limited basis mainly to those in civil defence or working in areas of military operations. The Government has looked again at the possibility of a retrospective award, but this would be impractical. Nevertheless, while so many in our population still have first-hand experience of war work, I am keen to do something to commemorate their efforts and commend their selflessness and self-sacrifice.

The Government has therefore been looking into the possibility of creating a National Memorial at Coventry Cathedral in the form of an appropriate plaque, which would highlight for future generations the self-sacrifice and service of all those who worked on the Home Front during the Second World War. I hope also that such a memorial would encourage present generations to look “not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

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The Government has also approached representative Church leaders to ask if it would be possible for Churches throughout the United Kingdom (and those from other faiths in their own assemblies) to set aside a day close to the unveiling of the national memorial to remember the dedication of those who worked on the Home Front during the Second World War, and to draw lessons from them for the next century. Prayers and readings might be commended for such an occasion. I envisage that some Cathedrals - especially in areas where the experiences of 1939 to 1945 are still to the fore - could play a special role in any commemorations, as may many local Churches.

We still need to work out a number of details. But given the pressing interest which this has generated, especially among some of those in munitions industries and the Women's Land Army, I wanted to make my proposals known more widely and to invite your views. I would welcome any comments you may have so that I may take these into account before the Government begins to consider in detail how to put the proposals into practice. My inclination is that any unveiling of a National Memorial, and commemorations to go with it, should take place between late autumn 1999 and mid-March 2000. February 2000 currently seems the most likely month.

I am writing in similar terms to Paddy Ashdown, Dafydd Wigley, David Trimble and Alex Salmond. My office will ensure that you receive a copy of the No 10 press release to be issued shortly.

I am placing copies of this letter in the Libraries of both Houses.

*Your ever  
Truly*

The Right Honourable William Hague MP



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

18 December 1998

Dear Harry,

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*Yours truly*  
*Tony*

The Right Honourable Paddy Ashdown MP



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

18 December 1998

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*Yours sincerely*  
*Tam*

The Right Honourable Dafydd Wigley MP

file



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

18 December 1998

Dear David,

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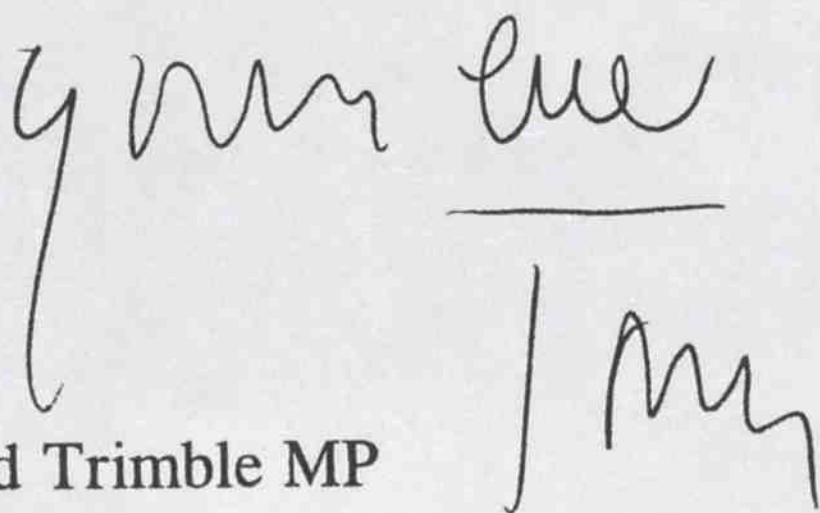
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The signature is written in cursive and consists of the name 'David Trimble' with a horizontal line under the name 'Trimble'.

The Right Honourable David Trimble MP



10 DOWNING STREET  
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*[Handwritten signature]*

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Alex Salmond Esq MP

*Yours sincerely*  
*Tony*



10 DOWNING STREET  
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From the Private Secretary

**SIR RICHARD WILSON**

---

**OFFICIAL HISTORIES PROGRAMME: THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
NORTH SEA OIL AND GAS**

The Prime Minister was grateful for your note of 15 December. He is content to appoint Professor Kemp to write this history.

**JEREMY HEYWOOD**

17 December 1998

AS

# Agricultural Resources and Better Regulation <sup>file PND 18/12</sup>

## Facsimile Transmission Form

From: ALISSA BLACKBURN

Agricultural Resources and Better Regulation Division  
Room  
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food  
Nobel House  
17 Smith Square  
London SW1P 3JR

Phone at (At home 0181 852 7734  
all weathered except when out shopping)

Tel: 0171 238

Fax: 0171 238 6553

To: Philip Barton

Please copy locally to:

Date: 18 December

No. of pages: 1 + 1

Message: Re Women's Land Army.

attached.

Will the final press notice put in the two changes Anthony Menfield suggested? because  
(1) on para 4 it would help to keep the words in relation to commendation " & will commend to present a firm conviction that readiness to take to the interests of others." both Coventry & Durham were very keen on the "commend" concept

(2) on the final paragraph could we have both Anthony's & the quote re two women. Otherwise the WLA will look like poor relations who've been brought in rather than being part of the core. I ask because this is a national press notice & we shall have to use it endlessly to justify the position.

5(FRI) 10:15

CEREMONIAL BRANCH

TEL: 0171 276 2766

**RESTRICTED - HONOURS**

FROM: A J MERIFIELD  
 DATE: 17 December 1998

Delivery: Internal: E-mail

**MR BARTON**

c. Miss Bharucha  
 (Sir Richard Wilson's Office)  
 Mrs Blackburn (MAFF)  
 (Mr Barton will confirm the time of  
 this release, hopefully due for  
 Monday.)  
 Mr Benjamin  
 Miss Wrighton

**HOME FRONT MEMORIAL: PRESS RELEASE**

You told me the Prime Minister was now hoping to announce this on Monday (foreign events permitting). I have two observations on the revised Press Release:

a. if fails to highlight sufficiently strongly the joint purpose of commemoration, **and commendation** - with its theme of service to others and regard for the interests of others;

b. the final paragraphs give the strong impression that local Constituency pressures are dictating a national event which should be non-Party. In any event the reference in the present form is likely to be unhelpful to those dealing with the Women's Land Army who have no mention in the text.

2. I suggest:

a. Amend Paragraph 4 to read:

Mr Blair believes that a National Memorial will highlight the spirit of self-sacrifice and service of all those who worked on the Home Front from 1939 to 1945, and will commend to present and future generations their readiness to look to the interests of others. It is hoped that a senior member of the Royal Family would attend the unveiling of this Memorial, with political leaders." And

b. I suggest replacing the final paragraph by:

(A) "The Prime Minister has been made aware of the tremendous debt which the nation owes to those who worked on the Home Front by representations to him from the Women's Land Army and Women's Timber Corps, from Bevin Boys and from many munitions workers, including those employed at Newton Aycliffe." (B)

AJP

**A J MERIFIELD****RESTRICTED - HONOURS**

(8)  
 178 DEC 1998



**From:** Philip Barton  
**Date:** 18 December 1998

**PRIME MINISTER**

**cc:** John Holmes  
Alastair Campbell  
Hilary Coffman  
Roger Liddle  
Melanie Moses

**AYCLIFFE ANGELS**

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**PHILIP BARTON**

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Earlier today, the Prime Minister met two women who worked at the Newton Aycliffe munitions factory during the Second World War. He told them: "Many thousands of people in Britain, like you, still have first-hand

experience of war work, and I am determined to do something to commemorate their selflessness and sacrifice that properly recognises the tremendous debt the whole nation owes them."

file

FROM: A J MERIFIELD  
 DATE: 17 December 1998

Delivery: Internal: E-mail

**MR BARTON**

c. Miss Bharucha  
 (Sir Richard Wilson's Office)  
 Mrs Blackburn (MAFF)  
 (Mr Barton will confirm the time of  
 this release, hopefully due for  
 Monday.)  
 Mr Benjamin  
 Miss Wrighton

**HOME FRONT MEMORIAL: PRESS RELEASE**

You told me the Prime Minister was now hoping to announce this on Monday (foreign events permitting). I have two observations on the revised Press Release:

- a. if fails to highlight sufficiently strongly the joint purpose of commemoration, **and commendation** - with its theme of service to others and regard for the interests of others;
  - b. the final paragraphs give the strong impression that local Constituency pressures are dictating a national event which should be non-Party. In any event the reference in the present form is likely to be unhelpful to those dealing with the Women's Land Army who have no mention in the text.
2. I suggest:
- a. Amend Paragraph 4 to read:

Mr Blair believes that a National Memorial will highlight the spirit of self-sacrifice and service of all those who worked on the Home Front from 1939 to 1945, and will commend to present and future generations their readiness to look to the interests of others. It is hoped that a senior member of the Royal Family would attend the unveiling of this Memorial, with political leaders." And

- b. I suggest replacing the final paragraph by:

"The Prime Minister has been made aware of the tremendous debt which the nation owes to those who worked on the Home Front by representations to him from the Women's Land Army and Women's Timber Corps, from Bevin Boys and from many munitions workers, including those employed at Newton Aycliffe."

**A J MERIFIELD**

**RESTRICTED - HONOURS**

(Immediate)

cc/HL - any comments? by close body

RL

(needs) please

FROM: A J MERIFIELD  
DATE: 16 December 1998

✓ cc 2. Rob - do you think X is necessary?

Delivery: Internal: E-mail

✓ cc 3. Kate - to see Y.

MR BARTON

c. Sir Richard Wilson  
Mr Holmes  
(I hear from Sir Robert  
Fellows that you and he have  
discussed this.)  
Mrs Blackburn (MAFF)  
Mr Benjamin (MOD)  
Miss Wrighton

4. back to PB

file  
PRB 18/12**HOME FRONT MEMORIAL**

I enclose a draft letter which you may wish to use for the Party Leaders. It is important that this venture should have all-Party support, and I would be slightly worried if you intended to send the letters to the Leaders at the same time as the issue of a Press release. I wondered if the Leaders could be contacted earlier - even if only the evening before?

2. I have alerted:

- Sir Richard Wilson, and through him Permanent Secretaries;
- MAFF (so they can tell the Women's Land Army and the Women's Timber Corps on Friday afternoon);
- Coventry Cathedral (who would prefer not to be exposed to Press enquiries at this juncture, but who would not mind if the Prime Minister decided to mention their involvement specifically in the Press Release);
- Durham Cathedral (I suggested that if pressed by the *Northern Echo* they simply express support and say they would stand ready to consider any approaches as and when dates are known. The Dean is considering a major County Service of re-dedication for early February 2000 and may already be in touch with No 10 diary section about the Prime Minister's attendance. (I hope the diary secretary appreciates the connection between the National Memorial and a Durham Service.) Dean Arnold felt wholly in sympathy with the proposals);
- Lambeth Palace (who were content with a general Press Notice but were conscious that they need to extend the Church consultations within the Anglican community and more widely).

Combine two.

Z

Y ||

3. We are still some way from going firm on the date for the unveiling but need to get agreement soonest. I have said that I would expect the Prime Minister to be in a position to write formally to the Palace in January. (I have to check further dates with the Archbishop's office and the No 10 diary secretary, and confirm the possibilities with Coventry and Sir Robert Fellowes.) Of the weeks suggested by the Provost of Coventry Sir Robert Fellowes inclines to a date in mid-February 2000 - but for The Queen herself some weeks between February and April will be taken up by a Royal overseas visit. The wording I have used in the Press Release about Royal involvement is on Robert Fellowes' advice. We cannot mention The Queen personally at this stage.

4. For public consumption I suggest a Press Notice on the lines of that attached below the draft letter. Are Ministerial colleagues so informed that the reference should be to "The Government ...." - or is "The Prime Minister has decided ...." more appropriate.

**A J MERIFIELD**

CONFIDENTIAL



CEREMONIAL BRANCH

A J Merifield Esq CB, Ceremonial Officer

CABINET OFFICE

Ashley House • 2 Monck Street • London SW1P 2BQ  
TELEPHONE: 0171-276 2770 • FAX: 0171-276 2766

copy Philip Burns  
John Holmes  
Henry Colman

cc M R Liddle (No 10)  
Mrs Alison Blackburn (MAFF)

Mr Mike Benjamin (MSD)  
Miss Wighton

Mr Jeremy Harris  
The Archbishop's Adviser for Public Affairs  
Lambeth Palace  
Lambeth Palace Road  
London SE1 7JU

file - Home Frt

6 November 1998

PRB 18/12

Dear Mr Harris,

During the Second World War there were some four million people engaged in the munitions industries in the UK. Their activities covered a wide range of work - in explosives or armament factories, in the dockyards and shipyards, in iron and steel factories, down the mines, in transport, and on the land. Very few of those concerned were eligible to receive the Defence Medal which in 1945 tended to be awarded to those in civil defence and areas of military operations. There has been a sense of grievance among many of those groups, the Women's Land Army, workers in explosives factories and so on, ever since. Particularly now those with firsthand experience of war work are declining in number, there is a strong feeling that something should be done to commemorate their efforts and commend them to future generations.

A claim for the retrospective award of the Defence Medal, by amendment to the original Warrant of May 1945, looks impractical, precluded by the sheer numbers involved, the impossibility of validating claims at this stage in time, and the difficulties of finding any cut-off point when so many thousands of individuals may feel they have as good a claim as others. Also it would be a breach of longstanding conventions about retrospective awards.

Nevertheless, it is true that many of those involved on the land, in factories and so on faced very considerable hardship and dislocation of their lives, and indeed danger from explosions or bombing, which ought to be remembered and commended to present and future generations. The suggestion has been made that it might be appropriate to have a particular Sunday towards the end of 1999 or early in the year 2000 at which all Churches, or just the Cathedral Churches in major centres, could hold a Service to commemorate those who worked on the Home Front and to remember and commend their selflessness and self-sacrifice. I have been asked to explore whether this might be something that would commend itself to the Archbishops and to their colleagues in other leading Churches.

CONFIDENTIAL



**CONFIDENTIAL**

It may be that, if such a series of Services were possible, then at one of them a plaque might be unveiled which would form a national memorial. We have had no discussion yet about where this might be placed, although Coventry - a symbol of civilian courage - is one possible location. Nor have we had any meetings to look at a possible form of words on such a memorial, but to give you some idea of the backward and forward looking elements of the occasions I enclose two personal draft possibilities.

Clearly there are many problems to be faced concerning dates - the availability of the Royal Family, the Prime Minister's diary, and indeed the calls upon the Archbishops and Diocesan and Parish colleagues. But I would find it helpful to have your response to this suggestion in terms of the principle, and the practicalities of arranging for a particular day to be designated and for arrangements to be put in hand if the Prime Minister, after consultation with the Palace, wished to go ahead. For the present you will appreciate that this is an in confidence enquiry to take informal soundings.

As you see, my office is in Monck Street not far from Lambeth Palace. I would be glad to come and have a word with you if this would be helpful. (I am away next week but back on 16 November.)

*Yours sincerely*

*Anthony Merifield*

**A J MERIFIELD**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

CHOPPING BLOCK EXAMPLES

i.

THIS MEMORIAL,  
UNVEILED BY XXXXXXXXXXXX ON XXXXXXXXXXXX,  
COMMENDS TO FUTURE GENERATIONS THE SELF SACRIFICE AND  
SERVICE OF ALL THOSE WHO WORKED ON THE HOME FRONT  
DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR  
*"DEATH AND SORROW WILL BE THE COMPANIONS OF OUR JOURNEY; HARDSHIP  
OUR GARMENT; CONSTANCY AND VALOUR OUR ONLY SHIELD"*  
W S Churchill - 8 October 1940

ii.

THIS MEMORIAL, UNVEILED BY  
XXXXXXXXXXXXX  
ON XXXXXXXXXXXX,  
COMMENDS TO FUTURE GENERATIONS THE SELF  
SACRIFICE AND SERVICE OF ALL THOSE WHO WORKED  
ON THE HOME FRONT DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR,  
*"LET EACH OF YOU LOOK NOT TO YOUR OWN INTERESTS,  
BUT TO THE INTERESTS OF OTHERS"*



Secretary of the Cabinet and Head of the Home Civil Service

AL ✓: JJY  
→ more Scottish  
(of DTI) ✓ C: HM/MF  
for PA

Top RR  
✓ P

PM  
content?  
9. ✓

**PRIME MINISTER**

**OFFICIAL HISTORIES PROGRAMME: THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH SEA OIL AND GAS**

I would be grateful to know whether you would be content to appoint Professor Alexander Kemp of the University of Aberdeen to write the official history of the development of North Sea Oil and Gas.

2. In his minute of 16 June 1997 Robin Butler said that preparations were in hand for selection of an author for the official history of the Development of North Sea Oil and Gas, the subject of the history having been approved by the Group of Privy Counsellors on Official Histories. Those preparations have now been completed and the purpose of this minute is to seek your approval to the appointment of Professor Alexander Kemp of the University of Aberdeen as an official historian to write this history the --- synopsis of which is attached.

3. Professor Kemp is a leading authority in this field and is regarded as eminently suitable to prepare the history. He has published many works and articles on the subject. The aim would be to complete the history in five years, starting early in 1999.

4. If you are content to approve Professor Kemp for this appointment, I shall write formally appointing him, and will put in hand arrangements for the appointment to be announced in Parliament, as is the usual practice, by means of a Written Answer to a Parliamentary Question.

R.W.

**RICHARD WILSON**

15 December 1998



## OFFICIAL HISTORY OF NORTH SEA OIL: SYNOPSIS

Introduction: Quarter of a century has seen the establishment and consolidation of the UK oil and gas sector on a scale inconceivable in 1960 or 1970. A remarkable technical and industrial achievement.

### **FIRST PHASE: THE 1960s**

Dutch gas discoveries prompted first exploration of UKCS in early 1960s.

Establishment of the framework for offshore activity. Continental Shelf Act 1964. North Sea licensing regime instituted by Ministry of Power in 1964. First (1964) and Second (1965) Offshore Licensing Round.

1965: UK/Norwegian median line agreed.

Extensive exploration activity in North Sea. Mid/late 1960s: Major Southern Basin gas discoveries.

Developments in gas market. Price negotiations between nationalised gas industry and producers. Construction of national high pressure gas transmission system. Conversion of all gas appliances to natural gas. BGC arrangements for prices for final consumers.

1969: First oil found in UK waters - the Montrose field.

Uncertainty about how long the offshore hydrocarbon resources would last, how best they should be exploited and the scale of onshore investment that was appropriate.

Emergence of public/private sector debate.

### **SECOND PHASE: THE 1970s**

Period of oil discoveries; oil crises gave emphasis to security of supply. 1973/74 and the rise of OPEC: realisation that UK could become a net oil exporter. Debate throughout 1970s on oil depletion policy.

Third (1970) - Sixth Rounds (1978/9) of Offshore Licensing.

Giant Forties (BP, 1970) and Brent (Shell/Esso, 1971) fields discovered.

UK offshore supplies industry develops: by 1979 over 70% of orders are placed in UK. (Government Offshore Supplies Office set up in 1973).

1974: Department of Energy set up.





1974: BGC agrees to import Norwegian Frigg gas.

1974: First North Sea oil landed.

Petroleum and Submarine Pipelines Act 1975: extension of framework for offshore field development.

Securing of economic rent from the North Sea: results of early auctions: implications of 1973 oil price hike: development of Fiscal regime. The Oil Taxation Act 1975: introduction of Petroleum Revenue Tax and ring-fenced production revenues for Corporation Tax. Interaction with level of state participation.

Start of public participation - establishment of British National Oil Corporation (BNOC) in 1975/6. Equity shareholding introduced 1976-79. Participation reintroduced in 1979 in form of option deeds.

### THIRD PHASE: THE 1980s

Background: North Sea as mature oil province.

Oil pricing in the 1980s and relations with OPEC.

Net self-sufficiency in oil achieved in 1981. Changing character of North Sea developments - development of smaller, more marginal fields.

Seventh (1980/1) - Eleventh (1989) Rounds of Offshore Licensing.

Leaving it to the market: Conservative Government's removal of public sector from oil and gas sector: demise of BNOC and participation.

Evolution of fiscal regime in response to events - oil price rises in late 1970s and 1986 price slump: tariffing regime in response to growing infrastructure.

1985: Government bars BG from purchasing Norwegian Sleipner gas. Reopens debate about costs and benefits of importing gas.

1980s saw further substantial progress by UK offshore supplies industry. By the end of the decade UK industry was taking over 80% of the home market and making progress in foreign markets through new technologies developed on the UKCS.

1986: Privatisation of British Gas. Establishment of Ofgas.

1986: Dramatic drop in oil price caused worldwide industry slump. Subsequent North Sea recovery based upon industry's increased cost consciousness and technological innovation.



1987: Petroleum Act established framework for abandonment of offshore installations.

1988: MMC report recommends restrictions on offshore gas purchasing.

## **SAFETY**

1965: Loss of Sea Gem. Subsequent tribunal recommendations incorporated in Mineral Working (Offshore Installations) Act 1971.

1970s: Development of current framework of safety regulation.

1978-80: Burgoyne Committee review of offshore safety regulation.

1986: DEn establishes Safety Directorate.

1988: Piper Alpha disaster; Cullen Inquiry set up.

## **THE NORTH SEA EFFECT**

Debate on macro-economic effects of North Sea: impact on the economy, use of Government revenues.

Development of Scotland's infrastructure: substantial impact on onshore development arising from UKCS activity which was widely dispersed to a variety of rural areas. Concentrated burst of development between 1970 and 1975 addressing additional infrastructure needs in relation to housing and transport.

Impact on Scottish economy: Creation of 60,000-70,000 jobs resulting from oil development and its wider economic effects, including the impact of the 1986 slump and the process of integration of the interests of the oil and fishing industries. 1978: Sullom Voe, world's largest oil transshipment terminal opened.

## **THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF NORTH SEA OIL DEVELOPMENT**

Environmental protection measures developed by offshore operating companies from construction of first platforms through to their abandonment. Impact of construction of onshore oil and gas facilities and infrastructure: local and central Government's roles: arrangements made to protect the environment.

1. cc JEH

✓  
RL

HC

2. file

**SIR RICHARD WILSON**PRB  
15/12FROM: A J MERIFIELD  
DATE: 15 December 1998c. Mr Barton (No 10)  
Mrs Blackburn (MAFF)  
Mr Benjamin (MOD)  
Mrs Bright (HO)  
Miss Wrighton**HOME FRONT MEMORIAL**

The Prime Minister re-visits Sedgefield this weekend, and wants to use the occasion to meet the *Northern Echo* (who have already had a private briefing), and the Aycliffe Angels, to tell them that he plans to have a national memorial.

2. In parallel he will write to the opposition party leaders, and No 10 will issue a Press Release. All this is to be timed for 3.30 pm on Friday 18 December, and I will be preparing briefing for No 10 by tomorrow evening. I have already cleared lines with Lambeth Palace and have asked MAFF to ensure they can contact the Women's Land Army on Friday afternoon, and will alert Coventry Cathedral (who I visited last Thursday) and Durham (who are in the dark but could be asked by the *Northern Echo* how they will run a "parallel celebration"). I will ensure Robert Fellowes is also kept in touch.

3. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Cardinal Hume and the Chief Rabbi have so far expressed understanding of what is proposed, but they (and we) need time to work up detailed proposals. Dates will be a problem and my informal soundings of the Palace have not made this seem any easier!

4. In the meantime I suggest you mention this to Wednesday morning colleagues. Richard Mottram (then MOD), Andrew Turnbull (then DETR), Richard Packer, Michael Bichard and David Omand will be aware of the project, along with Muir Russell (to whom I have spoken recently) and Hayden Phillips and Robin Young in terms of the earlier DCMS flag waving on the touchline. My speak note attached is hopefully clear.

5. Your colleagues may wish to alert their Secretaries of State, but in most cases I suspect current Ministers would not connect their present responsibilities with their 1939-45 inheritance.

**A J MERIFIELD**

RESTRICTED - HONOURS

**NOTE FOR WEDNESDAY MEETING**

1. In 1945 only a small proportion of "War Workers" in Britain received the Defence Medal. This has led to resentment, not least among the Women's Land Army, the Bevin Boys and some groups of munitions workers - including those from the Aycliffe explosives factory in the Prime Minister's own constituency.

2. The Prime Minister now accepts that it is not feasible to award a medal retrospectively:

- it is contrary to convention and could open up too many cases long closed;
- entitlement to a medal could not now be proved; and
- there is no "cut-off point" within the 6-8 millions of workers who were engaged in munitions factories, steel or chemical factories, the mines and so on, and claims would arise from others who had maintained essential services.

3. Instead he is proposing:

- **a National Memorial** plaque which would **commemorate the self-sacrifice of and service** of all who served on the Home Front and would **commend this** to future generations. [*Let each of you look, not to your own interests but to the interests of others.*] This might be at Coventry:
- **the opportunity for local people to stimulate commemoration Services in parallel** at local level, which might be facilitated by prayers or readings commended by the leaders of the Churches to whom the Prime Minister has written personally. [*Carey; Hume,*



*Free Churches' Council; Moderator of the Church of Scotland, Chief Rabbi.]; and*

- if possible, a **pamphlet of reminiscences** prepared by the Imperial War Museum.

4. He will announce his broad intentions on Friday afternoon this week by releasing his letter to Opposition Leaders and a Press Notice - and by talking at the same time to his Aycliffe constituents and the *Northern Echo*.

5. Dates for the Plaque to be unveiled remain to be settled - February or early March 2000 seem to be preferred (given the likely blockage from November 1999 to January 2000 [*Christmas/the Millennium*]).

6. Total cost (with some pump priming for a booklet) is unlikely to exceed £100,000. I propose to ask those Departments who are the successors of the 1939-45 supply or employment Ministries to pay a share [*£10,000 - £20,000 each*] of this.

- NB**
- a. Alison Blackburn has been alerted so she can tell the Women's Land Army on Friday;
  - b. Permanent Secretaries may wish to alert their Ministers and where necessary their Press Offices.



with compliments

A J Merifield CB  
*The Ceremonial Officer*

CABINET OFFICE  
Ceremonial Branch  
Ashley House  
2 Monck Street  
London SW1P 2BQ

12

Tel: 0171-276 2770

Fax: 0171-276 2766

Copies to: Sir Richard Wilson  
 Mr Barton (No 10)  
 Mrs Blackburn (MAFF)  
 Mr Benjamin (MOD)  
 Mrs Bright (HO)  
 Miss Wrighton

1. cc ✓ JEH  
 RL  
 HL

2. file  
 PNB 15/12

**NOTE**

**HOME FRONT MEMORIAL: MEETING AT COVENTRY CATHEDRAL**

1. I visited Coventry on 10 December to meet the Very Reverend John Petty (Provost), Canon Chris Burch (Precentor), Canon David Mead (Bursar) and Reverend Andrew Wright. Bishop Colin Bennetts joined the first half of the meeting.

2. I explained the context of the proposal for a national Home Front Memorial and the Prime Minister's wish to make a Statement of Intent to Parliament before the Christmas Recess. Pertinent factors included:

- resentment and disappointment that the majority of War workers had received no tangible recognition at the end of the War, nor since, and the particularly pressing claims by the Women's Land Army and munitions workers (including some in the Prime Minister's own constituency whose case had been supported persistently by the *Northern Echo*) and the Bevin Boys;
- a determination by the surviving workers that their families should have occasion to see their contribution from 1939 to 1945 recognised in their lifetime; and
- the Prime Minister's wish to see such self-sacrifice and selflessness commemorated in a way that both looked back at their dedication and commended their example to present and future generations.

3. During the discussion I drew attention also to some of the underlying currents:

- the pretty general exclusion of civilian workers from Remembrance Day events over the last 50 years, and the embarrassment felt by many workers because their "had no medal to wear" even if invited to such an occasion;
- the problems of definition of those concerned (a point raised by Bishop Colin and the Provost); particularly bearing in mind the significance of contributions from those who may have produced auxiliary war material or who had helped, clothe, house or educate

the munitions workers. The Imperial War Museum had commented similarly (and I understand that one of their key photographs is of a milkman delivering bottles of milk in the early morning after a major air raid);

- the need to strike a sensitive balance between inclusivity (ie not creating groups of people who could feel excluded), and falling into the counterproductive trap of failing to recognise adequately those who were now prime movers in pressure for recognition; and
- what I judged to be the Prime Minister's wish for a strong emphasis both on past service and on the inspiration this should give for the future ("Look not every man on his own interests but also on the interests of others"). The approach would have to be realistic about the Second World War without seeking glorify it - a note well struck by the Imperial War Museum itself. Such an approach could inform a Commemoration Service to meet the Provost's insistence that there should be a discernible Christian note in any Cathedral event, albeit one with the kind of ecumenical flavour that had been emphasised by the Archbishop of Canterbury's advisers at Lambeth Palace.

4. The Provost, supported by the Bishop of Coventry, said he felt that the Cathedral could mount a Ceremonial Service to meet the Prime Minister's wishes, and could associate it with the unveiling of a national memorial to those "on the Home Front". Coventry seemed a most appropriate location for such a memorial.

5. In looking at detail:

a. a memorial plaque might be placed in a central position (vertically or horizontally) in the centre of the "Cappers' Chapel" bay of the old Cathedral, where it would be readily seen by those leaving the Cathedral. There it would occupy the prominent third wall opposite the *statue of reconciliation* and at right angles to the burned *Coventry Cross*;

b. the Cathedral authorities would be glad to join any wider Cabinet Office committee to consider the wording, design and mounting of a national memorial, but recommended that their sculptor be given at least nine months to complete the work. This would have an estimated cost of around £20,000;

c. similarly the Provost and Precentor would prepare a Form of Service in co-operation with representatives of No 10/Cabinet Office, those workers most deeply concerned and, to ensure that the Service reinforced a nationwide programme of local commemorations, Lambeth Palace. I accepted that these meetings would best be conducted in Coventry, where the Provost and Precentor would be in the lead, drawing on their previous experience of such occasions;

d. we noted that the Form of Service would need to be drawn up sensitively, keeping to the **main themes of commemoration and commendation** and striking the right balance between the recognition for key groups and the avoiding of the exclusion of others whose service and sacrifice equally satisfied the rationale of the commemoration events. The Provost said he hoped the short Coventry reconciliation sentences and responses, in which the congregation joined, could feature in the Service as this was an underlying theme of the Cathedral. The precise details, including the timing of the actual unveiling of the plaque within the Service itself, would need to be further discussed - as would participation by any representatives from key groups (eg perhaps including a worker from Aycliffe and a former member of the Women's Land Army). Because the "Home Front" designation had a slight resonance of propaganda, I undertook to consult the Imperial War Museum over its acceptability as the generic term for this memorial and event;

e. the Provost said that provision would need to be made for refreshments for VIPs and those attending the Service with a ticketed invitation. Especially if the Service was held in the afternoon this might permit a VIP lunch (which he felt the City of Coventry might well wish to host); and tea after the Service in the Cathedral Visitors' Centre for up to 150 VIPs and perhaps in the neighbouring University of Coventry for the other guests. Refreshment costs would be included in an overall cost for the Service, along with the printing of Service sheets, the issuing of invitations, local administration and music/choir, which would probably fall between £7-8,000 and £10,000. This cost would have to cover the recruitment of a part-time event administrator who would assist in handling the Service (as had been done at the recent Maundy Service).

#### TIMING

6. The Provost said that the months of November and December 1999 and January 2000 were already extremely busy in Coventry, and would probably be equally pressed elsewhere. To meet the Prime Minister's wish for an event around the turn of the Millennium, he suggested that we should explore dates for February or March 2000, ie before Easter which fell at the end of March. Given that the Cathedral would need to be closed for security reasons before the Service he felt that the most appropriate pattern would be a Ceremonial Service and unveiling of the memorial on Saturday taking place between 2.30 and 3.30 pm; followed by commemorations on the Sunday of the same weekend both at Coventry and in local Churches or other Cathedrals which could use prayers, readings and any Sentences or Declaration of Dedication etc commended by the Archbishop of Canterbury and his ecumenical colleagues.

7. At Coventry all the Saturdays in February and March 2000 were currently available except 4 March. I promised to take early soundings of the Palace, No 10 and Lambeth Palace to see if any of these might provisionally be set aside. [The Palace have subsequently suggested Thursday or Friday, as weekends are usually kept free.]

8. It was noted that February or March would not necessarily be wholly suitable in terms of weather for the unveiling of a memorial in the open air, but weather hazards were not limited to the late winter/early Spring. In any event the unveiling would only be a short element of the Service. Its positioning within the Service would need thought, to avoid any feeling of anticlimax, but the Cathedral were used to using a sound relay from the old Cathedral into the new where the main congregation would be seated. (A full television link was not recommended as it was both unsightly and highly expensive.)

**ACTION**

9. It will be for the Cabinet Office to carry forward immediate action in terms of:

- a. canvassing possible dates with those concerned in London;
- b. considering the composition of a committee which might contribute to both the design and wording of the memorial and the "themes of the Service", and thinking how far this might be given expression in a smaller group to assist the Provost and Precentor as they worked up the details of a Service in Coventry;
- c. following up the letters which the Prime Minister personally had sent to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, the Moderator of the Church of Scotland, the General Secretary of the Free Churches' Council and the Chief Rabbi; and also continuing the soundings with the Director of the Imperial War Museum on the possibility of the Museum arranging for the publication of a celebratory booklet of reminiscences.

10. At an early stage the Permanent Secretaries of Departments primarily concerned will also need to be alerted to the proposals, although officials at MAFF, the Home Office and MOD are already being kept closely in touch by me.

11. Perhaps I should say that both the Bishop of Coventry and the Provost and his colleagues were generously helpful in their advice at our meeting.



**A J MERIFIELD**

14 December 1998

**1. FAXED**

1. fax Anthony Merfield, Cabinet Office

Confirmation of Year 11/12/98

R 15/12

# The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland

2. file (- DCO Home Fmt)

**Principal Clerk and Secretary to the Moderator:** The Rev Finlay A J Macdonald, MA, BD, PhD

**Depute Clerk:** The Rev Marjory A MacLean, LLB, BD



PRB  
7/12

WIT GR  
DLO  
→ Appts

11 December 1998

FAJM/LMJ

Angus -  
years, I think  
John H.  
17/12

The Rt Honorable Tony Blair  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON  
SW1A 2AA

*Dear Prime Minister,*

I am responding to your letter of 3 December addressed to the Moderator, Professor Alan Main. I should explain that Professor Main is currently in Harare attending the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches. However, I have consulted with the Rev John Cairns, Moderator Designate within whose year of office the proposed national memorial events will take place. You will appreciate that, in view of the time scale, I have not had an opportunity of consulting with other Scottish Churches.

It goes without saying that the Church of Scotland recognises the immense contribution made to the life of our nation by those whom you seek to honour. We share your aspirations that they and their sacrifice should not be forgotten, but continue to serve as an inspiration to future generations. We also recognise the sufferings and sacrifices made by others in the years since the second world war.

Were a special Sunday to be designated we would be happy to draw this to the attention of our ministers and invite them to incorporate suitable prayers into their services on that day. I should point out that our Presbyterian system would allow us to do no more than invite.

As far as timing is concerned, we see merit in associating this particular commemoration with the last Remembrance Sunday of the century. This would enable civilian and military notes to be sounded in an inclusive and complementary way. It would also prevent any possibility of two Remembrance Sunday events detracting the one from the other.

With regard to location we have no particular view but raise the question as to whether you have in mind a four nation approach as with the Millennium services. Following devolution this would seem appropriate. This also raises issues with regard to the siting of /

of a memorial or memorials.

Finally, it would be fair to say that our response to the proposal is warm rather than enthusiastic. If the Government does decide to proceed then we shall certainly give you all appropriate support and encouragement.

Yours sincerely,  
Rev Dr Finlay A J Macdonald

Rev Dr Finlay A J Macdonald  
Principal Clerk



11/12



Moderator:  
Rev Kathleen Richardson OBE Hon DLitt  
Chairman:  
Mrs Rosalind Goodfellow BA  
General Secretary:  
Rev Geoffrey H Roper MA

10<sup>th</sup> December 1998

Rt Hon Tony Blair MP  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON  
SW1A 2AA

Dear Prime Minister

Thank you for your letter of 3 December concerning a National Memorial and special Sunday for the commemoration of people engaged on the "Home Front" in the Second World War.

We appreciate being consulted on this matter. You are probably not thinking of siting the National Memorial at one of our churches so we do not have any specific comment about it, though we would be glad to participate at an unveiling event.

While it is now a long while back in the past and for most people history rather than lived experience, we welcome the initiative you suggest, and feel it is an opportunity to recognise the contribution made by so many ordinary people who were not in uniform but yet played their part in the war effort, enduring the shortages, hardships and dangers.

In the approach that the Churches are taking to the Millennium, we favour phasing those matters which take a backward look, reviewing the past century or millennium, seeking to heal memories or seek reconciliation, before the end of 1999. We would therefore favour holding any "Home Front Commemoration" in 1999, rather than in AD 2000.

The commemoration should be sufficiently far removed from Remembrance Day so as not to be confused with it. Indeed, it would be better to emphasize the civilian aspect and play down military symbols. It is also not desirable that it lend itself to repetition in future years.

A suggestion I would offer is September 5<sup>th</sup> 1999, the Sunday immediately following September 3<sup>rd</sup> which will be the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Sunday when the war broke out.

The activities you mention include those employed in occupations connected with the war effort. It will be good to feature some veterans from these groups in the commemoration; in doing so women should be given an equal place alongside men - women without family responsibilities were directed to war

27 Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9HH Telephone: 0171-387 8413 Fax: 0171-383 0150

THE FREE CHURCH FEDERAL COUNCIL (INCORPORATED) Limited by Guarantee Reg No 00364987 England Charity Number 236878

**Member Denominations:**

The Assemblies of God  
The Afro-Westindian United Council of Churches  
The Baptist Union of Great Britain  
The Baptist Union of Wales

The Congregational Federation  
The Council of African & Afro-Caribbean Churches UK  
The Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion  
The Fellowship of Churches of Christ  
The Free Church of England

The Independent Methodist Churches  
The Methodist Church  
The Moravian Church  
The New Testament Church of God  
The Old Baptist Union

The Presbyterian Church of Wales  
The Salvation Army  
The Union of Welsh Independents  
The United Reformed Church in the UK  
The Wesleyan Reform Union

work and bore patiently the disruption, the anxiety, the waiting and the long hours.

When we come to make suggestions for readings and concerns for prayer around this civilian commemoration it will be good to include remembrance of those killed in the bombing, and the lives blighted as a result of bombardment, children who were affected for the worse by evacuation, families and communities disrupted by the war - other aspects of the Home Front not specifically included in the recognition to be given to those who were employed.

Yours sincerely

*Geoffrey Roper*

Rev Geoffrey H Roper  
General Secretary

Lambeth Palace London SE1 7JU

10 December 1998

- 14/12
1. re fax Anthony Meifield, Cabinet office  
PB
  2. file - (DCC - Home Front file)

Dear Tony

PB 14/12

Thank you for your letter outlining proposals for a national memorial for all those who worked on the Home Front during the Second World War.

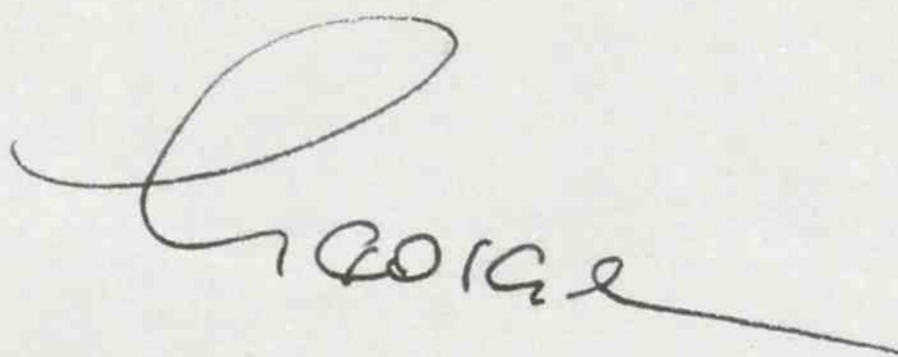
The initiative is an interesting and imaginative one, and I am certainly sympathetic to the aims and motives you describe for such a memorial. It is important to recognise and value past selflessness and sacrifice. That can also provide a useful signpost to the future.

As you acknowledge, the context, timing, and modalities of such an undertaking would have to be considered very carefully. So indeed would any broader reflection of this undertaking in religious worship and prayer.

This would also involve close consultation with the Church's major ecumenical partners. My staff are already taking initial soundings, and these may be taken forward once we have more detailed knowledge of what you propose.

I look forward to hearing more of this interesting project.

Yours ever



The Rt Hon Tony Blair MP  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON  
SW1A 2AA



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

3 December 1998

THE PRIME MINISTER

*Dear George,*

During the Second World War over four million people were engaged on the "Home Front" in the United Kingdom. Their activities covered a wide range of work - in explosives or armament factories, in the dockyards and shipyards, in iron, steel and chemical factories, down the mines, in transport and on the land. They faced very considerable hardship and dislocation of their lives and in many cases danger from explosions or bombing.

Some of the War workers have made strong pleas to me to be awarded the Defence Medal. As you will know, this was issued in 1945 on a limited basis mainly to those in civil defence or working in areas of military operations. The Government has looked again at the possibility of a retrospective award, but this would be impractical. Nevertheless, now those with firsthand experience of war work are declining in number, I am keen to do something to commemorate their efforts and to commend their selflessness and self-sacrifice to present and future generations.

The Government is therefore looking into the possibility of creating a National Memorial which would highlight for future generations the self-sacrifice

and service of all those who worked on the Home Front during the Second World War. I hope that such a memorial might also encourage present generations to look "not to your own interests, but to the interests of others".

I wonder whether it would also be possible for Churches throughout the United Kingdom (and those from other faiths in their own assemblies) to set aside a particular Sunday to remember the dedication of those who worked on the Home Front during the Second World War and to draw lessons from them for the next century. It may be that you and colleagues from other denominations would be able to commend special prayers and readings for such an occasion. I would hope that some Cathedral Churches - in Durham for example - could play a special role in any commemorations. I would be grateful if you could consider this and let me have your views on the principle of this suggestion.

Clearly there are many details to sort out concerning the particular occasion and dates - not least the availability of the Royal Family, my own diary and indeed the calls upon you and your colleagues. But given the wide interest there is in this issue, especially among some of those in munitions industries (not least in my own constituency) and the Women's Land Army, I would like to be able to inform Parliament before the Christmas Recess that such a National Memorial and Sunday are planned. I hope that you or your representatives could then discuss with my officials how to put these into practice. I would hope that any unveiling of a National Memorial and commemorations to go with it could take place between, say, autumn 1999 and Easter 2000.

I would be very grateful if you could agree quickly to my making an announcement in principle to go ahead with these plans. It would be helpful to have a response by the end of next week.

I am writing in similar terms to the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster the General Secretary of the Free Churches' Council, Dr Jonathan Sacks and the Moderator of the Church of Scotland.

Yours ever  
Tony

The Most Reverend and Right Honourable The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury

ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE,  
WESTMINSTER, LONDON, SW1P 1QJ

10 December, 1998

F6504 <sup>14/12 med</sup> 1. ✓ fax Anthony Merfield, Cabinet office  
2. file (Home Front - DCO)

PRB 14/12

Dear Prime Minister,

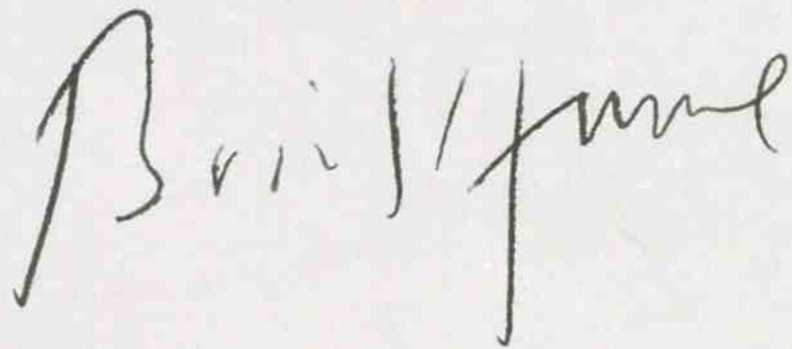
Thank you for your letter of 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

I agree very much with your proposal to commemorate the contribution of war workers to the successful outcome of the Second World War.

I would be very happy to be in touch with you if and when you wish it.

With kindest regards.

Yours sincerely,



Archbishop of Westminster

The Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, M.P.,  
10 Downing Street,  
London SW1A 2AA.

Janice -

Another one for PB  
PPS still in TPMS

Run

ב"ה

# OFFICE OF THE CHIEF RABBI

Adler House 735 High Road London N12 0US  
Telephone: 0181-343 6301 Fax: 0181-343 6310

PP/CR/3608

PPS in TPM bu 15/12

Similar letters sent to  
4 others

PB

The Right Honourable Tony Blair MP  
10 Downing Street  
London  
SW1A 2AA

1. cc fax Anthony Merfield, Cabinet office  
PB

8 December, 1998

2. file (OCO Home front memorial pps)

Dear Prime Minister,

PB, 14/12

Thank you for your letter of 3<sup>rd</sup> December, which I read with considerable interest.

The proposal of a National Memorial for those engaged during the Second World War in the munitions industries is a highly appropriate way of recognising their vital contribution to the defence of Britain and freedom.

I am happy to give my support to such a project and to compose a special prayer to be read out in synagogues on the designated Sabbath.

Yours, with warmest good wishes,

2 blessings in all you do!

Jonathan Sacks

Chief Rabbi Professor Jonathan Sacks



file - if no paper copy.

FROM: A J MERIFIELD  
DATE: 8 December 1998

MR BARTON

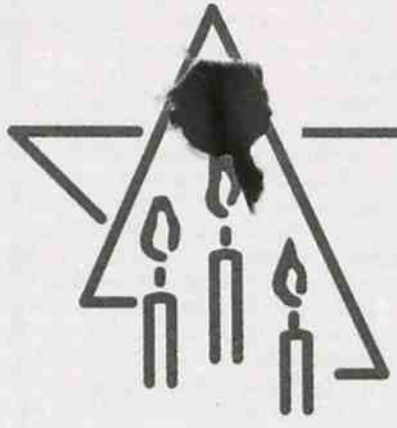
Philip  
10/12

Delivery: E-mail  
copy: Miss Wrighton  
(with papers)

### HOME FRONT MEMORIAL

Thank you for copies of the Prime Minister's letter to the Church leaders. I was sorry to have lost the reference to "other civilian workers" from paragraph 1 of my draft as this had been inserted because of representations made to me specifically by Lambeth Palace (when I saw the Archbishop's Public Affairs adviser), and by the Provost of Coventry and the Imperial War Museum. The point will emerge, undoubtedly, in future discussions and those workers will need to be covered, without detracting from the main thrust of the activity and the feelings of the Aycliffe Angels, the Women's Land Army, the miners so on. It is part of the cut-off problem!

A J MERIFIELD



# The Holocaust Educational Trust

BCM Box 7892  
London WC1N 3XX  
Telephone: 0171-222 6822  
Fax: 0171-233 0161  
Email: hetrust@compuserve.com

## Patrons

Rt Hon Lord Jakobovits  
His Grace the Duke of Norfolk  
KG GCVO CB CBE ML DL  
Rt Hon Rt Rev Lord Runcie MC  
Prof Elie Wiesel

From the Chairman: Lord Janner of Braunstone, QC

10/12

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Rt Hon Lord Sainsbury

7 December, 1998

**Chairman**  
Lord Janner of Braunstone QC

The Prime Minister The Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, MP  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1

(DTP)

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Jon Mendelsohn  
Martin Paisner LLM  
David Sumberg

*By dear Tony,*

DTE for  
10/12 " FCO  
HO  
AM  
JLB

## Board of Management

David Gryn  
Kitty Hart  
Ben Helfgott  
Jonathan Kestenbaum  
Paul Phillips  
Martin Savitt

I do hope that you, Cherie and the children are all well – and that you will enjoy a marvellous Christmas. The Janners are fine.

**British Video Archive  
for Holocaust Testimonies**  
Alberta Strage

I write to say thank you – to you or to whomever it was in the government who decided that a day each year should be set aside to commemorate the Holocaust. All my colleagues on the Holocaust Educational Trust were as delighted as I was to hear the good news and we thank you – for a worthy, notable and very important and honourable decision.

**Hon Accountants**  
Arram Berlyn Gardner

The question that now arises is – which day will it be? I would suggest that it be the same day as Yom Hashoa, as it is celebrated in Israel and throughout the world. But as this is – like Easter – not a fixed date, then if you decide that it should be on a particular date each year, we would be very happy to consult with the appropriate Minister as to which date would be best – there are some fairly strong views on that subject.

**Director**  
Janice Lopatkin

**Associate Director**  
Stephen Ward

**Research Director**  
Dr Daniel Summerfield

**Communications Director**  
Karen Pollock

Anyway, thank you. And with warmest good wishes, as always.

**Administrative Director**  
Jayne Ford

*Love ever,  
Julia*



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

Hech  
cco

THE PRIME MINISTER

3 December 1998

Dear Allan,

During the Second World War over four million people were engaged on the "Home Front" in the United Kingdom. Their activities covered a wide range of work - in explosives or armament factories, in the dockyards and shipyards, in iron, steel and chemical factories, down the mines, in transport and on the land. They faced very considerable hardship and dislocation of their lives and in many cases danger from explosions or bombing.

Some of the War workers have made strong pleas to me to be awarded the Defence Medal. As you will know, this was issued in 1945 on a limited basis mainly to those in civil defence or working in areas of military operations. The Government has looked again at the possibility of a retrospective award, but this would be impractical. Nevertheless, now those with firsthand experience of war work are declining in number, I am keen to do something to commemorate their efforts and to commend their selflessness and self-sacrifice to present and future generations.

The Government is therefore looking into the possibility of creating a National Memorial which would highlight for future generations the self-sacrifice

and service of all those who worked on the Home Front during the Second World War. I hope that such a memorial might also encourage present generations to look "not to your own interests, but to the interests of others".

I wonder whether it would also be possible for Churches throughout the United Kingdom (and those from other faiths in their own assemblies) to set aside a particular Sunday to remember the dedication of those who worked on the Home Front during the Second World War and to draw lessons from them for the next century. It may be that you and colleagues from other denominations would be able to commend special prayers and readings for such an occasion. I would hope that some Cathedral Churches - in Durham for example - could play a special role in any commemorations. I would be grateful if you could consider this and let me have your views on the principle of this suggestion.

Clearly there are many details to sort out concerning the particular occasion and dates - not least the availability of the Royal Family, my own diary and indeed the calls upon you and your colleagues. But given the wide interest there is in this issue, especially among some of those in munitions industries (not least in my own constituency) and the Women's Land Army, I would like to be able to inform Parliament before the Christmas Recess that such a National Memorial and Sunday are planned. I hope that you or your representatives could then discuss with my officials how to put these into practice. I would hope that any unveiling of a National Memorial and commemorations to go with it could take place between, say, autumn 1999 and Easter 2000.

I would be very grateful if you could agree quickly to my making an announcement in principle to go ahead with these plans. It would be helpful to have a response by the end of next week.

I am writing in similar terms to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, the General Secretary of the Free Churches' Council and Dr Jonathan Sacks.

Yours ever  
Tony

The Right Reverend Professor Alan Main



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

file  
cc0

THE PRIME MINISTER

3 December 1998

Dear Reverend Roper,

During the Second World War over four million people were engaged on the "Home Front" in the United Kingdom. Their activities covered a wide range of work - in explosives or armament factories, in the dockyards and shipyards, in iron, steel and chemical factories, down the mines, in transport and on the land. They faced very considerable hardship and dislocation of their lives and in many cases danger from explosions or bombing.

Some of the War workers have made strong pleas to me to be awarded the Defence Medal. As you will know, this was issued in 1945 on a limited basis mainly to those in civil defence or working in areas of military operations. The Government has looked again at the possibility of a retrospective award, but this would be impractical. Nevertheless, now those with firsthand experience of war work are declining in number, I am keen to do something to commemorate their efforts and to commend their selflessness and self-sacrifice to present and future generations.

The Government is therefore looking into the possibility of creating a National Memorial which would highlight for future generations the self-sacrifice and service of all those who worked on the Home Front during the Second World

War. I hope that such a memorial might also encourage present generations to look "not to your own interests, but to the interests of others".

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Clearly there are many details to sort out concerning the particular occasion and dates - not least the availability of the Royal Family, my own diary and indeed the calls upon you and your colleagues. But given the wide interest there is in this issue, especially among some of those in munitions industries (not least in my own constituency) and the Women's Land Army, I would like to be able to inform Parliament before the Christmas Recess that such a National Memorial and Sunday are planned. I hope that you or your representatives could then discuss with my officials how to put these into practice. I would hope that any unveiling of a National Memorial and commemorations to go with it could take place between, say, autumn 1999 and Easter 2000.

I would be very grateful if you could agree quickly to my making an announcement in principle to go ahead with these plans. It would be helpful to have a response by the end of next week.

I am writing in similar terms to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, Dr Jonathan Sacks and the Moderator of the Church of Scotland.

Yours sincerely  
Tony Blair

The Reverend Geoffrey Roper





10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

File  
cc Co.

THE PRIME MINISTER

3 December 1998

Dear Jonathan,

During the Second World War over four million people were engaged in the munitions industries in the United Kingdom. Their activities covered a wide range of work - in explosives or armament factories, in the dockyards and shipyards, in iron, steel and chemical factories, down the mines, in transport and on the land. They faced very considerable hardship and dislocation of their lives and in many cases danger from explosions or bombing.

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The Government is therefore looking into the possibility of creating a National Memorial which would highlight for future generations the self-sacrifice and service of all those who worked on the Home Front during the Second World War. I hope that such a memorial might also encourage present generations to look not to their own interests, but to the interests of others.

I wonder whether it would also be possible for Churches throughout the United Kingdom, and those from other faiths in their own assemblies, to set aside a particular day to remember the dedication of those who worked during the Second World War and to draw lessons from them for the next century.

I have written to George Carey, Basil Hume, the Reverend Geoffrey Roper of the Free Churches' Council and the Reverend Alan Main of the Church of Scotland to ask if they would be able to commend special prayers and readings for such an occasion. I have told them that I am also writing to you. I would be grateful if you could let me have your views on the principle of what I have suggested, and how it might be applied in your own community.

Clearly there are many details to sort out concerning the particular occasion and dates - not least the availability of the Royal Family, my own diary and indeed the calls upon you and your colleagues. But given the wide interest there is in this issue, especially among some of those in munitions industries (not least in my own constituency) and the Women's Land Army, I would like to be able to inform Parliament before the Christmas Recess of what is planned. I would hope that any unveiling of a National Memorial, and particular commemorations to go with it could take place between, say, autumn 1999 and Easter 2000.

I would be very grateful for your views. It would be helpful to have a response by the end of next week.

Bert wishes  
Yours ever  
Tony

Dr Jonathan Sacks



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

3 December 1998

*Dear George,*

During the Second World War over four million people were engaged on the "Home Front" in the United Kingdom. Their activities covered a wide range of work - in explosives or armament factories, in the dockyards and shipyards, in iron, steel and chemical factories, down the mines, in transport and on the land. They faced very considerable hardship and dislocation of their lives and in many cases danger from explosions or bombing.

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*file*  
*CCO.*

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and service of all those who worked on the Home Front during the Second World War. I hope that such a memorial might also encourage present generations to look "not to your own interests, but to the interests of others".

I wonder whether it would also be possible for Churches throughout the United Kingdom (and those from other faiths in their own assemblies) to set aside a particular Sunday to remember the dedication of those who worked on the Home Front during the Second World War and to draw lessons from them for the next century. It may be that you and colleagues from other denominations would be able to commend special prayers and readings for such an occasion. I would hope that some Cathedral Churches - in Durham for example - could play a special role in any commemorations. I would be grateful if you could consider this and let me have your views on the principle of this suggestion.

Clearly there are many details to sort out concerning the particular occasion and dates - not least the availability of the Royal Family, my own diary and indeed the calls upon you and your colleagues. But given the wide interest there is in this issue, especially among some of those in munitions industries (not least in my own constituency) and the Women's Land Army, I would like to be able to inform Parliament before the Christmas Recess that such a National Memorial and Sunday are planned. I hope that you or your representatives could then discuss with my officials how to put these into practice. I would hope that any unveiling of a National Memorial and commemorations to go with it could take place between, say, autumn 1999 and Easter 2000.

I would be very grateful if you could agree quickly to my making an announcement in principle to go ahead with these plans. It would be helpful to have a response by the end of next week.

I am writing in similar terms to the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster the General Secretary of the Free Churches' Council, Dr Jonathan Sacks and the Moderator of the Church of Scotland.

*Yours love*  

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*Tony*

The Most Reverend and Right Honourable The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

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CCO

THE PRIME MINISTER

3 December 1998

Dear Basil,

During the Second World War over four million people were engaged on the "Home Front" in the United Kingdom. Their activities covered a wide range of work - in explosives or armament factories, in the dockyards and shipyards, in iron, steel and chemical factories, down the mines, in transport and on the land. They faced very considerable hardship and dislocation of their lives and in many cases danger from explosions or bombing.

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The Government is therefore looking into the possibility of creating a National Memorial which would highlight for future generations the self-sacrifice

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and service of all those who worked on the Home Front during the Second World War. I hope that such a memorial might also encourage present generations to look "not to your own interests, but to the interests of others".

I wonder whether it would also be possible for Churches throughout the United Kingdom (and those from other faiths in their own assemblies) to set aside a particular Sunday to remember the dedication of those who worked on the Home Front during the Second World War and to draw lessons from them for the next century. It may be that you and colleagues from other denominations would be able to commend special prayers and readings for such an occasion. I would hope that some Cathedral Churches - in Durham for example - could play a special role in any commemorations. I would be grateful if you could consider this and let me have your views on the principle of this suggestion.

Clearly there are many details to sort out concerning the particular occasion and dates - not least the availability of the Royal Family, my own diary and indeed the calls upon you and your colleagues. But given the wide interest there is in this issue, especially among some of those in munitions industries (not least in my own constituency) and the Women's Land Army, I would like to be able to inform Parliament before the Christmas Recess that such a National Memorial and Sunday are planned. I hope that you or your representatives could then discuss with my officials how to put these into practice. I would hope that any unveiling of a National Memorial and commemorations to go with it could take place between, say, autumn 1999 and Easter 2000.

I would be very grateful if you could agree quickly to my making an announcement in principle to go ahead with these plans. It would be helpful to have a response by the end of next week.

I am writing in similar terms to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the General Secretary of the Free Churches' Council, Dr Jonathan Sacks and the Moderator of the Church of Scotland.

yours ever  
Tom

His Eminence Cardinal Basil Hume



FROM: A J MERIFIELD  
DATE: 2 December 1998

**MR BARTON (e-mailed only)**

**HOME FRONT MEMORIAL**

Following a conversation with Muir Russell in the Scottish Office I suggest you add to the three Church leaders a fourth:

The Rt Rev Professor Alan Main MA TD BD STM PhD  
Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland  
121 George Street  
Edinburgh  
EH2 4YN

The final paragraph of the three Churches letter should then include the name as appropriate "[The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland]". I do not think it is imperative to amend the letter to the Chief Rabbi.

**A J MERIFIELD**

RESTRICTED - HONOURS

FROM: A J MERIFIELD  
DATE: 2 December 1998

**MR BARTON**

cc Sir Richard Wilson  
Mrs Blackburn (MAFF)  
Mr Benjamin (MOD)  
Miss Wrighton

*file*  
*PRB*  
*2/12*  
**HOME FRONT MEMORIAL**

*CC Honours.*

I am enclosing a draft from the Prime Minister to send to:

- a. The Most Reverend and Right Honourable George Carey PhD, Archbishop of Canterbury, Lambeth Palace, Lambeth Palace Road, London SE1 7JU;
- b. His Eminence Cardinal Basil Hume, The Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, Archbishop's House, Ambrosden Avenue, London SW1; and
- c. The Reverend Geoffrey Roper, General Secretary, Free Churches' Council, 27 Tavistock Square, London WC1.

2. A letter in similar vein should go to:

Dr Jonathan Sacks, The Chief Rabbi, 735 High Road, London N12 0US.

3. I have attached a slightly varied version of the letter to the Chief Rabbi. In all cases you will wish to consider style, eg in the letter to the Chief Rabbi I wondered if the Prime Minister would want to adopt a less formal note than in letters that will be widely circulated to other Archbishops and Free Church Groups throughout the UK.

4. I am visiting Coventry next week to talk to the Provost about the feasibility of a national memorial, what form it might take, its cost and possible dates. He was suggesting November next year but my enquiries of the Palace have revealed that The Queen (and Mr Blair) will be abroad during that time.

5. I am also fixing a meeting with the Imperial War Museum who will need to be pump-primed if they are to undertake the preparation of a brochure and who have some reservations regarding the spread of the pamphlet given that there is no easy cut off as to who was or was not a "war worker". I will also be writing to the Permanent Secretaries for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

*A J M*

**A J MERIFIELD**  
RESTRICTED - HONOURS

**DRAFT FOR PRIME MINISTER TO SEND TO THE THREE CHRISTIAN  
CHURCH LEADERS**

During the Second World War over four million people were engaged in the munitions industries in the United Kingdom. Their activities covered a wide range of work - in explosives or armament factories, in the dockyards and shipyards, in iron, steel and chemical factories, down the mines, in transport and on the land. Along with a fair proportion of other civilian workers who ensured that they were fed, clothed and housed, they faced very considerable hardship and dislocation of their lives and in many cases danger from explosions or bombing.

Some of the War workers have made strong pleas to me to be awarded the Defence Medal, which in 1945 was given on a limited basis mainly to those in civil defence or working in areas of military operations. Such a retrospective award is impractical, but particularly now those with firsthand experience of war work are declining in number, I believe that something should be done to commemorate their efforts and, equally important, to commend their selflessness and self-sacrifice to inspire present and future generations.

I have asked my officials to look into the possibility of creating a National Memorial which commends to future generations the self-sacrifice and service of all those who worked on the Home Front during the Second World War. I hope that such a memorial might also encourage present generations to look "not to your own interests, but to the interests of others".

But along with this, I wondered whether it would be possible for Churches throughout the United Kingdom (and those from other faiths in their own assemblies), to set aside a particular Sunday to remember the dedication of those working during the Second World War and to draw lessons from it for the next century. It may be that you, and colleagues from other denominations (with the Chief Rabbi to whom I am also writing, and others), would be able to commend special prayers and readings for such an occasion. I would hope that some Cathedral Churches - in Durham for example - could play a special role in any commemorations. I would be grateful if you could consider this and let me have your views on the principle of what I have suggested.

Clearly there are many details to be considered concerning the particular occasion and dates - not least the availability of the Royal Family, my own diary and indeed the calls upon you and your colleagues. But given the pressing interest which this has generated, especially among some of those in munitions industries (not least in my own constituency) and the Women's Land Army, I would like to be able to make a Statement of Intent to Parliament before the Christmas Recess. Thereafter I would hope that it would be possible for you or your representatives to join with my officials in examining how the principle can be turned into practice. I would hope that any unveiling of a National Memorial, and particular commemorations to go with it, could take place between, say, late autumn 1999 and Easter 2000. We have considered whether it would be possible on this occasion to link it with Remembrance Day but that does not seem to be a runner. It would not

be a suitable day for the Royal Family, and I think it may detract from both the Act of Remembrance itself and the emphasis that I would like to place on the courage and commitment and self-sacrifice of the workers during the Second War. This need not mean that on future occasions the two may not be more closely linked.

I am writing in similar terms to [The Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster] [The General Secretary of the Free Churches' Council] and [to Dr Jonathan Sacks] [The Archbishop of Canterbury].

**DRAFT FOR PRIME MINISTER TO SEND TO THE CHIEF RABBI**

During the Second World War over four million people were engaged in the munitions industries in the United Kingdom. Their activities covered a wide range of work - in explosives or armament factories, in the dockyards and shipyards, in iron, steel and chemical factories, down the mines, in transport and on the land. Along with a fair proportion of other civilian workers who ensured that they were fed, clothed and housed, they faced very considerable hardship and dislocation of their lives and in many cases danger from explosions or bombing.

Some of the War workers have made strong pleas to me to be awarded the Defence Medal, which in 1945 was given on a limited basis mainly to those in civil defence or working in areas of military operations. Such a retrospective award is impractical, but particularly now those with firsthand experience of war work are declining in number, I believe that something should be done to commemorate their efforts and, equally important, to commend their selflessness and self-sacrifice to inspire present and future generations.

I have asked my officials to look into the possibility of creating a National Memorial which commends to future generations the self-sacrifice and service of all those who worked on the Home Front during the Second World War. I hope that such a memorial might also encourage present generations to look not to their own interests, but to the interests of others.

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Clearly there are many details to be considered concerning the particular occasion and dates - not least the availability of the Royal Family, my own diary and indeed the calls upon you and your colleagues. But given the pressing interest which this has generated, especially among some of those in munitions industries (not least in my own constituency) and the Women's Land Army, I would like to be able to make a Statement of Intent to Parliament before the Christmas Recess. I would hope that any unveiling of a National Memorial, and particular commemorations to go with it, could take place between, say, late November 1999 and Easter 2000.

*file eps/Barton as*



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

26 November 1998

*Dear John,*

**HOME FRONT WORKERS:  
MEETING WITH THE NORTHERN ECHO**

I know that you and Mark Covell are meeting the editor of the Northern Echo tomorrow to discuss the Prime Minister's plans to recognise the contribution of those who worked on the Home Front during the Second World War, including the Aycliffe Angels. I am attaching a briefing note for you to draw on. ✓

It is important that you do not go much beyond this. We have not yet been able to secure the agreement of Buckingham Palace, Lambeth Palace and others to the Prime Minister's proposals. Please call me in the morning if you want to discuss any of this.

*Yours sincerely,*

*Philip*

PHILIP BARTON

John Burton, Esq.

*h*



IN CONFIDENCE

BRIEF FOR MR BARTON

HOME FRONT WORKERS

Esteem is Strongly Felt

1. PM anxious to ensure that the nation marks the contribution of those who worked on the Home Front during the Second World War, ie Aycliffe is part of a wider scene.
2. He sees the self sacrifice and dedication showed between 1939 and 1945 as an example to those entering the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Medals

3. The Sovereign has not granted medals retrospectively in UK - and about 5 years after the War King George the VI drew a line under further campaign awards.
4. Those on the Home Front, who were awarded the Defence Medal by the Churchill Atlee Government, were essentially the civil defence workers, and some others specifically working in military operational areas, who had 3 years proven service. Many more were omitted. Indeed some 4-5 million workers at least did not receive the Defence Medal, and over the years they have felt their claim should have been allowed back in the 1940's when the evidence of their employment (and their employers) was still around.
5. Amongst those who feel this way are:
  - along with the Aycliffe Angels, those in some 60 other explosives, filling or noxious chemical factories (eg Royal Ordnance Factories like Woolwich Arsenal, Waltham Gunpowder Factory; Gretna, Holton Cordite Factory, Sellafield, Pembrey, Bridgewater, Drigg, Bishopton, Wrexham, Ranskill; Hereford Filling Factory, Chorley, Bridgend, Glascoed, Swynnerton, Risley, Kirby, Thorpe Arch; Armstrong-Whitworth, Vickers-Armstrong etc);
  - workers in armament factories making guns and small arms ammunition, Enfield, BSA, Armstrong-Whitworth, Nuffield.
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- miners conscripted as Bevin Boys, the miners generally, the Women's Land Army, engineering firms (cutting gun barrels or assembling aircraft, war vehicles) etc.

6. It is not now possible to re-visit this 1945 situation.

### Proposed Recognition

7. But the PM is actively drawing up plans with those concerned to secure:-
- a) a **National Memorial** which would commend to future generations the self sacrifice and service of all those who worked on the Home Front;
  - b). encouragement from the top to ensure that this is also remembered, celebrated and **commended in parallel locally**, with the involvement of as many people as possible. For example, it is very likely that there would be strong support for such a commemoration in the North East - whether at Durham/ Newcastle/ Sunderland/ or Middlesborough/ Hartlepool; plus
  - c). a commemorative booklet of reminiscences, **if we can find a publisher able to take this on**. (Intention to include an Aycliffe view, though many other groups of war workers will expect a mention also ).

### Northern Echo response

8. Have the Northern Echo any other ideas; or thoughts on how they might wish to contribute eg:-
- would they be able to run a special supplement which described particularly the local contributions in Aycliffe, in the mines, shipyards, and steel and chemical works etc? (The PM would be able to provide a keynote message for this);
  - if it proves possible to develop a brochure of national reminiscences would the Echo want to be one of the sponsors (or buy copies for those attending one of the local commemorative events or Services?), and
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#### Why has it taken so long?

1. Initially historical research was needed to identify all the groups of munitions workers throughout the UK. (Records of employees are now destroyed, and many firms have likewise wound up).

2. Then the Prime Minister had to address many issues as he established his new Government. But when the time became available he wanted to be involved personally in any commemorations, and wanted any events to carry the right degree of significance.

- Nationally;
- At the turn of the Millennium, with both a backwards and forward looking flavour; and with opportunity for local events which were responsive to local history and events during the War.

#### Who will organise all this?

3. If celebrations are based on Cathedrals, there could well be local committees, perhaps organised by the Local Authorities with the Cathedral to plan the event and decide who might be given the opportunity to apply for tickets. Local representatives would no doubt wish to play a part in drawing up these arrangements.

4. The PM would seek to ensure this was handled appropriately in the NE. (Do Northern Echo feel Durham Cathedral provides the strongest setting? Are there other places to be considered?).

#### Medal Proof

5. Quite apart from the long standing convention of no retrospective awards, note that **all National Medals require proof of service of the required duration.** And there are potentially over 4 to 5 million claimants (including relatives of those who have died).

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01924 290098  
 fax (immediate) Mark Covell

IN CONFIDENCE

Hilary Collman

BRIEF FOR MR BARTON

file  
 PRB  
 26/11

HOME FRONT WORKERS

The powers that be are very nervous about your briefing the Northern Echo as we don't yet have a full green light from the churches and Buckingham Palace. But they've prepared this line. I hope this gives you enough. I'll be back from Dublin at about 1600 and will call you then.

1. PM anxious to ensure that the nation marks the contribution of those who worked on the Home Front during the Second World War, ie Aycliffe is part of a wider scene.

2. He sees the self sacrifice and dedication showed between 1939 and 1945 as an example to those entering the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Philip Barton  
 25/11

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**RESTRICTED HONOURS**

25 November 1998

file  
P23 25/11  
**FAXED**

Mr Barton

- To Dublin (Via Brent)  
25/11/98

cc: Mrs Alison Blackburn (MAFF)  
Mr Mike Benjamin (MOD)  
Mrs Frances Bright (HO)  
Miss Wrighton

**HOME FRONT MEMORIAL**

1. Given the pitfalls of this - and risk of misunderstanding and misquoting - I am extremely wary of briefing the Northern Echo as proposed. I am not sure that they will see that as unattributable or indeed in confidence! There is also a severe risk of upsetting the Palace, the Churches more widely, and Coventry Cathedral, who have not yet been able to go firm on dates, events or co-ordination of possible programmes.
2. There are also hazards:-
  - public memorials are traditionally paid for by public subscription and MOD have held this line to prevent tax payers from having to fund the erecting of many memorials which are brought to their attention. We are trying to finesse the costs of any Coventry (if the Provost agrees) event so that this firm principle is not breached;
  - the various groups of workers have objectives, and resentments, of their own. It is interesting that the Imperial War Museum have expressed a caveat about a brochure because "almost everybody in society could reasonably claim to have contributed to the War effort,.....and I foresee bitterness from those left out". The Parliamentary Answer of 19 November to Mr Marthew is not wholly correct and may infuriate those who complain that "they have not been invited to attend such Services in the past, and in any event have no medal to wear" (sic)!
3. The note attached is designed for Mr Burton. It may seem less definite than you would like ideally, but that is because those who must respond have not done so in sufficient detail yet to be quoted openly.
4. Two further points:-
  - (a) I do not have the thousands/millions of pounds to spend buying brochures of reminiscences from whoever may put one together. But if

**a brochure can be produced for sale, and if its writing can be funded,** the Northern Echo might be interested to sponsor it in some way;

- (b). The Archbishop of Canterbury's Office suggested that the Prime Minister might care to put his proposal to the Church leaders so that whatever is done (and it may be recommendations on prayers and lessons to be read) has a strong ecumenical flavour. To reduce duplication it is suggested that the letters should go to the Archbishop of Canterbury (who would consult the Archbishop of York, the Archbishop of Wales, the Primate of All Ireland and the head of the Scottish Episcopal Church); the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster (who would consult his 6 fellow Archbishops in UK and the Cardinal Archbishop in Armagh) and the General Secretary of the Free Churches' Council (who would consult Free Church leaders), and the Chief Rabbi. I will send you a draft of this as soon as I have Robert Fellowes response and can speak with a greater feel for the Queen's position.



(A J Merifield)

**IN CONFIDENCE**

**BRIEF FOR MR BARTON**

**HOME FRONT WORKERS**

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THE	
NATIONAL	
ARCHIVES	

DEPARTMENT/SERIES ..... <u>PREM 49</u> ..... PIECE/ITEM ..... <u>354</u> ..... (one piece/item number)	Date and sign
Extract details:  <u>Letter dated 24 November 1998</u>	
CLOSED UNDER FOI EXEMPTION .....	
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*Instructions for completion of Dummy Card*

Use black or blue pen to complete form.

Use the card for one piece or for each extract removed from a different place within a piece.

Enter the department and series,  
eg. HO 405, J 82.

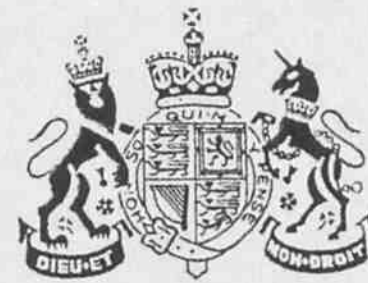
Enter the piece and item references, .  
eg. 28, 1079, 84/1, 107/3

Enter extract details if it is an extract rather than a whole piece.  
This should be an indication of what the extract is,  
eg. Folio 28, Indictment 840079, E107, Letter dated 22/11/1995.  
Do not enter details of why the extract is sensitive.

If closed under the FOI Act, enter the FOI exemption numbers applying to the closure, eg. 27(1), 40(2).

Sign and date next to the reason why the record is not available to the public ie. Closed under FOI exemption; Retained under section 3 (4) of the Public Records Act 1958; Temporarily retained; Missing at transfer  
or Number not used.





FCS/98/162

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Dear Secretary of State,

Enemy Property

file

25/11

TOP-JEH

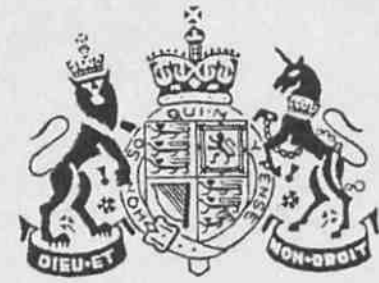
JPB

PB

JJH

1. Thank you for your letter of 16 November. I have no comment to offer on the proposed claims scheme.
2. We will be glad to help in publicising the scheme to potential claimants overseas - your officials might take this up initially with Western European Department here.
3. On the question of seeking an indemnity from the Governments of Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania, I made it clear during the discussions I had in March/April that I did not think there was any prospect of our being able to persuade the Governments of those countries to allow us to receive, process and adjudicate claims, but look to them to finance the payments. As you know, we have asked those Governments what their predecessors did in the aftermath of World War II to discharge the obligations they assumed under the Peace Treaties. The answer was that nothing seems to have been done, but that they would consider legislation to compensate remaining citizens of their countries whose assets had been confiscated by the UK. Progress on this has been slow, despite prompting by our Embassies. As you will also know, the Governments concerned do not accept that they automatically inherited the obligations undertaken by their Communist predecessors. The situation is further complicated by the fact that most of the surviving Jewish populations in the area concerned have emigrated since World War II. It is not, in my view, realistic to expect any reimbursement of the resources needed for our scheme from that source.

NM  
25/11



4. I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, Margaret Beckett, Jack Cunningham, Margaret Jay, Ann Taylor, Stephen Byers and to Sir Richard Wilson.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'L. J. [unclear]'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

for ROBIN COOK

(Approved by the Foreign Secretary and signed by Private Secretary in his absence)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
24 November 1998



**Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food**  
Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR  
Telephone: 0171-238 6000 Direct Line: 0171-238 6562  
GTN: 238 Telex: 21271 Fax: 0171-238 6591 or 6553

Top: PB.  
cc: hons

RESTRICTED - HONOURS

1. cc HC  
✓ PL

2. file

PRB  
26/11

Mr A J Merifield Esq CB  
The Ceremonial Officer  
Cabinet Office  
Ceremonial Branch  
Ashley House  
2 Monck Street  
London  
SW1P 2BQ

24 November 1998

*Dear Anthony*

### COMMEMORATION OF THOSE ON THE HOME FRONT

Thank you very much for keeping me in touch with all the hard work you have been putting into taking this issue forward.

I very much support what you are proposing.

In relation to the draft statement which you circulated on 19 November 1998, apart from the typing error, a missing "b" in the "Timber Corps", I have no comments. I would ask though in relation to the regional or local commemorations are we suggesting that the Government should be putting something in here or are these ones that we would expect to rise from local voluntary efforts in which case perhaps we would need to state that to avoid giving rise to any false hopes.

In relation to Mr Barton's shorter version, I would also see it as acceptable assuming that you are in a position to go firm on the details. But, I think that the last sentence "This will be presented to all involved" should be omitted. I am not sure what it means but we do not want to send it to every WLA member, munitions worker or others. The resources needed would be enormous.

On the Chopping Block Examples my preference is very much for (ii). The reason for this is that Sir Winston Churchill was known to be fairly antagonistic to the Women's Land Army and a far more neutral message but one which really expresses the selflessness of the effort of those on the home front i.e. "Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interest of others" would be far more acceptable. It is also coincidentally more in keeping with the current thinking in relation to, for example, the giving age.

I am copying this letter to Sebastian Wood (Cabinet Office), Philip Barton (No. 10) and Mr M Benjamin (Ministry of Defence).

*Best wishes*

*Mrs A M Blackburn*

Mrs A M Blackburn  
Head of Agricultural Resources  
and Better Regulation Division

RESTRICTED - HONOURS

file



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

**MR MERIFIELD  
CABINET OFFICE**

**HOME FRONT MEMORIAL**

Thank you for your minute of 19 November. I think that the Prime Minister will need to be much more specific in his statement than your current draft. Otherwise, there is a risk this initiative will look like a damp squib, particularly as it has taken such a long time to put together. I have tried my hand at a re-draft (enclosed) along the lines I think we should be aiming for. Please let me know if you see any immediate problems with this.

As you know, John Burton is seeing the Editor of the Northern Echo on 27 November to discuss our plans (off the record). He will be accompanied by Mark Covell. I attach a list of questions they believe they will need to answer. I would be grateful if you would revise the brief you prepared earlier (dated 3 November) to take account of these points and developments since then. Please could I have this by **close on Wednesday, 25 November**.

I am copying this minute and attachments to Sebastian Wood (Cabinet Office), Mrs A Blackburn (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food) and Mr M Benjamin (Ministry of Defence).

*Philip Barton*

**PHILIP BARTON**  
23 November 1998

RESTRICTED - HONOURS

## DRAFT ANSWER

Yes. I am well aware of the many people who worked on the Home Front, often in dangerous and difficult conditions away from their homes. They included the millions of workers in the munitions factories and dockyards, in the mines, on our roads and railways, and those in the Women's Land Army and the Women's Timber Corp, as well as the Bevin Boys. Their selfless contribution during the war years underpinned the efforts of those in the fighting forces. It is right that the nation should commemorate their contribution.

The Government has therefore agreed with Lambeth Palace that [X Sunday] next year will be set aside to commemorate the sacrifice made by people on the Home Front. There will be commemorative services in churches throughout the country. HM The Queen will unveil a plaque at Coventry Cathedral. A Memorial Brochure will be produced by the Imperial War Museum, celebrating the achievements on the Home Front. This will be presented to all those involved .

## QUESTIONS FOR NORTHERN ECHO MEETING

Why has it taken so long? - Complex, involving which departments.

How was the Civil Defence Medal Awarded? - Who got it, historical aspect, King, Attlee, etc.

Why it would not cover all those at Aycliffe munitions factory - length of service it was given for - 3 years. Verification procedures for awarding etc.

Why it is not just one group of people? Home Front, various groups involved in war effort.

**What the Prime Minister proposes to do to give recognition to these groups**

National Service - including event in Durham which he would attend, as we approach new millennium/commemorative service brochure covering Home Front in North, accounts etc, high quality to pass on to grandchildren.

When would service be? Who would be invited? Who will organise? When can we make press announcement to Echo? Could the Echo be involved in the service brochure/bringing together local peoples accounts from the area?



Top: FA/PS

ACOS  
FA/PS  
EA/PS  
AC/JS

The Rt Hon Robin Cook MP  
Secretary of State for Foreign  
and Commonwealth Affairs  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
King Charles Street  
LONDON  
SW1A 2AH

file  
M/19/ki

Secretary of State  
Department of  
Trade and Industry

1 Victoria Street  
London SW1H 0ET

Direct line  
0171 215 5430

DTI Enquiries  
0171 215 5000

e-mail  
TLO.Mandelson@tlo.dti.gov.uk

16 November 1998

*Prime Minister*  
You will remember the  
fuss about this earlier in the  
year. The original idea of  
a "capped fund" with a limit  
of £20 million has been replaced  
by an open-ended scheme which could  
cost £20-25 million. I am not sure this  
was absolutely necessary but the Treasury  
have audited it, so no reason for us to  
intervene.

*See Robin,*

**ENEMY PROPERTY**

You will recall that on 3 April Margaret Beckett announced that the Government would establish a claims procedure, drawing on independent advice for its implementation, for the victims of Nazi persecution whose property had been confiscated by the British Government under Trading with the Enemy legislation during the Second World War.

As you are aware, we asked Peter Archer to advise, as an independent third party, on the claims Scheme. I have now received his recommendations.

Peter issued a consultation document at the end of July and received representations from all the relevant interested parties. In brief, Peter has recommended a Scheme which will be open to anyone who was classified as an 'enemy alien' during the War, who had property in the UK confiscated by HM Government, who did not have it returned (by HM or any other Government) and who suffered Nazi persecution. Peter's Consultation Document originally proposed the setting up of a capped fund to be shared among the claimants in proportion to the original value of their confiscated property. Although Peter obtained a fair degree of informal support for this from interested parties before he published his Consultation Document, this was not sustained in the formal responses which were unanimously against the idea of a fund. Peter has therefore been persuaded to recommend that compensation should be paid at current day values.





There are several ways to establish present day values, such as uprating by price inflation, awarding interest or revaluing each asset individually. Peter has recommended using the RPI to measure the increase in value. He has done so because it is fair, transparent and relatively straightforward. There will be some who argue for other methods of uprating. However, we are faced with the difficult task of trying to put matters right some 50 years after the event and I think that our approach does have to take this into account. None of the assets remain in the Government's possession: all were either returned or liquidated for a cash value. I therefore endorse Peter's recommendation although I am aware that it might attract some criticism.

I enclose a copy of Peter's advice, together with a summary of the main points of the Scheme.

The effect of these recommendations will be to make the scheme considerably more expensive than the £2 million originally earmarked by this Department. We estimate the cost of the scheme at between £20 and £25 million. Stephen Byers has agreed that I may fund up to £25 million next year on the basis of carrying forward cash limited underspend this year. I am grateful to him for that degree of flexibility which provides a reasonable basis for an early announcement, subject to colleagues' agreement to the policy.

I propose to announce that the Government broadly accepts Peter's advice, and that we wish to set up the claims Scheme as soon as possible. Although Peter has not published his advice at this stage, the interested parties and the Press are aware that he has submitted it to the Government. I should therefore like to make an early announcement of our response, if possible before the end of this month. I trust that you will be content with this.

Before the Scheme can be launched, there are a number of details to be worked through such as the terms of reference for the Assessors, their appointment and the machinery for dealing with the validation of claims. I should like to move ahead quickly on this so that we may put the Scheme in place as early as possible. Many of the potential claimants are old



and if they are to receive some benefit from this Scheme, time is of the essence. Peter has proposed, and I agree, that the Scheme should be subject to a cut-off date by when claims need to be registered. This will give us some finality as to the financial commitment. My view, and I propose to take some soundings on this, is that this should be no more than six months from when the Scheme is launched.

Because many of the potential claimants are overseas, I should be grateful for your help in publicising the Scheme. Perhaps our officials can discuss this.

Finally, one of the issues that Peter has raised concerns the moves being taken by Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania in proposing or preparing compensation schemes in accordance with Treaty obligations. Peter suggests that we "may wish to consider whether the administrators of the UK Scheme should negotiate with (those governments) for an indemnity". I should be grateful for your assessment of how realistic this might be and, if it is realistic, how we may go about making the necessary arrangements.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, Margaret Beckett, Jack Cunningham, Margaret Jay, Ann Taylor, Stephen Byers and to Sir Richard Wilson.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'A. J. ...'.

Par (to see)

By Bone & Scott-Lowe

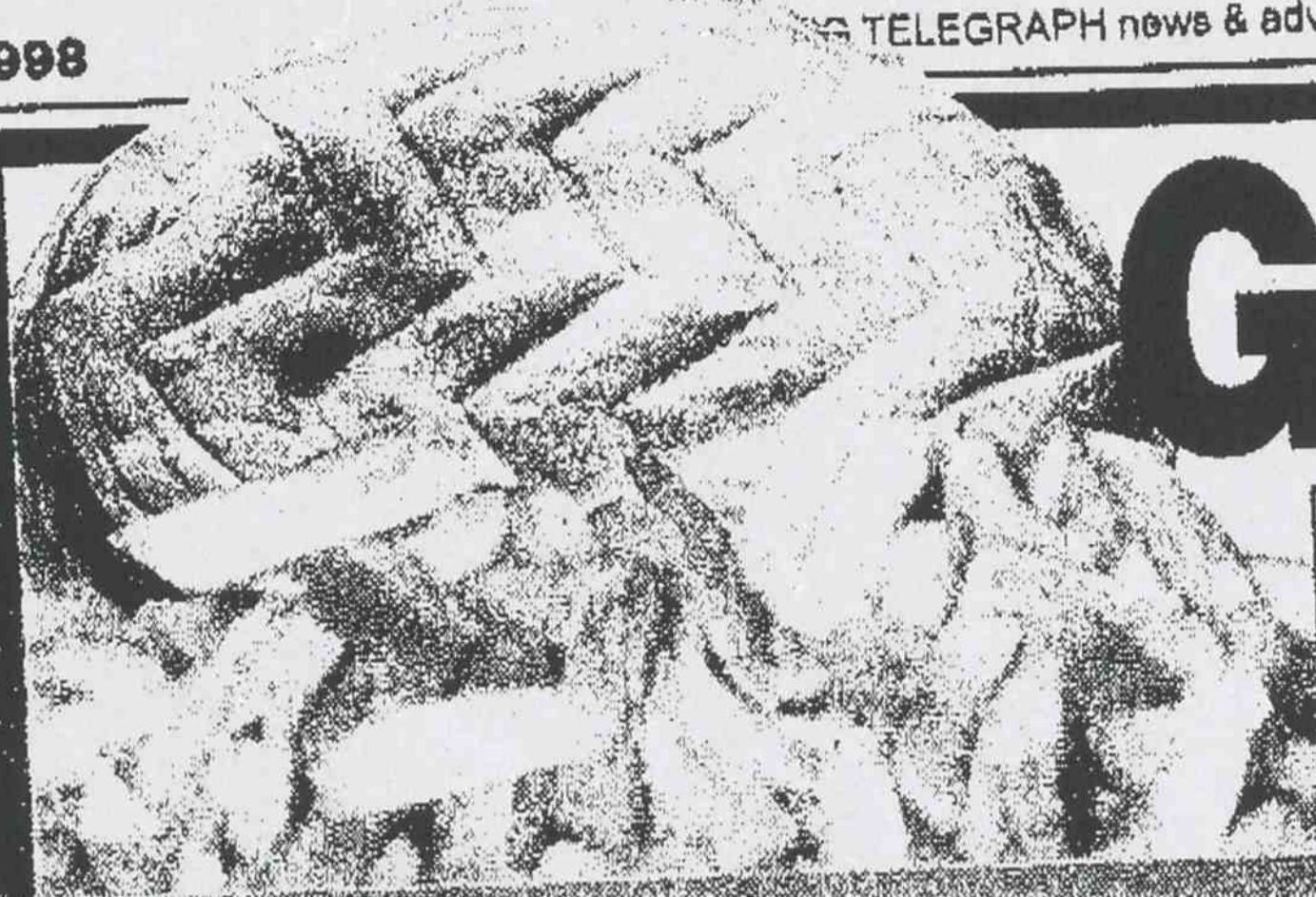
Angi Hunter says more

File

TELEGRAPH news & advertising 01733 555111, classified 555222

Monday, November 16, 1998

Tomorrow in your terrific Telegraph



Great of Captain Cod

POLITICS: War of words as MP is asked to apologise for outburst in P

# PM grilling sparks row



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AN MP has come under fire from a former part-time soldier for "yobbish antics" in the House of Commons on Armistice Day.

Just hours after MPs stood in silence in the House of Commons to honour Britain's war-dead, the speaker Betty Boothroyd warned John Hayes he faced being thrown out for barracking Prime Minister Tony Blair, answering questions on Europe in the Commons.

Now Philip Dilks, who served in the Territorial Army for nearly 20 years and lives in Mr Hayes' constituency, has called on the MP to apologise for his "lack of respect" on a day when "most of us were remembering the fallen of two world wars".

But Mr Hayes hit back, saying that his Europe question and remembrance day were unrelated.

And he called on Mr Dilks to apologise

by **PAUL HILL** and **GORDON DARROCH**

NEWS REPORTERS

for his "gratuitous" reference to war veterans to score a political point.

Mr Hayes said: "Mr Dilks' complaint is out of order.

"There is no connection whatsoever between my comments about the government's European policy and the Armistice.

"He has overstepped the mark by trying to use the memory of our war veterans to make a political point."

Mr Dilks, of Church Street, Deeping St James, who is the press officer for the Labour Party for the south east region, said his remarks were personal comments, and not made through his role with the Labour Party.

## Warned for heckling



JOHN Hayes was reprimanded by House of Commons speaker Betty Boothroyd after his outburst, which was captured live on TV at Prime Minister's Question Time.

Mr Hayes was warned for heckling Prime Minister Tony Blair while standing, which is against House of Commons rules.

The speaker told him he could be thrown out of the debating chamber if he stepped out of line again.

The MP for South Holland and the Deepings said: "The chamber was packed on Wednes-

J

**From: Philip Barton**  
**Date: 11 November 1998**

**PRIME MINISTER**

**cc: John Holmes**  
**Alastair Campbell**  
**Roger Liddle**  
**Hilary Coffman**

**AYCLIFFE ANGELS**

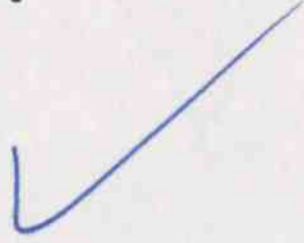
As you may have heard, there was some critical coverage of this issue in Monday's Northern Echo, not helped by the idiotic line taken by the Cabinet Office (see attached - we have rebuked them and told them to pass all enquiries to us from now on).

There is also an outstanding letter to you from Andrew Smith, editor of the Northern Echo. I have discussed this with Hilary, John Burton and Mark Covell. They agree that you should respond pointing out that it was a pity the Northern Echo reporter who was with you during your visit to Sedgefield on Friday did not raise this, repeating your commitment to doing something for the Aycliffe Angels, and offering that John Burton will go and talk to them to discuss what we have in mind.

On the substance, John Burton has sounded out a few people locally on the ideas Roger worked up with the Cabinet Office - ie a Memorial Sunday some time next year, commemorative services and plaques around the country, and a memorial brochure for all those involved. People are attracted to these ideas, as John is himself. I have therefore told the Cabinet Office to get on with sorting this out. The aim is for John to be in a position to brief the Echo in general terms in the next couple of weeks and for you to make a detailed announcement

at the time of your pre-Christmas visit to Sedgefield. I will keep a close eye on progress and stay in touch with John in an effort to sort this out once and for all.

**If you are content with this approach, please could you sign the attached letter to the Northern Echo?**



*Philip*

PHILIP BARTON

file - with other papers  
on Aycliffe Angels.

Philip 13/11

# The Northern Echo

Founded 1870

No. 39,845

## Angels should get their reward

ON THE very day he launched his party's manifesto for the 1997 General Election, Tony Blair telephoned *The Northern Echo* to support our campaign to recognise the Aycliffe Angels and those who risked their lives on the "home front".

"A future Labour government," he said, "will set the wheels in motion to have these people recognised by awarding them the Civil Defence Medal. Other civilians who did important jobs during the war were recognised for their bravery. I see no reason why these men and women shouldn't have a medal of their own as a token of the nation's thanks."

More than 18 months down the line it is time to call the Prime Minister to account.

We understand that Mr Blair has had more pressing matters on his agenda, and that even the most simple of tasks can get bogged down in a morass of Whitehall bureaucracy.

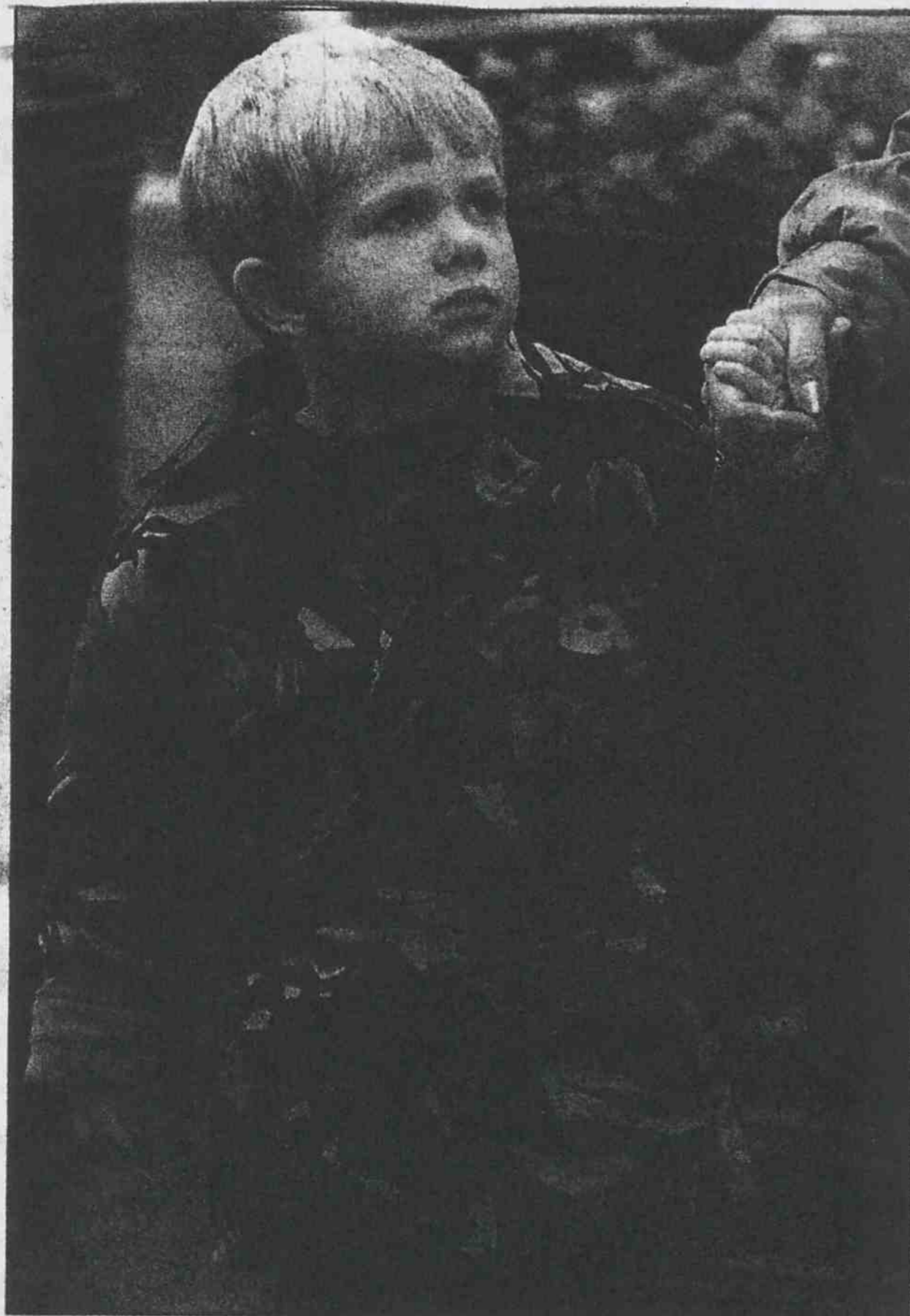
But the Prime Minister can only hide behind red tape for so long. Surely the time has come for him to recognise officially the endeavours of the Angels and others like them.

He is, after all, a powerful man. Surely he has the ability to make a decision that will be endorsed by the whole of the nation.

The Aycliffe munitions plant, and others like it, was a significant component of our war effort. Workers faced constant threat from bombing raids, and many of them were killed or injured in explosions.

It is unjust that their contribution in wartime was overlooked and that they are still waiting for recognition half a century on.

This week, as we remember those who paid the ultimate sacrifice during times of war, would be an appropriate time for the country to honour the debt owed to the Angels, and for Mr Blair to honour the pledge he gave to them.



■ The young and old gathered throughout Britain yesterday to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. Three-year-old Jordan Burn, of Newton Hall, wore his poppy with pride at the Durham ceremony, while in Middlesbrough, medals were on show as veterans recalled their comrades who fell in two world wars/Neg Nos. 98/11/76 and 77  
 Pictures: IAN WEIR and CHRIS TINSLEY

# The whole nation remembers, but do you, Mr Blair?

## REMEMBER THE ANGELS

ANOTHER Remembrance Sunday. Another missed opportunity to honour the Aycliffe Angels.

And last night hundreds of elderly women who risked everything for their country were still wondering: "How long do we have to wait for recognition, Prime Minister?"

Labour promised before last year's General Election to honour Britain's Second World War munitions workers.

When he became Prime Minister, Tony Blair told *The Northern Echo* he hoped the matter could be sorted out by Christmas.

He said it was wrong that thousands of women who worked in dangerous munitions factories, such as the one at Aycliffe, County Durham, during the war, did not receive a medal.

Mr Blair backed *The Northern Echo's* campaign, both to win the right for surviving Angels to take part in Remembrance Day ceremonies, and to award them the Civil Defence Medal.

During the heat of the General Election campaign, Mr Blair called *The Northern Echo* to pledge that he would gain the Angels the recognition they deserved.

*The Northern Echo* kept its word to the Angels and those who were able, took part in Poppy Day parades for the first time last year.

However, this country prevaricated for so long before it let the Angels honour their comrades that for some it was too late.

And still the procrastination con-

### What the Prime Minister said

"A future Labour government will set the wheels in motion to have these people recognised by awarding them the Civil Defence Medal."  
 4.4.97

"Since the Labour Party won the election, my constituency office has taken the matter up with the Home Secretary and I hope an announcement will be made in due course."  
 5.7.97

"I supported their case before the election and continue to think they have got a good case. They ran the same risks as many other people and there were a great number of accidents. That's why I am so sympathetic to them."  
 11.9.97

"I really wanted this done by Christmas. It has taken far longer than I expected but we will get an answer soon."  
 9.5.98



tinues on whether they will get what is right and proper - a medal to say they did their bit.

Earlier this year, the Prime Minister said: "I really wanted this done by Christmas."

Last night, supporters of the munitions workers asked: "Which Christmas do you mean Prime Minister?"

Vera Ball, 77, of Crook, worked on the munitions lines for almost three years. She said: "I'm bitterly disappointed because I thought Labour

### On Page 3

How much longer?

### On Page 8

Schoolboy heroes

would stick to its word. Instead, they've let us down like all the rest."

The munitions workers have won support from services organisations.

Richard Ellington, of the Tyneside Burma Star Association, said: "Without the ammunition those ladies made we couldn't have won the war. I know it's more than 50 years ago, but it's never too late to do what's right."

Major Bill Campbell, of the North-East British Legion, said: "There's no reason I can see not to give them a medal. Their bravery, working in such difficult conditions, is to be commended, not condemned to be forgotten."

A Cabinet Office spokesman said there was no end in sight. The matter is under consideration. A decision - for so long promised "next month" or "by Christmas" - is now a long way off.

Mary Hay, 79, from West Auckland, hoped that one day, her husband, Peter, would watch her march.

Sadly, Peter died before she was given the chance and now she fears the Government may just sweep the remaining Angels beneath the Cabinet Office carpet. She said: "We're all getting on, those of us who are left. I suppose it's easy to forget."

*The Northern Echo* does not think so. And nor should the Prime Minister.



The Prime Minister gave his backing 18 months ago to our campaign to recognise the Aycliffe Angels, so why are they still waiting for their medals? RUTH CAMPBELL reports

# How much longer must they wait Mr Blair?

## REMEMBER THE ANGELS

YESTERDAY was one year since 90-year-old Maisie White, leaning heavily on her walking stick, marched slowly but proudly in the Remembrance Day parade.

It was the first time she and scores of other former munitions workers were allowed to take part. Unfortunately for Maisie it was also the last.

Her health is failing and she has had to move into a residential home. She said: "I will not be able to do it again. I am 90 and I am on my way out. I am so glad I was able to walk last year."

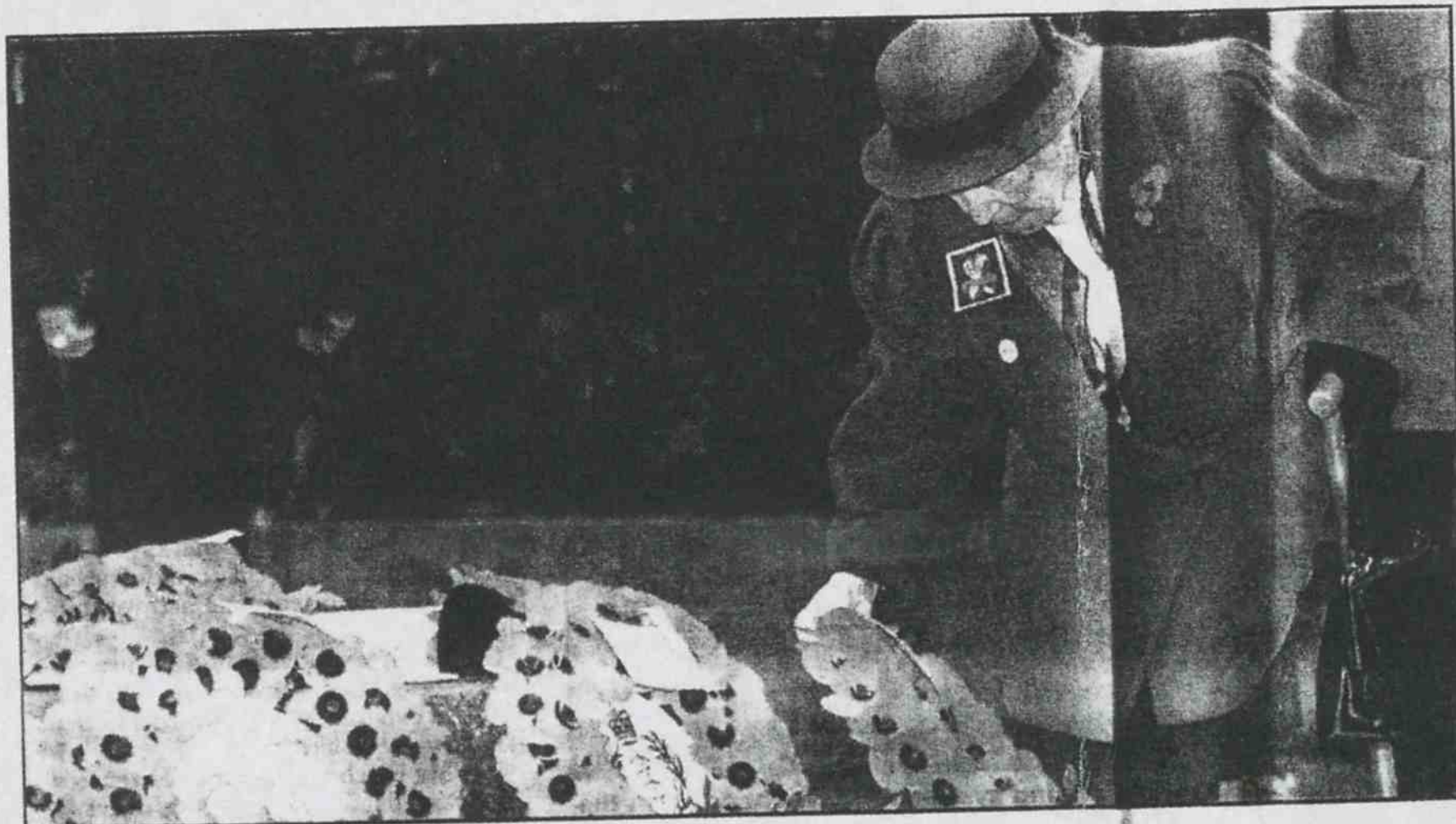
It is a shame the Prime Minister and his Whitehall advisors, who have been debating for more than a year-and-a-half whether to award the Aycliffe Angels the Civil Defence Medal they so clearly deserve, could not come to the North-East and meet Maisie and her former colleagues.

The Angels, the munitions workers at the massive plant at Newton Aycliffe who risked their lives for our freedom only to be forgotten about after the war, have been hoping and waiting for official recognition since March 25, 1997, when *The Northern Echo* first launched its campaign. The campaign to win them their medals was backed by Tony Blair, then leader of the Opposition.

But time is not on the Angels' side. Maisie, her voice frail and faltering, speaks for them all when she said: "The Government is not classing it as very important. They think it is not much, but it is so important to me."

It is now two years since I first raised the question of why the brave efforts of our wartime munitions workers had been so quickly forgotten. I had met a number of former Angels who were clearly upset that, unlike their glamorous sisters in the armed services, they were never represented in Remembrance Day parades.

No one had ever laid wreaths of poppies in memory of those Angels who died in explosions at the plant.



■ Maisie White, pictured above (bottom right) with munitions factory colleagues, last year laid a wreath on Remembrance Day, left, for the first - and last - time

RUTH CAMPBELL reports on the forgotten army of munitions workers who were known as the Aycliffe Angels during the war. The campaign to mark their sacrifice starts here...

## Factory workers can be heroes too

■ The Northern Echo campaign for munitions workers to be recognised was launched on March 25, 1997, left, and soon gained high profile supporters, such as Vera Lynn, right

Vera Lynn joins fight for Angels

REMEMBER THE ANGELS

None of those who suffered appalling injuries while working in extremely dangerous conditions, often through bombing raids, had ever received a medal.

"How could we forget the Angels of Aycliffe?" I wrote on December 13, 1996. "It would not cost us much to remember them, certainly not as much as we asked many of them to give."

It struck me then that these now frail and ageing women from across the region, who had returned to raise their children and look after their families after the war had no one to speak up for them.

With no forces organisation or trades union to represent them, they simply had no voice.

But in the days, weeks and months after my article, I received a steady flow of letters, not just from former Angels and their families, but from others,

from all over the region, who simply wanted to offer support. The people of the North-East clearly felt the time had come to remember.

One war veteran who fought in Burma summed up the mood: "They did a damn sight more than a lot of serving personnel. Their contribution was all important. They deserve a medal without a shadow of doubt."

*The Northern Echo* campaign which followed ensured that the women were, at last, able to take their rightful place in Remembrance Day parades. But Government offices have repeatedly delayed making a decision about awarding them the Civil Defence Medal. We were told a decision was imminent last November, then December.

Since January 20 this year, I have been chasing up the relevant Government departments every week to ensure that the Aycliffe Angels are not for-

gotten again. But, after 42 phone calls, the lack of response has become increasingly depressing.

Calls are often not returned; people are too busy to search out information; letters remain unanswered. There is clearly no sense of urgency.

Just this week, a young press officer in the cabinet office told me he wasn't sure when he could get back to me because he "had a lot on" that day.

His apparent lack of concern contrasted with the intense emotion of former Angel Janet Jackman, who I spoke to ten minutes later.

The 77-year-old, who took part in last year's Remembrance Day Parade, pushed in a wheelchair, told me: "If they don't recognise us soon, the age factor will bury this. As we die off we become unknown."

We will keep campaigning for the Angels. We won't let them down. But will you, Mr Blair?

## Angels' struggle for recognition

● 1943: The Royal Ordnance factory at Aycliffe, County Durham, reaches peak production, employing 17,000 people working round the clock. Nearly 90 per cent are women. They are soon known as the Aycliffe Angels.

● December 1945: The factory is empty. The women who did so much are forgotten.

● August 1946: Bulldozers demolish the factory to make way for Aycliffe Industrial Estate.

● April 1995: The Angels story is rediscovered by Durham University researchers and re-told in *The Northern Echo*.

● 1996: *The Northern Echo* reveals that none of the women were ever given a medal to mark the nation's gratitude for their sacrifice.

● March 1997: *The Northern Echo* launches a campaign to recognise all munitions workers.

● April 1997: Forces sweetheart Dame Vera Lynn joins the campaign.

● April 4, 1997: Tony Blair takes time out from the General Election campaign to pledge his support to the Angels.

● April 18, 1997: Town councillors in Newton Aycliffe say they will mark the Angels' sacrifice by erecting a memorial to them.

● May 28, 1997: Mr Blair faces criticism that he has failed to keep his word to the Angels. The Home Office promises a speedy response.

● June 1997: The Home Office, after months of inaction, hands responsibility to the Cabinet Office.

● July 1997: Hundreds of Angels meet in a reunion organised by Great Aycliffe Town Council.

● July 5, 1997: Mr Blair once again pledges his support, saying: "I hope an announcement will be made in due course."

● July 21, 1997: The French government says it will consider giving the Angels a medal of honour.

● September 1997: I'm still backing the campaign, says Mr Blair. We'll give you an answer soon, says the Cabinet Office.

● November 1997: For the first time, Aycliffe Angels take part in Remembrance Day ceremonies across the region.

● May 1998: Mr Blair once again promises a speedy decision.

● November 1998: The Cabinet Office says it is no closer to a decision. "Don't hold your breath," says a spokesman.

## What they said

"You'll be getting a reply within a few days." Home Office spokesman in May 1997

"These men and women may not have worn a uniform but without their incredible hard work and sacrifice, victory would have been impossible..." Dame Vera Lynn

"Without their help this country would have lost the war." Falklands hero Simon Weston

"We have a special place in our hearts for all the British people who helped our country during the war..." Spokesman for the French ambassador to London

"The British Legion would be very happy to see these ladies get what they deserve." Royal British Legion

"We will get an answer soon." Tony Blair five months ago



RESTRICTED - HONOURS



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

File

From the Private Secretary

**MR. MERIFIELD**  
**CABINET OFFICE**

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**HOME FRONT MEMORIAL**

You have been discussing with Roger Liddle the way ahead on this and I have seen a copy of your letter of 6 November to Lambeth Palace on the possibility of a Memorial Sunday next year to commemorate the sacrifice made by people on the Home Front. You should also know that this issue received some extremely unhelpful coverage in *The Northern Echo* on 9 November (see attached).

The Prime Minister discussed the various ideas in Roger Liddle's minute of 3 November (copy attached) with John Burton when he was in his constituency last week. The Prime Minister asked Mr. Burton to sound out local opinion informally to see how they would react to these ideas. Mr. Burton has now reported that people are attracted to them (as he is himself), particularly if the Bevin Boys are included. We need therefore to agree quickly with all those concerned that this is the way ahead.

The Prime Minister will be in his constituency again from the weekend of 19/20 December. We need to be in a position to make a firm announcement by then. The Prime Minister is also writing to *The Northern Echo* to promise that John Burton will talk to them in more detail about what we have in mind as soon as possible. Ideally, this should happen before the end of November, but we will need to ensure that other Whitehall departments, Lambeth Palace and the Palace are signed up to our ideas before then. I would be grateful if you could pursue this. Please let me know if you encounter any resistance.

Finally, as you may have seen, part of *The Northern Echo* story on 9 November was based on some unfortunate remarks by the Cabinet Office Press Office. I would be grateful if you could ensure that in future all media enquiries on this issue are referred to the No. 10 Press Office.

RESTRICTED - HONOURS

RESTRICTED - HONOURS

- 2 -

I am copying this minute to Sebastian Wood and Barry Sutcliffe in the Cabinet Office and to John Holmes, Alastair Campbell and Hilary Coffman here in No 10.

*Philip Barton*

**PHILIP BARTON**

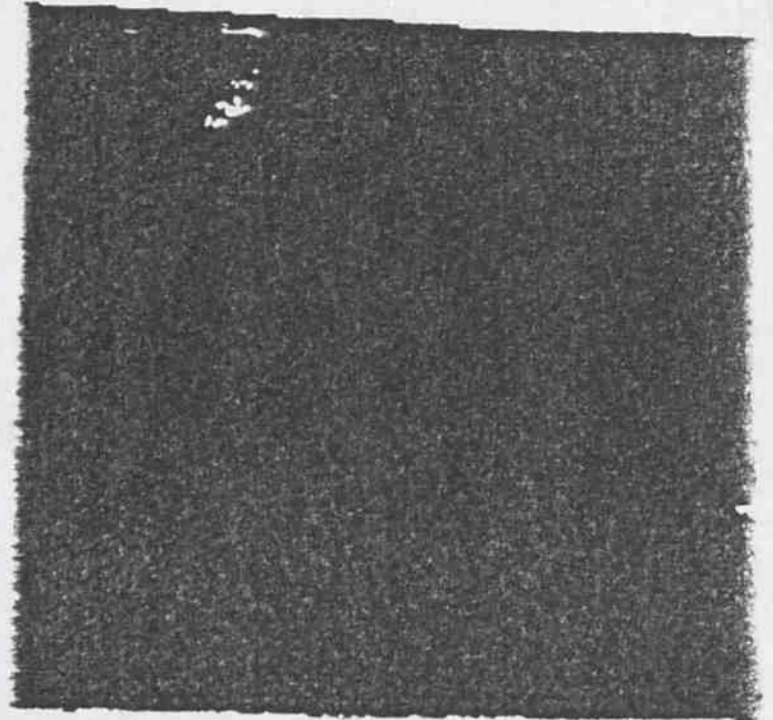
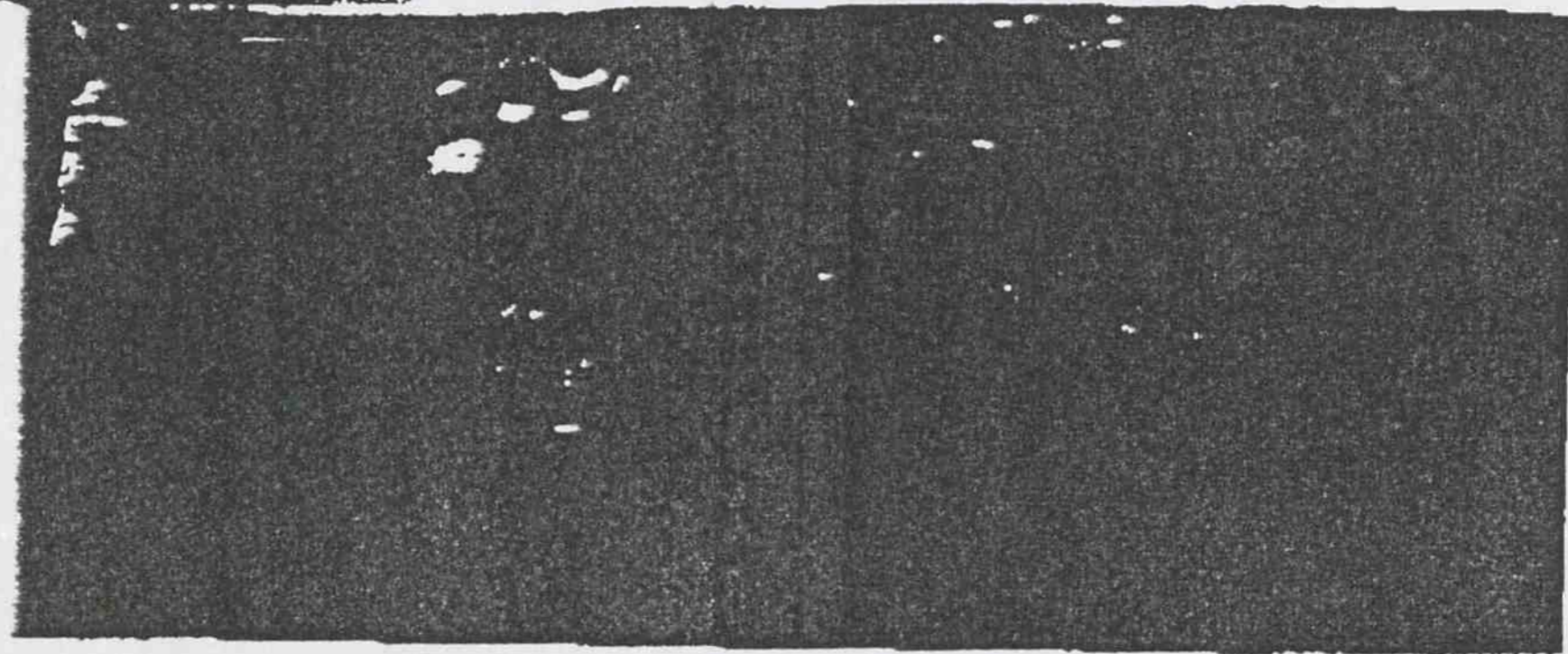
11 November 1998

RESTRICTED - HONOURS

JEH

C-02  
J.P.C.

AC



The young and old gathered throughout Britain yesterday to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice. Old Jordan Burn, of Newton Hall, wore his poppy with pride at the Durham ceremony, while in Middlesbrough recalled their comrades who fell in two world wars/Neg Nos. 98/11/78 and 77

# The whole nation remembers, but do you, Mr Blair?

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And still the procrastination con-

### What the Prime Minister said

"A future Labour government will set the wheels in motion to have these people recognised by awarding them the Civil Defence Medal." 4.4.97

"Since the Labour Party won the election, my constituency office has taken the matter up with the Home Secretary and I hope an announcement will be made in due course." 5.7.97

"I supported their case before the election and continue to think they have got a good case. They ran the same risks as many other people and there were a great number of accidents. That's why I am so sympathetic to them." 11.9.97

"I really wanted this done by Christmas. It has taken far longer than I expected but we will get an answer soon." 9.5.98



tinues on whether they will get what is right and proper - a medal to say they did their bit.

Earlier this year, the Prime Minister said: "I really wanted this done by Christmas."

Last night, supporters of the munitions workers asked: "Which Christmas do you mean Prime Minister?"

Vera Bail, 77, of Crook, worked on the munitions lines for almost three years. She said: "I'm bitterly disappointed because I thought Labour

On Page 3

How much longer?

On Page 8

Schoolboy heroes

would stick to its word. Instead, they've let us down like all the rest."

The munitions workers have won support from services organisations.

Richard Ellington, of the Tyneside Burma Star Association, said: "Without the ammunition those ladies made we couldn't have won the war. I know it's more than 50 years ago, but it's never too late to do what's right."

Major Bill Campbell, of the North-East British Legion, said: "There's no reason I can see not to give them a medal. Their bravery, working through difficult conditions, is to be commended, not condemned to be forgotten."

A Cabinet Office spokesman said there was no end in sight. The matter is under consideration. A decision - for so long promised "next month" or "by Christmas" - is now a long way off.

Mary Hay, 79, from West Auckland, hoped that one day, her husband, Peter, would watch her march.

Sadly, Peter died before she was given the chance and now she fears the Government may just sweep the remaining Angels beneath the Cabinet Office carpet. She said: "We're all getting on, those of us who are left. I suppose it's easy to forget."

*The Northern Echo* does not think so. And nor should the Prime Minister.

o recognise the Aycliffe  
L reports

# Must Blair?



Maise White, pictured above (bottom right) with munitions factory colleagues, last year laid a wreath on Remembrance Day, left, for the first - and last - time

## Vera Lynn joins fight for Angels

gotten again. But, after 42 phone calls, the lack of response has become increasingly depressing.

Calls are often not returned; people are too busy to search out information; letters remain unanswered. There is clearly no sense of urgency.

Just this week, a young press officer in the cabinet office told me he wasn't sure when he could get back to me because he "had a lot on" that day.

His apparent lack of concern contrasted with the intense emotion of former Angel Janet Jackman, who I spoke to ten minutes later.

The 77-year-old, who took part in last year's Remembrance Day Parade, pushed in a wheelchair, told me: "If they don't recognise us soon, the age factor will bury this. As we die off we become unknown."

We will keep campaigning for the Angels. We won't let them down. But will you, Mr Blair?

## Angels' struggle for recognition

- 1943: The Royal Ordnance factory at Aycliffe, County Durham, reaches peak production, employing 17,000 people working round the clock. Nearly 90 per cent are women. They are soon known as the Aycliffe Angels.
- December 1945: The factory is empty. The women who did so much are forgotten.
- August 1946: Bulldozers demolish the factory to make way for Aycliffe Industrial Estate.
- April 1985: The Angels story is rediscovered by Durham University researchers and re-told in *The Northern Echo*.
- 1996: *The Northern Echo* reveals that none of the women were ever given a medal to mark the nation's gratitude for their sacrifice.
- March 1997: *The Northern Echo* launches a campaign to recognise all munitions workers.
- April 1997: Forces sweetheart Dame Vera Lynn joins the campaign.
- April 4, 1997: Tony Blair takes time out from the General Election campaign to pledge his support to the Angels.
- April 18, 1997: Town councillors in Newton Aycliffe say they will mark the Angels' sacrifice by erecting a memorial to them.
- May 28, 1997: Mr Blair faces criticism that he has failed to keep his word to the Angels. The Home Office promises a speedy response.
- June 1997: The Home Office, after months of inaction, hands responsibility to the Cabinet Office.
- July 1997: Hundreds of Angels meet in a reunion organised by Great Aycliffe Town Council.
- July 5, 1997: Mr Blair once again pledges his support, saying: "I hope an announcement will be made in due course."
- July 21, 1997: The French government says it will consider giving the Angels a medal of honour.
- September 1997: I'm still backing the campaign, says Mr Blair. We'll give you an answer soon, says the Cabinet Office.
- November 1997: For the first time, Aycliffe Angels take part in Remembrance Day ceremonies across the region.
- May 1998: Mr Blair once again promises a speedy decision.
- November 1998: The Cabinet Office says it is no closer to a decision. "Don't hold your breath," says a spokesman.

## What they said

"You'll be getting a reply within a few days." Home Office spokesman in May 1997

"These men and women may not have worn a

uniform but without their incredible hard work and sacrifice, victory would have been impossible..." Dame Vera Lynn

"Without their help this country would have lost the war." Falklands hero Simon Weston

"We have a special place in our hearts for all the British people who helped our country during the war..." Spokesman for the French ambassador to London

"The British Legion would be very happy to see these ladies get what they deserve." Royal British Legion

"We will get an answer soon." Tony Blair five months ago

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pictures

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**FLIGHT**



The Prime Minister gave his backing 18 months ago to our campaign to recognise the Aycliffe Angels, so why are they still waiting for their medals? RUTH CAMPBELL reports

# How much longer must they wait Mr Blair?

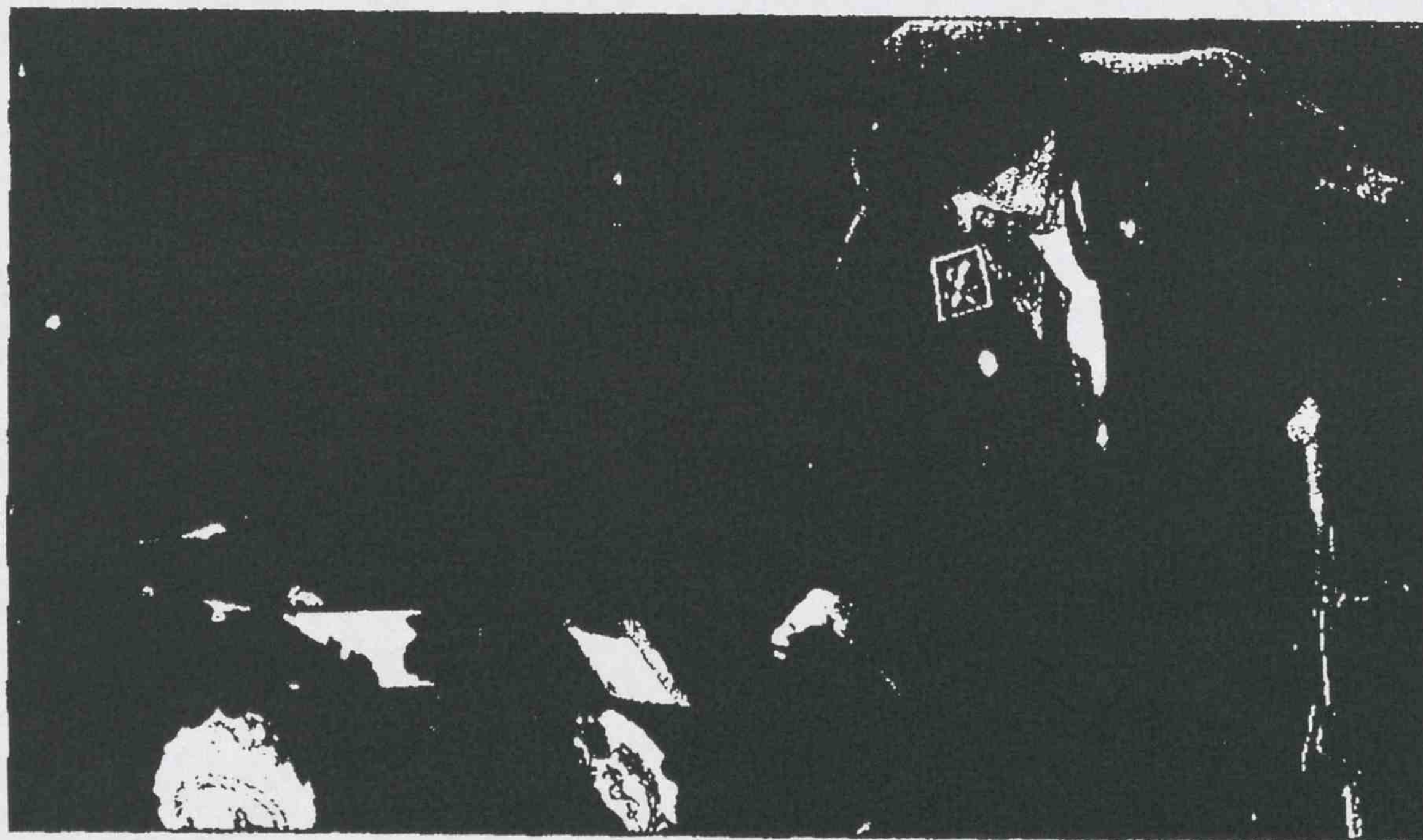
## REMEMBER THE ANGELS

YESTERDAY was one year since 90-year-old Maisie White, leaning heavily on her walking stick, marched slowly but proudly in the Remembrance Day parade.

It was the first time she and scores of other former munitions workers were allowed to take part. Unfortunately for Maisie it was also the last.

Her health is failing and she has had to move into a residential home. She said: "I will not be able to do it again. I am 90 and I am on my way out. I am so glad I was able to walk last year."

It is a shame the Prime Minister and his Whitehall advisors, who have been debating for more than a year-and-a-half whether to award the Aycliffe Angels the Civil Defence Medal they so clearly deserve, could not come to the North-East and meet Maisie and her former colleagues.



■ Maisie White, pictured above (bottom right) with munitions factory colleagues, last year laid a wreath on Remembrance Day, left, for the first - and last - time

RUTH CAMPBELL reports on the forgotten army of munitions workers who were known as the Aycliffe Angels during the war. The campaign to mark their sacrifice starts here...

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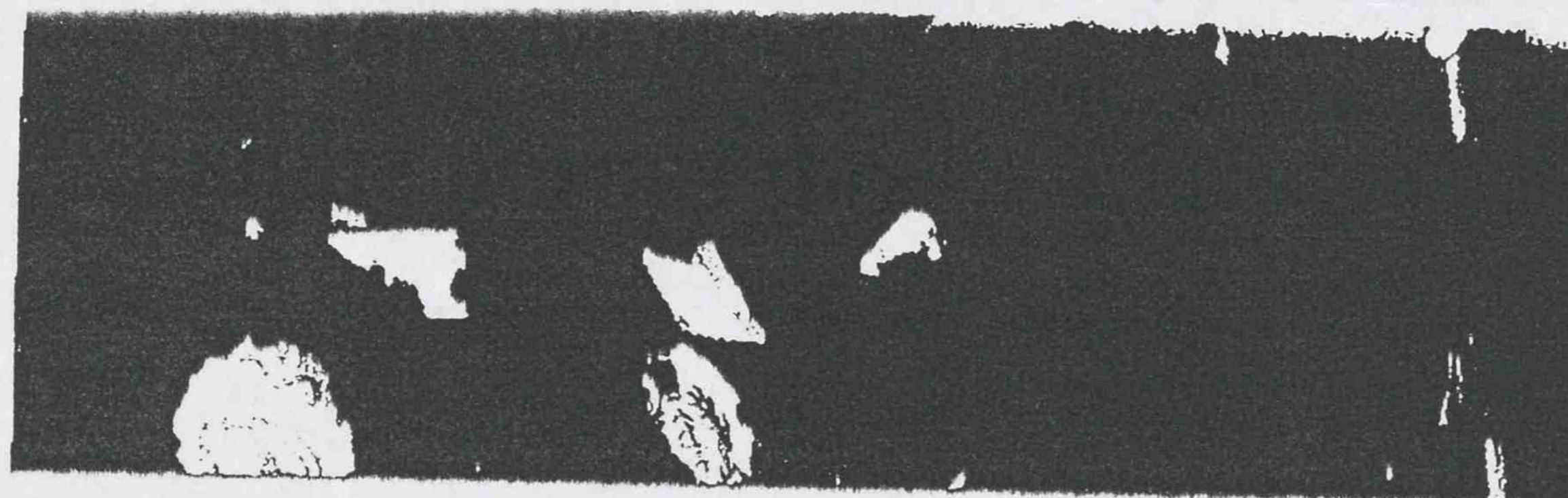
It is a shame the Prime Minister and his Whitehall advisors, who have been debating for more than a year-and-a-half whether to award the Aycliffe Angels the Civil Defence Medal they so clearly deserve, could not come to the North-East and meet Maisie and her former colleagues.

The Angels, the munitions workers at the massive plant at Newton Aycliffe who risked their lives for our freedom only to be forgotten about after the war, have been hoping and waiting for official recognition since March 25, 1997, when *The Northern Echo* first launched its campaign. The campaign to win them their medals was backed by Tony Blair, then leader of the Opposition.

But time is not on the Angels' side. Maisie, her voice frail and faltering, speaks for them all when she said: "The Government is not classing it as very important. They think it is not much, but it is so important to me."

It is now two years since I first raised the question of why the brave efforts of our wartime munitions workers had been so quickly forgotten. I had met a number of former Angels who were clearly upset that, unlike their glamorous sisters in the armed services, they were never represented in Remembrance Day parades.

No one had ever laid wreaths of poppies in memory of those Angels who died in explosions at the plant.



■ Maisie White, pictured above (left) with munitions factory colleagues last year laid a wreath on Remembrance Day, left, for the first - and last - time.

**RUTH CAMPBELL** reports on the forgotten army of munitions workers who were known as the Aycliffe Angels during the war. The campaign to mark their sacrifice starts here...

## Factory workers can be heroes too

■ The Northern Echo campaign for munitions workers to be recognised was launched on March 25, 1997, left, and soon gained high profile supporters, such as Vera Lynn, right

Page 19

## Vera Lynn join fight for Angel

None of those who suffered appalling injuries while working in extremely dangerous conditions, often through bombing raids, had ever received a medal.

"How could we forget the Angels of Aycliffe?" I wrote on December 13, 1996. "It would not cost us much to remember them, certainly not as much as we asked many of them to give."

It struck me then that these now frail and ageing women from across the region, who had returned to raise their children and look after their families after the war had no one to speak up for them.

With no forces organisation or trades union to represent them, they simply had no voice.

But in the days, weeks and months after my article, I received a steady flow of letters, not just from former Angels and their families but from others,

from all over the region, who simply wanted to offer support. The people of the North-East clearly felt the time had come to remember.

One war veteran who fought in Burma summed up the mood. "They did a damn sight more than a lot of serving personnel. Their contribution was all important. They deserve a medal without a shadow of doubt."

*The Northern Echo* campaign which followed ensured that the women were, at last, able to take their rightful place in Remembrance Day parades. But Government officials have repeatedly delayed making a decision about awarding them the Civil Defence Medal. We were told a decision was imminent last November, then December.

Since January 20 this year, I have been chasing up the relevant Government departments every week to ensure that the Aycliffe Angels are not for-

gotten again. But, after 42 phone calls, the response has become increasingly depressing.

Calls are often not returned; people are too busy to search out information; letters remain unanswered. There is clearly no sense of urgency.

Just this week, a young press officer in the net office told me he wasn't sure when he got back to me because he "had a lot on" that day.

His apparent lack of concern contrasted with the intense emotion of former Angel Janet Jack who I spoke to ten minutes later.

The 77-year-old, who took part in last year's Remembrance Day Parade, pushed in a wheelchair, told me: "If they don't recognise us soon, the factory will bury this. As we die off we become known."

We will keep campaigning for the Angel. We won't let them down. But will you, Mr Blair?

RESTRICTED

From: Roger Liddle  
Date: 3 November 1998

PRIME MINISTER

cc: John Holmes  
Philip Barton  
Jonathan Powell  
Sally Morgan  
Hilary Coffman

AYCLIFFE ANGELS

*We must  
include John  
Barton in this  
briefing until this  
I will  
you have  
signature lines  
for me*

I met Mr Merrifield about this today and he is separately putting up a note to you in advance of your visit this week to Sedgfield.

He convinced me that to award the Defence Medal retrospectively to munitions workers would open up a horrendous can of worms (how would one justify the award; where to draw the line; how would one validate claims etc)

But I believe I convinced him that he should beef up his idea of a ceremonial unveiling of a memorial plaque to the Home Front at Coventry Cathedral in the following ways:

- We should set aside a memorial Sunday to commemorate the sacrifice made by people on the Home Front timed for the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the start of the Second World War
- Commemorative services at cathedrals throughout the UK to be held at the same time as the unveiling by the Queen of a memorial plaque at Coventry (this would enable you to attend an event at Durham when the Aycliffe Angels could be strongly represented alongside civilian veterans from Tyneside, Wearside and the Tees)
- The publications of a Memorial Brochure celebrating achievements on the Home Front (pictures, personal accounts) which could be presented to veterans either free or at a concessionary price - and handed on with pride to grandchildren

Mr Merrifield is now consulting the Archbishop and the Imperial War Museum.

RESTRICTED

*R Liddle*

Top - PB

cc JEM  
✓ HC, Press

To : Philip Barton

From : Mark Covell

file - Home Front

Date : 11.11.98

PAB 18/12

cc : John Burton, Hilary Coffman

I attach copy of letter I sent to editor of Northern Echo with reference to their story on Monday. I have discussed the matter again with John Burton several times this week and he and I have both spoken with the editor of the Northern Echo.

The next step is to arrange a meeting with the Northern Echo to discuss the whole issue and what we intend to do. We need to move this on and need to have an initial meeting with them at the end of next week or the week after. This can be done to set out our ideas and an actual press announcement could either be done by the Prime Minister in an interview with the Echo at Downing Street or on his next constituency visit in December.

At the initial meeting with the Echo we need to be clear on a number of points and a few lines on each of these questions would be most helpful.

Questions for Northern Echo Meeting

Why has it taken so long ? - complex, involving which departments.

How was the Civil Defence Medal Awarded ? - who got it ,historical aspect, King, Attlee, etc.

Why it would not cover all those at Aycliffe munitions factory - length of service it was given for - 3 years. Verification procedures for awarding etc.

Why it is not just one group of people ? Home Front , various groups involved in war effort.

**What the Prime Minister proposes to do to give recognition to these groups.**

National service - including event in Durham which he would attend, as we approach new millennium/ commemorative service brochure covering Home Front in North, accounts etc. high quality to pass on to grandchildren.

When would service be ? Who would be invited ? Who will organise ? When can we make press announcement to Echo ? Could the Echo be involved in the service brochure / bringing together local peoples accounts from the area?

Other points to think about would be possible invite to angels / representatives of, to Downing Street or to meet PM in Constituency for him to outline the proposals to them. Could this be done in December ?

*[Handwritten signature]*





**The Labour Party**

Regional Office

20/22 Cheapside  
Wakefield  
West Yorkshire WF1 2TF  
Telephone (01924) 291221  
Facsimile (01924) 290098  
E-Mail LP-NORTH&YORKS@GEO2.POPTEL.ORG UK

Regional Director: Andrew Sharp  
Regional Officers: Tony Slatcher, Nan Sloane  
Press Officer: Mark Covell  
Development Officer: Nicola Marsh

The Editor  
Northern Echo  
PO Box 14  
Priestgate  
Darlington  
Co. Durham DL1 1NF

November 9 1998

Dear Sir

With reference to the story in today's Northern Echo on the Aycliffe Angels. Your headline and story does not reflect the time and effort put in by both Tony Blair and John Burton to achieve recognition for the Aycliffe Angels and other groups who were involved on the Home Front. Progress is being made on this complex matter. Would it not have been reasonable to ask about the latest position in the Constituency on Friday?

The Prime Minister made a series of constituency visits on Friday and the Northern Echo were informed of the visit details on Wednesday. A reporter from the Northern Echo attended on Friday and at Tallent Engineering your reporter was given an opportunity to question the Prime Minister. I am very disappointed that you had a face to face opportunity to question the Prime Minister and did not ask him about the issue before running your front page story today.

John Burton has spent a considerable amount of time working on what is a complex issue and discussed the matter in detail with the Prime Minister at Mirabella on Friday. John has been as frustrated as you by the length of time that the Whitehall system has taken. However it is a complex matter involving several departments and requiring a great deal of historical research on the whole question of how recognition was dealt with after the Second World War.

Yours Sincerely

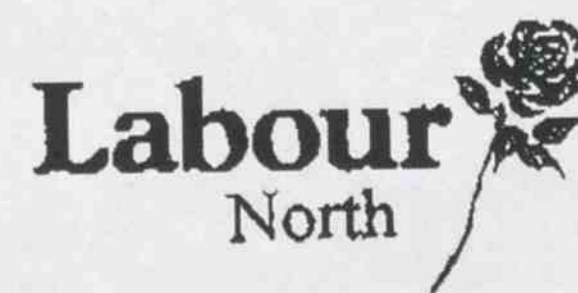
Mark Covell

Regional Press Officer



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Serving the North East, Yorkshire and Humberside



*File*

**From:** Philip Barton  
**Date:** 11 November 1998

**PRIME MINISTER**

**cc:** John Holmes  
Alastair Campbell  
Roger Liddle  
Hilary Coffman

**AYCLIFFE ANGELS**

As you may have heard, there was some critical coverage of this issue in Monday's Northern Echo, not helped by the idiotic line taken by the Cabinet Office (see attached - we have rebuked them and told them to pass all enquiries to us from now on).

There is also an outstanding letter to you from Andrew Smith, editor of the Northern Echo. I have discussed this with Hilary, John Burton and Mark Covell. They agree that you should respond pointing out that it was a pity the Northern Echo reporter who was with you during your visit to Sedgefield on Friday did not raise this, repeating your commitment to doing something for the Aycliffe Angels, and offering that John Burton will go and talk to them to discuss what we have in mind.

On the substance, John Burton has sounded out a few people locally on the ideas Roger worked up with the Cabinet Office - ie a Memorial Sunday some time next year, commemorative services and plaques around the country, and a memorial brochure for all those involved. People are attracted to these ideas, as John is himself. I have therefore told the Cabinet Office to get on with sorting this out. The aim is for John to be in a position to brief the Echo in general terms in the next couple of weeks and for you to make a detailed announcement

at the time of your pre-Christmas visit to Sedgefield. I will keep a close eye on progress and stay in touch with John in an effort to sort this out once and for all.

**If you are content with this approach, please could you sign the attached letter to the Northern Echo?**

*Philip*

PHILIP BARTON

forward to Seoul. v15

Rui



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Prime Minister's Chief of Staff

9 November 1998

Dear Stephen,

**MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR THE LATE LORD ROTHERMERE**

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you so much for attending the Memorial Service for Lord Rothermere in Korea and for your other kindnesses to Viscountess Rothermere. He particularly enjoyed the pictures. He will be speaking to Viscountess Rothermere tomorrow and no doubt she will also wish to thank you for all your kindness.

I would be grateful if you could pass on the Prime Minister's thanks to all those involved at the Embassy

Yours ever  
J.P.

JONATHAN POWELL

S. D. R. Brown, Esq.

*[Handwritten mark]*

**RESTRICTED - POLICY**

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

The Rt Hon Peter Mandelson MP  
Secretary of State for Trade and Industry  
Department of Trade and Industry  
1 Victoria Street  
LONDON  
SW1H 0ET

6 November 1998

File  
~~JJA~~  
C: JEH  
PB  
✓ JPO  
AC

Dear Secretary of State,

**FUNDING PRESSURES: NUCLEAR LIABILITIES AND ENEMY PROPERTY**

Thank you for your letter of 26 October. I am broadly content with what you propose, subject to our officials having the chance to discuss the detail and the likely costs.

2. On enemy property, we must of course await Lord Archer of Sandwell's review. The aim should be to achieve maximum value for money consistent with the political and humanitarian imperatives. I note that you would wish to discuss this further in the light of later estimates of payments due to enemy property claims and the 1998-99 underspend. I am sure you will appreciate that if we do discuss further, my hope is that by then you will have considered how the impact of enemy property payments can be covered by take-up of EYF (relative to your department's other spending pressures) or by use of DTI's departmental unallocated provision (DUP) agreed for 1999-2000.

PK 611

**RESTRICTED - POLICY**

3. I am content for you to fund nuclear liabilities in the way you propose on the basis that the savings from the underspends on coal health liabilities are guaranteed. You will understand that savings offered on non-discretionary spending have to be scrutinised with particular care to ensure that they are deliverable and that the DEL Reserve does not remain exposed. I am content for our officials to discuss and determine the amounts. I would expect your officials to examine the extent to which rephasing decommissioning work - subject to the overriding safety considerations - might help offset the extra costs connected with Dounreay. I would add that if UKAEA end up paying BNFL more than was assumed in setting BNFL's External Finance Limit (EFL) for 1998-99, then that EFL will be reduced accordingly.

4. You will appreciate that the agreement on nuclear liabilities relates only to the current financial year. The ring-fencing arrangements which were put in place as part of the CSR will not permit any underspend on coal health liabilities to be vired into nuclear liabilities (or indeed to other spending areas) in future years.

5. I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Robin Cook, Margaret Beckett, Margaret Jay, Jack Cunningham and Sir Richard Wilson.

*Yours sincerely,*

*Stephen Byers*

**I. P. STEPHEN BYERS**

*Approved by the Chief Secretary  
and signed in his absence.*

10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON WC2A 2AA

File  
aps / two minute silence  
mrm

Press Office

? DCO to file

From the Private Secretary

4 November 1998

Dear Peter,

### TWO MINUTE SILENCE

The Royal British Legion are campaigning again this year for a Two Minute Silence to be observed at 11am on Wednesday, 11 November, as well as on Remembrance Sunday. You might welcome guidance on the Prime Minister's position.

The Prime Minister will be observing the Two Minute Silence on Wednesday, 11 November. He hopes that other Ministers will do likewise.

You and copy addressees might also find the following lines to take helpful in dealing with enquiries on this:

- the Government will maintain its efforts to ensure that Remembrance Sunday and the Two Minute Silence that day are observed with full dignity, respect and honour;
- the Prime Minister strongly supports the observance of Remembrance Sunday and the Two Minute Silence;
- the Prime Minister will observe the silence, both at the Cenotaph on 8 November and at 11am on 11 November;
- the Prime Minister hopes others will do likewise and the Government would certainly not want to stand in the way of those who wish to do so too;
- but it is clearly a personal decision whether to observe the Two Minute Silence.

me

Departments may also wish to make arrangements to allow staff who want to observe the silence next Wednesday to do so.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to the Private Secretaries of other members of Cabinet and to Sebastian Wood (Cabinet Office).

*Yours ever,*

*Philip*

**PHILIP BARTON**

Peter Unwin Esq  
Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions



RESTRICTED

From: Roger Liddle  
Date: 3 November 1998

PRIME MINISTER

cc: John Holmes  
Philip Barton  
Jonathan Powell  
Sally Morgan  
Hilary Coffman

AYCLIFFE ANGELS

I met Mr Merrifield about this today and he is separately putting up a note to you in advance of your visit this week to Sedgfield.

He convinced me that to award the Defence Medal retrospectively to munitions workers would open up a horrendous can of worms (how would one justify the award; where to draw the line; how would one validate claims etc)

But I believe I convinced him that he should beef up his idea of a ceremonial unveiling of a memorial plaque to the Home Front at Coventry Cathedral in the following ways:

- We should set aside a memorial Sunday to commemorate the sacrifice made by people on the Home Front timed for the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the start of the Second World War
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- The publications of a Memorial Brochure celebrating achievements on the Home Front (pictures, personal accounts) which could be presented to veterans either free or at a concessionary price - and handed on with pride to grandchildren

Mr Merrifield is now consulting the Archbishop and the Imperial War Museum.

RESTRICTED

*Handwritten signature*

*Handwritten notes:*  
7  
We must involve John Barton in this. I will get you how to get the signature done for me.



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 0171-21 82111/2/3

SECRETARY OF STATE

MO 4/22/1H & MO 27/3

*file*

*PRB*

*5/11*

3 November 1998

*TOP - PB*

*cc: JEH*

*JPB*

*AC*

*KG*

*Dear Philip,*

**PRESENTATION BY THE PRIME MINISTER TO A GULF VETERAN  
AT THE FESTIVAL OF REMEMBRANCE: 7 SEPTEMBER 1998**

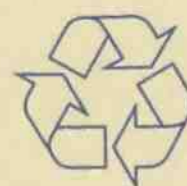
Your letter of 30 October sought our views on the proposal by the Royal British Legion (RBL) that the Prime Minister should make a presentation to Nigel Thompson after the Festival of Remembrance on Saturday.

Mr Thompson is a former Royal Navy Petty Officer who served during the Gulf conflict in 1990/91 and has since been diagnosed as suffering from Motor Neurone Disease (MND), a degenerative disease of unknown causes for which there is no known cure. His case is well-known to MOD Ministers and he attended a meeting with the then Minister for the Armed Forces in April this year, accompanied by his MP, Mr Paddy Ashdown.

The RBL advise that, despite suffering from a terminal illness, Mr Thompson has been outstandingly successful in raising funds for the RBL's welfare activities. Hence they have arranged that he be awarded a Sword of Honour, presented by Wilkinson Sword. We understand this to be a unique award in that the RBL have previously only so honoured units rather than individuals. Given the circumstances, the RBL are keen that the presentation of the sword is made by the Prime Minister.

Philip Barton Esq  
10 Downing Street

*NM  
4/11*



Recycled Paper

The Defence Secretary feels that this award is appropriate recognition of Mr Thompson's fund raising activities in the face of personal adversity. It would also be much more in keeping with the Government's open and robust approach to Gulf veterans' illnesses to make the presentation than to decline. Mr Robertson therefore recommends that the Prime Minister presents the award on Saturday as the RBL have requested.

You will have seen the coverage of this issue in the Sunday Times of last weekend, some of which was inaccurate. It is obviously possible that some will portray the event as an admission by the Government that Mr Thompson is right in attributing his illness to his Gulf service, or even seek to show that No 10 is distancing itself from MOD's stance on the issue.

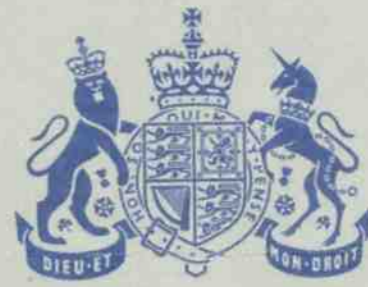
In response to any specific media enquiries about Gulf veterans' illnesses resulting from this presentation we would strongly welcome Mr Thompson's award. We would stress all that the Government is doing in this area. We would also express deep sympathy with Mr Thompson's situation, whilst pointing out that there is no evidence that his condition is linked to his Gulf service.

If the event goes ahead, the MOD Press Office is available to assist on presentational issues and we would provide an MOD background briefing on Gulf veterans' illnesses later this week.

*Your wife  
Chris*

(C M DEVERELL)  
Private Secretary

From the Ambassador  
Stephen Brown



British Embassy  
Seoul

4 Chung-dong  
Chung-ku  
Republic of Korea

Telephone: 735-7341/3  
Facsimile: 725-1738

2 November 1998

**PERSONAL**

Jonathan Powell Esq  
Prime Minister's Chief of Staff  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

Dear Jonathan,

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR THE LATE LORD ROTHERMERE

1. They say a picture is worth a thousand words ..... so here are a couple of thousand words or more on the above.
2. As you know, Colin Crooks was present at Kimpo airport when the Dowager Viscountess Rothermere returned to Korea with half of her late husband's ashes. I called on her shortly afterwards, on my return to Seoul, to offer my condolences and pay my respects. She again pressed me to attend the Memorial Service near Muju.
3. It is rare for British citizens to ask for their ashes to be laid to rest in Korea, although, this is the second time this year that this has occurred (a former British soldier who fought with the UN forces during the Korean War had his ashes scattered at the scene of the Glosters' famous battle on the Imjin River earlier this year). In view of Lord Rothermere's distinguished career and the fact that his successor was also attending the Memorial Service, I agreed to attend. I was accompanied by my wife.
4. There was considerable coverage of the event in the Korean media, all positive. The Dowager Viscountess Rothermere has written to express her gratitude and appreciation.

*Yours ever,  
Stephen Brown*

Stephen Brown  
HM Ambassador

*RC*  
*✓ Pas*  
*I have the book*  
*You can speak to Viscountess*  
*Rothermere home.*  
*✓*

*to ask him*  
*a personal letter*  
*from me*



EL25 PQ01

11-01 AAI+15AU 4646

PREM

49/354



EL25 PQ01

11-01 AN1+10AU 4646

PREM

49/354



The Rt Hon Peter Mandelson MP  
Secretary of State for Trade and Industry

RESTRICTED - POLICY



The Rt Hon Stephen Byers Esq MP  
Chief Secretary to the Treasury  
HM Treasury  
Parliament Street  
London  
SW1P 3AG

Secretary of State  
Department of  
Trade and Industry

1 Victoria Street  
London SW1H 0ET

Direct line  
0171 215 5430

DTI Enquiries  
0171 215 5000

e-mail  
TLO.Mandelson@tlo.dti.gov.uk

26 October 1998

*Dec*  
*Press on enemy property bill.*  
*27/10*  
*File*  
*17/10*

*Mr Stephen,*

*Top JEH*  
*cc JFH*  
*IBRESS*

**FUNDING PRESSURES: NUCLEAR LIABILITIES AND ENEMY PROPERTY**

I face two difficult pressures on my Department's budget, and I need your assistance in dealing with them. I recognise the pressures on the Reserve both this year and next, and I have therefore looked hard for a way forward which does not require any reduction in its level.

The first pressure arises from the review of enemy property which the Government asked Lord Archer of Sandwell to undertake earlier this year. I expect to receive Lord Archer's proposals any day now, and I understand that he is likely to recommend a scheme which would reimburse victims of Nazi persecution or their heirs for property confiscated under Trading with the Enemy legislation at 1939 values uprated to take account of inflation since then (a factor of about 23).

When the review was established, my predecessor made clear that the Government would establish a claims procedure, and that it accepted the general principle that confiscated assets placed in the UK by victims of Nazi persecution should be returned to them by the UK where this was practicable and where claims could be validated. Against this background, I believe that we must be prepared to accept Lord Archer's recommendations in full. If we failed to do so, we would face an outburst of anger from the Jewish community and condemnation in the media.

Our best estimate is that the cost of implementing Lord Archer's recommendations is likely to be £20-25m, although it is difficult to anticipate the level of claims and it could be more, and that the great majority of this expenditure is likely to fall in 1999-2000. My predecessor made clear when the review was established

**dti**

Department of Trade and Industry

CM10177



that she was prepared to find £2m in the current financial year but no more, and the DTI's CSR settlement made no provision for what was at that stage a commitment which was impossible to quantify.

In principle, I do not see any justification for meeting the costs of implementing Lord Archer's recommendations from DTI's provision. It is in effect a large one-off liability the size of which could not be predicted in advance and thus a proper claim on the Reserve. In addition, the Consolidated Fund has benefited over the years from significant injections of funds from the proceeds of confiscated enemy property. However, I also understand the pressures on the public finances, and your concern not to reduce the level of the Reserve save in exceptional circumstances.

I therefore propose that the costs should be funded as follows. First, I am willing to provide £2m from my budget in 1999-2000 to fund these claims, even though my predecessor's offer of £2m related only to 1998-99. Second, I am willing to roll forward the underspend of over £20m which is currently forecast this year on my cash limited budgets, excluding that for nuclear liabilities, and to use that underspend to fund these claims in 1999-2000. If it becomes clear later on that this approach will not work, either because estimates of enemy property expenditure in 1999-2000 have risen or because estimates of the relevant underspend have fallen, we would need to discuss the matter further. I think this is unlikely, but I cannot be sure.

The second pressure arises from my Department's responsibility for managing our nuclear liabilities. The CSR provided additional funding for these over the next three years, and I remain hopeful that this will be sufficient. Continuing difficulties at Dounreay and the loss of expected receipts following the decision to shut down reprocessing mean however that the relevant budget is forecast to overspend in the current financial year. A dispute between UKAEA and BNFL over DTI liabilities on BNFL sites is likely to increase the degree of overspend, although discussions about this are continuing. The degree of overspend remains difficult to predict, but I understand that it is likely to total some £30-60m. I shall want to investigate any overspend very carefully, but failure to discharge our nuclear liabilities properly would be impossible to defend. Here too I see no justification for DTI's budget having to absorb the pressures caused by these liabilities, which are beyond my control, but I understand your concerns about the Reserve.



I therefore propose that we should agree that the cost of any necessary expenditure over the level of Estimates provision for nuclear liabilities in the current financial year should be funded from the forecast underspend of some £85m on my non-cash limited programmes, which arises from the unexpected delay in agreeing settlement arrangements for the various legal cases against British Coal involving coal health liabilities. This would mean the Treasury giving authority to vire from a non-cash limited to a cash limited budget. But frankly I do not understand why nuclear liabilities are treated as cash limited at all, and it seems to me perfectly reasonable that an overspend on nuclear liabilities should be funded from an underspend on coal liabilities.

I should emphasise that the proposals I make for dealing with these funding pressures are linked. If you do not agree to what I propose on nuclear liabilities, my forecast cash limited underspend would almost certainly be required to meet them and could not be rolled forward for enemy property claims.

I should also emphasise the need for speed. Once I have received Lord Archer's recommendations, we shall come under considerable public pressure to accept its recommendations from Lord Janner, the Holocaust Education Trust, the media and others. Prevarication will be damaging to the Government as a whole: it will make us look grudging, and we run the risk of facing even more expensive demands: Lord Janner is looking for compensation for interest foregone as well as uprating for inflation. That is why I am coming forward with a proposal which represents a genuinely reasonable way of funding Lord Archer's recommendations, not an opening position which presages lengthy negotiations with you.

I have asked my officials to discuss the details of this with yours immediately, and to give them any further information they require on Lord Archer's recommendations (as soon as they arrive), and on the causes of the expected overspend on the nuclear liabilities budget. Once your officials have briefed you, I should be grateful for a meeting to discuss this with you in person if you see any difficulties with what I propose.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Robin Cook, Margaret Beckett, Margaret Jay, Jack Cunningham and Sir Richard Wilson.

**dti**

Department of Trade and Industry



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

*file* 7  
*lc* *SP*  
*AC*  
*DB*

From the Principal Private Secretary

25 September 1998

*Dear Tom,*

**SOVIET MEMORIAL TRUST FUND**

Thank you for your letter of 15 September. Unfortunately, the Prime Minister will not be able to attend on 9 May.

I am copying this to John Grant (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), David North (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's office) and Sebastian Wood (Cabinet Office).

*Yours are*  
*John*

**JOHN HOLMES**

Tom McKane Esq  
Ministry of Defence

*hs*

DCO?

**From: John Holmes**  
**Date: 21 September 1998**

**A J MERIFIELD**

**HOME FRONT MEMORIAL**

Thank you for your note of 15 September. I am afraid the Prime Minister is still not convinced that this will do the trick. He has suggested that you speak to his constituency agent, John Burton (telephone 01429 882202) and then report back further.

I am copying this to Sir Richard Wilson.



**JOHN HOLMES**





MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 0171-21 82111/2/3

✓ @ a JP  
AC  
K9  
I see no strong case  
for HST. Views?

SECRETARY OF STATE

MO 6/18/4J & MO 29/4

@ Paul  
16/9.

15<sup>th</sup> September 1998

TOP-JEH  
E: JB  
JH  
Fu.  
PB or

Dear John.

**SOVIET MEMORIAL TRUST FUND**

The Defence Secretary would be grateful if you would bring the Prime Minister's attention to the work of the Soviet Memorial Trust Fund. The fund is managing a project to build a War Memorial near the Imperial War Museum to commemorate the sacrifice of the Soviet people during World War Two.

It is planned that this, the first such memorial to be erected in the United Kingdom, will be unveiled on 9 May 1999. The Defence Secretary, who attended the ceremony earlier this year to dedicate the site of the memorial, as did Mr Primakov, regards this event as a good opportunity for a public display of reconciliation between the peoples of Britain and the Former Soviet Union. He has offered to help raise the public profile of the Trust Fund's work and the unveiling ceremony itself, possibly providing a guard of honour. The ceremony will be attended by senior representatives of most CIS governments, including Russia.

The Defence Secretary has suggested that the Prime Minister might consider attending the unveiling ceremony himself. Please let me know if you need any more details.

I am sending a copy of this letter to John Grant (FCO), David North (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's office), and to Sebastian Wood (Cabinet Office).

Yours,  
Tom

(T C McKANE)  
Private Secretary

John Holmes Esq, CMG  
10 Downing Street

NM  
15/9

Prime Minister

Paras 4 and 5 seem to me to provide a reasonable way forward, unless you local pressures suggest differently.

FROM: A J MERIFIELD

DATE: 15 September 1998

MR HOLMES

HOME FRONT MEMORIAL

cc Sir Richard Wilson

Mrs Blackburn (MAFF)

Mr Benjamin (MOD)

Miss Wrighton

Content for this to be taken forward? Any views between London and Coventry?

No. it will be long h. Get this chap to speak to John Burston. I'll report back.

Thank you for your note of 9 September. To answer your enquiries:

2. First: individual groups have been able to have **their own** War Memorial (privately funded, or sponsored) ever since 1945. The Prime Minister is more in touch than I with his constituents, but this did not seem to be the campaign aim for which they had sought his support. If he deems it otherwise I will provide a letter for him to send to his constituents telling them that a local memorial is the right solution, and when it is ready that he would be happy to unveil it. (*The Northern Echo* might help fund it as *The Evening Standard* are doing for the new memorial to civilians killed in London.) We would then have to tackle the Women's Land Army to whom this approach would certainly be less appealing. The Women's Land Army, like the Aycliffe Angels, are seeking retrospective awards of the Defence Medal. For the reasons you know, this retrospection was ruled out on grounds of cost, the impossibility of validating the claims (for the medal's required **three years' proven service**) from millions of workers across all sectors of war work, and because of firm rules about retrospective medal awards;

3. Second: I do not know who would issue Certificates, on what authority, or to whom. Again this could expand into a costly and time consuming exercise involving the whole range of munitions and war workers, miners and so on, and/or their dependants. But a Certificate would be seen as a wholly unacceptable and hopelessly belated second best. Indeed the Women's Land Army have already expressed dissatisfaction at receiving only a letter from Queen Elizabeth (now The Queen Mother) thanking them for their work during the War;

4. Third: the only way we can see to meet the demand for recognition which is being sought, is to have a prestigious national memorial, - perhaps unveiled towards the end of 1999 - the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War. There is no time to launch a public subscription (the accepted approach adopted by all Administrations to the creation of war memorials) and unfortunately we have found that sites for a major memorial (eg a commemorative fountain in Parliament Square) are not currently available. This may prove to be disappointing to those concerned. But Coventry Cathedral (and/or St Pauls), could provide a significant and symbolic location for a plaque, as well as a resonant setting for a Ceremonial Service to unveil such a memorial. We would aim for a significant plaque, and a major occasion to dedicate it. A national commemoration Service could attract a Royal presence.

5. In the light of this, and the Prime Minister's wish to have this sorted out quickly, I propose to approach the authorities at Coventry and/or St Pauls about an imposing **national** memorial plaque to see how they would respond. War memorials are paid for by public subscription. We certainly should not pay for local memorials (MOD have rejected and still continue to refuse any claims of this sort), but I think we might finesse the issue of cost for a national memorial plaque and commemoration Service as proposed. We would report back to you on what is feasible, knowing that the Prime Minister is looking for a strong symbol and a notable unveiling occasion which will meet the aspirations of those in his constituency at Aycliffe (a small minority of the munitions workers), and those in the Women's Land Army and in the wider fields of war work throughout the country.

6. If those at Aycliffe wished, thereafter, to have their own memorial, perhaps unveiled by Mr Blair, they could do this - and even copy some of the words on any national memorial. But funds for this would have to be raised locally. In any event the Aycliffe workers would be invited to send representatives to a national unveiling along with colleagues from the other 200 or so munitions factories and dockyards, and those from the mines, railways and Women's Land Army etc.

7. As you know this is not strictly a Cabinet Office responsibility but I have taken a lead on behalf of the diffuse interests of MAFF, MOD, DTI, DfEE, Home Office, DETR, and the territorial Departments, each of whom have a residual sponsorship for war production work. I am seeking to find a way of meeting Mr Blair's reported commitment to the Aycliffe workers, without the several millions of pounds cost, long time-scale and subsequent dissatisfactions, of breaching standing medalling procedures entailed in any retrospective award of a Defence Medal to those in the munitions and related industries.

*I'd be glad to have a word with you if this is not clear.*

*A J M*

A J MERIFIELD



RESTRICTED - HONOURS



*Ru*

10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Principal Private Secretary

**MR A J MERIFIELD  
CABINET OFFICE**

**HOME FRONT MEMORIAL**

Thank you for your minute of 27 August, which the Prime Minister has seen. He is keen to have this sorted out quickly but is not convinced that we have the right answer yet. In particular he does not think a single plaque, whether in London or Coventry, is likely to be seen as enough. He has asked why individual groups such as the Aycliffe Angels should not be able to have their own plaques, and ceremonies to go with them, or at least certificates. In any case we need to be clear about precise proposals before we make any announcement to Parliament. We risk looking ridiculous otherwise, given the length of time this has already been under consideration.

I would be grateful for further rapid advice in the light of these comments. I see no reason why your letter to the Northern Echo should not go in the meantime.

I am copying this to Sir Richard Wilson.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'John Holmes'.

**JOHN HOLMES**

9 September 1998

A handwritten mark consisting of a large, stylized letter 'e' followed by a horizontal stroke, possibly representing initials.

RESTRICTED - HONOURS

FROM: A J MERIFIELD

DATE: 27 August 1998

*[Handwritten signature]*

1. **SIR RICHARD WILSON**

cc Mr Jonathan Powell

2. **MR JOHN HOLMES**  
**PPS/PRIME MINISTER**

*Prime Minister*

*I agree a plaque could be OK but  
surely we should make up our minds on  
what/where before you write a Party  
answer. It sounds ridiculous otherwise.  
I have no strong views on London v.  
Coventry.*

**HOME FRONT MEMORIAL**

You may be aware of the growing support for some form of recognition for those who were active on the Home Front during the Second World War. The campaign was started by the *Northern Echo* in respect of the munitions workers of Aycliffe in the Prime Minister's constituency ("the Aycliffe Angels") but others have now joined in, including the Women's Land Army and some of the Bevin Boys.

*Coventry,  
Have  
you?*

*(I am  
the letter*

*to the Northern  
Echo can*

*go,  
2/9*

2. The Prime Minister had already agreed that individual recognition in the form of medals was not possible, as the validation of claims would be almost impossible given the patchy records available and the very high administrative burden. It would also open the floodgates to similar (and costly) treatment for several million claimants from many other groups. At Mr Blair's behest, we have been looking at the possibility of a national memorial.

3. This is a matter that crosses Departmental boundaries and we have been discussing with relevant Permanent Secretaries the feasibility of linking a Home Front Memorial with an existing Lottery project, so as to keep down costs. We had identified one or two possibilities but all available sites, including Parliament Square, pose problems of consents (the land ownership is not straightforward) and timing (because of legislation etc). Though more work could be done on this I doubt if that will provide a profitable route. My preference, in terms of practicality, speed and cost, is now for a memorial plaque. This might be in St Paul's Cathedral (where a memorial to those killed in London's blitz, paid for by the Evening Standard, will be unveiled in November), or at Coventry. The latter, suggested by my Deputy Judy Wrighton, presents a fine symbol of civilian bravery and endurance, of reconciliation and of contributions outside London as well as nationally. I have not yet approached the Dean of Coventry, but I know from the Registrar of St Pauls that he could expect the Dean and Chapter there to be receptive should a London memorial be proposed.

4. All Departments continue to receive regular enquiries, from individuals and groups as well as from the media, asking what is to be done. It would therefore be timely to make a Statement to the House - as an answer to an arranged Written PQ - indicating that some form of memorial is envisaged although details have yet to be finalised. I attached a draft Question and Answer (cleared inter-Departmentally) which I suggest should be used when the House reassembles.

5. In the meantime, the *Northern Echo* have asked for a formal letter of progress that they can publish. If the Prime Minister agrees to the proposed Statement after the Recess, I will arrange for a letter to *The Echo* as in the draft at Annex B.

6. Does the Prime Minister:

- a. agree that the Statement be made after the Recess;
- b. accept that the trailer letter to the *Northern Echo* be sent now; and
- c. have a preference for any memorial being at Coventry Cathedral, or in St Pauls.

A J M

A J MERIFIELD

Surely we can do more  
 than a plaque. Why not  
 a form of recognition for  
 particular groups of  
 people? Why not have a  
 crenelated archway with  
 a certificate or something.  
 This must be done  
 urgently for me for  
 certain reasons

**DRAFT STATEMENT**

**PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION**

Will the Prime Minister say whether he agrees that we should commemorate those who worked in our fields, factories and mines during the Second World War?

**DRAFT ANSWER**

Yes. I am aware of the many who worked on the Home Front, in dangerous and difficult occupations and often away from their homes, whose selfless contribution during the war years underpinned the service of those in the fighting Forces. I am thinking, for example, of the sacrificial work of the millions of workers in the munitions factories and dockyards, in the mines, on our roads and railways, and those in the Women's Land Army and Women's Timber Corps. I know that many of them were disappointed that no commemorative medal was awarded to them at the end of the war. However, it is not our practice to award such medals retrospectively, and given the millions of people that would be involved I do not think it is now a practical proposition. But I would like to see some memorial commemorating their wartime efforts which will also inspire future generations to make an equally telling contribution to our nation in the future. I shall make a further Statement when the form of the memorial has been agreed.

**DRAFT**

Ms E Ruth Campbell  
The Northern Echo  
Priestgate  
Darlington  
Co Durham  
DL1 1NF

Your letter of 9 July to the Home Secretary about recognition of the 'Aycliffe Angels', was acknowledged by Mark Porter. It has now been passed to me for further consideration.

The Government has been considering the possibility of some form of recognition for all World War II munitions workers along with their fellow Home Front workers (the Women's Land Army, the 'Bevin Boys', those in the dockyards and many others who gave sacrificial service during the war years). This would involve many different groups with varied service - all of it worthy of recognition. The Prime Minister has asked me to say that he hopes to be in a position to make a Statement on the way forward early in the next session of Parliament.

**A J MERIFIELD**

**RESTRICTED - HONOURS****10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA**

From the Principal Private Secretary

**MS JAN POLLEY  
CABINET OFFICE****RECOGNITION TO A GROUP OF (OF ALL) MUNITIONS WORKERS  
AND OTHERS IN WARTIME SERVICE**

The Prime Minister was grateful for Sir Robin Butler's minute of 7 November about this difficult issue. The Prime Minister agrees with Sir Robin's conclusion that the best option looks like a suitable public memorial, and that work between Departments should start on this, together with a consultation exercise. I assume you will now commission work on an appropriate statement for Parliament, as suggested. Is it necessary for this to come from the Prime Minister? Alternatively, could it be done at PMQs?

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Holmes".

**JOHN HOLMES**11 November 1997**RESTRICTED - HONOURS**

**RESTRICTED - HONOURS**~~C. H. W. WEAVER~~

To file please.

1/11/97

11/11/97

Ref. AO97/2368

**PRIME MINISTER**  

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**Recognition to a Group of (or all) Munitions Workers and Others in  
Wartime Service****Background**

During the summer your Office asked the Home Office (who within their Civil Defence remit control the administration of the Defence Medal to civilians) to advise on a response to the *Northern Echo's* campaign to obtain recognition, possibly a medal, for the "Aycliffe Angels". As you know, these were the 17,000 or so workers employed in the Royal Ordnance "Aycliffe Filling Factory" which was opened in Spring 1941. Out of a total of 45 Royal Ordnance Factories (ROF) installations, it was one of 20 (employing over 200,000 people) employed in making explosives or filling shells, alongside 40 privately owned "agency" factories. These private firms, like the Royal Ordnance Factories, also employed workers in other munitions production.

2. In parallel, MAFF Ministers have been considering a claim for recognition on behalf of up to 220,000 of the Women's Land Army. Many of these, when conscripted, opted to join the Land Army rather than the Armed Forces, whilst others volunteered. They, along with their farmer employers and at least four million workers in the whole of the munitions industries, were excluded in 1945 from eligibility for the award of the Defence Medal.

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addresses were known), would be a nightmare today, involving signed Affidavits even where there was an element of collateral proof;

c. we estimate this approach could cost £3m for those with three years qualifying service in the filling and explosives factories alone, but we doubt if the line could be held here and it could cost up to £5m with the addition of the three year qualified members of the Women's Land Army, up to £8m with the addition of other ROF or Armstrong/Vickers etc munitions staff, and much more with all **qualified** workers in the ship building and munitions industries as defined in the Official Second World War Histories. Applications for medals would not be made within a specified period so the costs would be, to some extent, ongoing; and

d. there could be a much higher cost, as the award of a medal retrospectively would breach the principles on which Ministers in all Governments since the War have depended to fend off claims for retrospective campaign medals (that "there should be no second guessing of contemporary decisions, and no retrospection after three to five years"). It would immediately undermine Ministerial resistance to long-standing claims from ex-service personnel, eg for those who served in Bomber Command, at Dunkirk, in the Arctic Convoys or in the 1951-54 "Egypt" Garrison etc.

7. **Thirdly, by celebrating, perhaps at the Millennium, the civilian contribution to Britain's war effort through two major world wars, by a memorial plaque, a stained glass window, or a statue portraying those involved (engineering worker, explosives woman worker [modelled on an**



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Aycliffe daughter of a former "filling worker"], land girl, miner, nurse, railwayman, housewife) in a garden setting in London and (or) the North. It could be limited to women, or be extended to all civilian workers.

**Recommendation**

8. I recommend the third option, not only on grounds of cost, but because the other options carry the potential of upsetting both the Aycliffe Angels (many of whom may not have three years' proven service) and a wider constituency. It also seems to me that there is much merit in celebrating, at the Millennium, civilian self-sacrifice in two World Wars, and pointing to the need for a similar robust spirit in tackling the tough (but hopefully different) demands of the next century. This week's Early Day Motion in the House calling for a national memorial to the women who served in the Second World War seems to support this approach.

9. My colleagues and their Ministers in the Ministry of Defence (who face a major slice of the potential costs and will suffer most if the retrospection principles is breached), and in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (with a potential bill of nearly £2m for dealing with the award of medals to the estimated 80,000 qualified (out of 220,000) members of the Women's Land Army), agree with this recommendation. So do the Department of Trade and Industry (who do not wish to stir up the Bevin Boys controversy), and the Department of Health, who would prefer to devote their resources to next year's celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the NHS and its aftermath, rather than dealing with claims for the Defence Medal from civilian war time health workers who will certainly claim that they too should be included if awards go to those in the scattered explosives and filling factories or the ROF/Royal Dockyards generally.

**RESTRICTED - HONOURS****Way Forward**

10. The third option (eg, a commemorative statue) is not without its perils. MOD (and other Departments) have a host of strongly supported applications for Government funds to finance commemorative war statues, which their Ministers have rejected on the grounds that (the Falklands plaque in St Paul's Cathedral apart) all such memorials have been paid for traditionally by donations or national subscription. The Department of Culture, Media and Sport are investigating whether some help **might** be forthcoming from either the National Heritage Memorial (of those who have died for the UK) Fund, or perhaps the Millennium Commission, provided this is seen as a specific and one-off Year 2000 event. If the third option is to be taken forward, an inter-Departmental action group will need to start planning soon and soundings taken of interested bodies and/or individuals. I assume that if this option was preferred, you would wish to give the public an opportunity to offer views on the form of a suitable memorial, before a competition, and then a contract (say for a statue, or two statues), can be launched - and one (or two) sites found.

11. If you agree with my proposal I will arrange for a statement to be drafted for you to give to Parliament indicating your intention (perhaps with a parallel letter to the Editor of the *Northern Echo*), which takes account of all those interests to whom "recognition" will be welcomed.

R. B.

**ROBIN BUTLER**

7 November 1997



SECRETARY OF STATE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 0171-21 82111/2/3

*Faxed  
already*

MO 14/3J

*14<sup>th</sup>* August 1998

*Dear Philip*

**50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BERLIN AIRLIFT**

As you may know, the Defence Secretary and the Chief of Defence Staff attended a programme of events at the end of June to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the beginning of the Berlin Airlift. Their presence was well received and served to remind Berliners of the important role played by Britain in 1948-9.

The Prime Minister had, of course, contributed to British celebration of the event by being present at RAF Northolt to see off the Dakota flight to Berlin on 26 June. The Defence Secretary has asked me to ensure that the Prime Minister knows that there will be further events in May next year to celebrate the conclusion of the airlift.

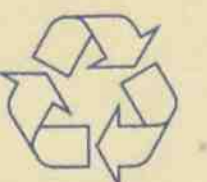
Our Embassy in Bonn are working to ensure that the British and Commonwealth involvement in the airlift is properly recognised. The Defence Secretary will be keen to play his part in this, but the Prime Minister too may wish to be involved. Could I ask you to ensure that this possibility is considered when you next look at your plans for next year.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Andrew Patrick (FCO).

*Yours,  
Tom*

(T C McKANE)  
Private Secretary

Philip Barton Esq, OBE  
10 Downing Street



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JPB  
JEH

10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

11 August 1998

Dear Andrew,

**FAR EAST PRISONERS OF WAR**

Thank you for your letter of 10 August. We are happy for Derek Fatchett to write to Messrs Day, Martin and Titherington as you suggest. Please could News Department keep in touch with our Press office about the media handling of this issue.

Yours ever,

Philip  
PHILIP BARTON

Andrew Patrick Esq  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

AS



✓ cc COS O/R  
FA/PS O/R  
AC O/R  
GS

Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

10 August 1998

London SW1A 2AH

Dear Philip

Far Eastern Prisoners of War (FEPOWs)

In my letter of 30 July, I explained that we had received confirmation from the Law Officers that the Government was effectively barred today from re-opening the 1951 Peace Treaty and the issue of compensation for FEPOWs. This followed careful consideration of the legal opinion prepared by Professor Christopher Greenwood and Philippe Sands on behalf of Keith Martin (Chairman, Association of British Civilian Internees Far East Region) and Arthur Titherington (Chairman, Japanese Labour Camps Survivors Association).

The Greenwood/Sands opinion was faxed to the Prime Minister the day before he met Messrs Martin and Titherington in June. At that meeting, it was agreed that Mr Fatchett would write to the FEPOWs' lawyer, Martyn Day, giving our views on the opinion. We subsequently agreed that Mr Fatchett should at the same time send short, sympathetic letters to Messrs Martin and Titherington. These would enclose a copy of our legal advice (the letter to Mr Day) and stress the Government's willingness to continue to raise their concerns with the Japanese.

... You requested to see in draft the letters to Messrs Day, Martin and Titherington. Attached are two draft letters to Mr Day: the first sets out our views on the Greenwood/Sands opinion, the second explains the results of our research into the bilateral agreements which Japan signed after the 1951 Treaty, and which Day suggested would allow us to re-open the Treaty. Also attached are draft letters to Messrs Martin and Titherington, a draft press line and a draft note on the background to this issue for distribution to any interested journalists.

SKP 11/8/98



We hope that it will be possible for Mr Fatchett to send these letters before he departs on leave on 14 August.

*Yours ever*

*Andrew Patrick*

(Andrew Patrick)  
Private Secretary

Philip Barton Esq OBE  
10 Downing Street

DRAFT REPLY FROM MR FATCHETT TO MARTYN DAY IN RESPONSE TO HIS  
LETTER OF 6 MAY

Martyn Day  
Leigh, Day & Co  
Priory House  
25 St John's Lane  
London EC1M 4LB

In your letter of 6 May, you listed a number of treaties which Japan had signed and suggested that these might provide the basis for re-opening the compensation settlement under the 1951 Peace Treaty. As I explained in my initial reply on 12 May, this is a complex matter which we have been researching for some time.

We have looked carefully at all the treaties that you listed, and a number of other bilateral agreements which Japan signed in the post-war period. Our researches have shown that these agreements not only implemented claims under a number of different Articles of the 1951 Peace Treaty, but often covered other issues unrelated to the War such as bilateral economic cooperation. The 1965 agreement with South Korea, for example, covered not only claims arising from the annexation of Korea in 1919 by Japan and its subsequent colonisation (to implement Article 4 of the 1951 Treaty which recognised that Korea was a special case), but also the promotion of economic cooperation. Another example is the 1967 agreement which Japan signed with Singapore. This was designed in part to pay reparations similar in nature to those envisaged by Article 14 of the 1951 Treaty (which provides for additional reparations for those countries which had been occupied during the War) and was also to further bilateral relations. It was signed after fresh evidence of wartime atrocities had come to light, but half of the settlement (which took the form of loans and grants) was to be used specifically for the economic development of Singapore.

In fact, the majority of the agreements that you listed provide no basis for re-opening the 1951 Peace Treaty under Article 26. The payments made under these were not made on a basis that could be used for the comparison which Article 26 requires. Nevertheless, there are a few agreements where the potential existed, at least in theory, for a claim to re-open the 1951 Treaty under Article 26. But the most recent agreement in this category, that with Italy, was concluded in 1972, 26 years ago.

In the light of the lapse of time, the decision in 1955 not to attempt to reopen the Treaty, and statements since then by successive governments accepting that the issue of compensation under the Treaty has been settled, the legal advice that I have received is that the British Government is today effectively barred from making a claim. Following the Prime Minister's meeting with you, Arthur Titherington and Keith Martin, our Legal Advisers have looked carefully at the opinion prepared by Professor Greenwood. They have concluded that this does not alter their advice. I am writing separately and in more detail to you on this.

One treaty that you did not list is the 1960 agreement that the United Kingdom signed with Japan for £500,000 (equivalent to £6.3 million in today's prices) in compensation for losses incurred in China before the outbreak of the Pacific War. This was to implement Article 18 of the 1951 Peace Treaty. This agreement was negotiated by the British Government on behalf of the hundreds of British subjects and companies who registered claims for losses in China. These ranged from a few pounds to several thousands. A lump sum settlement was agreed which the then British Government distributed to claimants on a pro-rata basis (papers sent to us earlier this year by Mr Ron Bridge, a member of ABCIFER, show that his mother was one of the recipients).

This is not the only example of efforts made by past Governments to help British civilians who lost so much during the war in the Far East. Immediately after the war, while not



admitting any liability for paying compensation, the then British Government recognised the difficulties of its subjects who had lost private possessions in British territories in the Far East. To help such people, the Government introduced the Extended Far Eastern Private Chattels Scheme which provided assistance through ex gratia payments to those people who returned to reside permanently in the United Kingdom. This programme was widely publicised at the time, along with similar schemes to help civilians in Britain who had lost everything in the wartime bombing raids.

I have enormous respect for the former prisoners of war and civilian internees, and I would not want to raise falsely their expectations. For the present, at least, there seems to be no likelihood of a further round of compensation. Nevertheless, we will continue to do whatever we can to help them.

DRAFT LETTER FROM MR FATCHETT TO MARTYN DAY GIVING OUR VIEWS ON  
THE GREENWOOD/SANDS LEGAL OPINION

Martyn Day  
Leigh, Day & Co  
Priory House  
25 St John's Lane  
London EC1M 4LB

At the meeting in June with the Prime Minister, we undertook to look carefully at the legal opinion prepared by Professor Christopher Greenwood and Philippe Sands. We have now done so and, as we agreed, I am writing to explain our conclusions.

Before you sent me this opinion, I had already received legal advice that the Government is today effectively barred from re-opening the 1951 Peace Treaty. This advice was based on considerable research into the historical facts and full consideration of a range of legal factors referred to in my letter of [today's date] to you in response to yours of 6 May. In their opinion, Professor Greenwood and Mr Sands make clear that it was prepared at short notice and should be regarded as preliminary. Having looked at it carefully, our legal advisers have concluded that it makes no difference to the advice they have already given.

This conclusion is based on a number of important points:

- the opinion concentrates on only one aspect of the issue: the lapse of time since Japan signed agreements with other countries on reparations-related issues. It does not take into account - or even mention - other important factors including the effect of the 1955 decision not to attempt to re-open the 1951 Treaty by invoking Article 26;
- it greatly underestimates the complexity of the comparison process under Article 26 and wrongly assesses the nature of the Agreements with Vietnam and Argentina;

- it assumes that successive governments have put the Japanese on notice of the possibility of re-opening the Treaty, whereas, while we have held intensive discussions with the Japanese Government over possible ways to help the former prisoners, we have never sought to re-open the compensation settlement under the 1951 Treaty;

- it assumes no difference between a legal situation where, despite lapse of time, no settlement has ever been made and the legal situation in this case, where a binding settlement had been concluded, subject to a limited right to raise further claims.

While it was certainly worth exploring, it is clear that Article 26 of the Peace Treaty does not provide today a way to claim further compensation. Unless the Tokyo court case you are pursuing on behalf of individual representatives of the former prisoners bears fruit, I am afraid that there seems to be no likelihood of additional compensation. We will continue to do whatever we can to help the former prisoners of war and civilian internees. I certainly wish to remain in close contact with you, Arthur Titherington and Keith Martin over their concerns and any developments.

DRAFT LETTER FROM MR FATCHETT TO KEITH MARTIN, ABCIFER

Keith Martin  
Chairman  
Association of British Civilian  
Internees Far East Region  
Northington Lodge  
Northington  
Alresford  
Hants SO24 9UB

I was pleased to see you again when you met the Prime Minister in June. Following that meeting, we asked our legal advisers to look carefully at the opinion prepared for you by Professor Christopher Greenwood and Philippe Sands. I enclose a copy of a letter that I have sent today to Martyn Day, explaining our conclusions. Our legal advice remains that the Government is effectively barred today from re-opening the compensation settlement under the 1951 Peace Treaty.

I realise that this will be disappointing news for you. As you are aware, we have made considerable efforts to explore ways to help your members. While we have made some progress, I know that it has been much less than you hoped. We remain willing to do whatever we can to help: I am deeply conscious that the passage of time has in many cases deepened rather than reduced the effects of your members' wartime ill-treatment.

DRAFT LETTER FROM MR FATCHETT TO ARTHUR TITHERINGTON, JLCSA

Arthur Titherington  
Chairman  
Japanese Labour Camps Survivors  
Association  
Oriel House  
Church Green  
Witney  
Oxon OX8 6AW

I was pleased to see you again when you met the Prime Minister in June. Following that meeting, we asked our legal advisers to look carefully at the opinion prepared for you by Professor Christopher Greenwood and Philippe Sands. I enclose a copy of a letter that I have sent today to Martyn Day, explaining our conclusions. I am afraid that the news is not good: our legal advice remains that the Government is effectively barred today from re-opening the 1951 Peace Treaty.

I realise that this will be disappointing news for you. As you are aware, we have made considerable efforts to explore ways to help your members. While we have made some progress, I know that it has been much less than you hoped. We remain willing to do whatever we can to help: I am deeply conscious that for many of your members, the effects of their dreadful treatment while prisoners of war have become even worse as they have grown older.

FEPOWS: PRESS LINE ON COMPENSATION AND THE 1951 PEACE TREATY

Will HMG re-open the Peace Treaty and claim further compensation?

- The Government has received clear legal advice that it is effectively barred from re-opening the issue of compensation under the Peace Treaty. This is based on the results of considerable research into the historical facts and a full consideration of the legal factors.

Why is the Government unable to make a claim for more compensation today? There is no time limit in Article 26.

- Our legal advice reflects a number of important factors. Not least the fact that in 1955 the then Government decided not to attempt to re-open the issue of compensation under the Peace Treaty by invoking Article 26. At the time of that decision, there was an exchange of notes between the British and Japanese Governments. In that exchange HMG stated that they regarded the compensation paid by Japan as having fully discharged its obligations under Article 16 of the Treaty (the one concerning compensation for POWs). The exchange was entered into in full knowledge of the implications of the 1955 Swiss-Japan Agreement signed earlier that year and represented a conscious rejection of the possible right to invoke Article 26. Since then, successive governments have made public statements accepting that the 1951 Treaty settled the issue of compensation.

- This view shared by other countries whose POWs received compensation under the Peace Treaty (eg US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand). Our researches have shown that apparently none of the 48 countries that signed the 1951 Peace Treaty have attempted to re-open it.

But what about the legal opinion by leading expert Professor Greenwood saying that it would be possible?

- We have considered carefully the opinion, but it makes no difference to our legal advice. Our advice is based on considerable research into the historical facts and full consideration of a range of legal factors.

- the Greenwood/Sands opinion makes clear that it was prepared at short notice and should be regarded as preliminary. It concentrates on only one aspect of the issue: the lapse of time since Japan signed agreements with other countries. It makes a number of assumptions about these agreements without any apparent consideration of the texts and about other aspects of this issue which are either too sweeping or simply incorrect. The opinion also ignores other important factors considered by our legal advisers.

**Did Japan sign agreements with other countries after 1951 that would have allowed the UK to make a claim for more compensation?**

- While the majority of agreements signed by Japan after 1951 provided no basis for re-opening the compensation issue under the Treaty, there were a few where the potential might have existed. However the most recent one was signed many years ago. After so long, and because of other important legal factors, HMG is effectively barred today from attempting to bring a claim.

- Many of the agreements Japan signed with other countries were in fact to implement the various Articles of the 1951 Treaty, and often covered other issues unrelated with the War. For example, the 1965 agreement with South Korea covered not only claims arising from the annexation of Korea in 1910 by Japan and its subsequent colonisation (to implement Article 4 of the Treaty which recognised Korea was a special case), but also the promotion of economic cooperation.

- The UK in fact successfully pressed for further compensation from Japan after 1951 to cover losses (in China) from the period before war was officially declared (this was to implement Article 18 of the 1951 Treaty). After long negotiations, HMG finally signed an agreement in 1960 with

Japan for £500,000 in compensation (worth over £6 million in today's prices). This was then distributed to the hundreds of British subjects and companies who had lodged claims.

**Did the Peace Treaty settle the issue of compensation?**

- Yes it did, but on a basis which included the possibility of re-visiting the issue. In 1955 it was decided not to exercise that right. Whatever the rights or wrongs of that decision, it cannot be undone today.

**But this means that HMG has misled the former POWs for years.**

- Has certainly been no deliberate attempt to mislead the former prisoners. On the contrary, we have maintained close contact with all groups that represent the former POWs and civilian internees, and kept them informed about our efforts.

- This Government has held extensive discussions with the Japanese on behalf of the former prisoners to explore possible ways to help them. These efforts reflect the respect that we have for them. As a result of our talks, the Japanese Government announced a new programme of reconciliation measures when the Prime Minister visited Japan in January. The Japanese Prime Minister also formally apologised to Mr Blair, which he subsequently repeated direct to the British people via an article in The Sun.

**What about compensation from HMG for the former POWs?**

- The policy of successive governments has been to provide via the War Pensions Agency a system of continuing compensation for those former POWs who suffer from the effects of their wartime ill-treatment. For further information, suggest you contact the MOD.

**But what about the civilian internees?**

- The War Pensions Agency is able to grant disablement pensions to some civilian internees who suffer today from the effects of internment. The DSS is currently looking again at the guidelines for awarding these pensions.



D R A F T

BRIEFING NOTE ON COMPENSATION AND THE 1951 PEACE TREATY

In 1951, 48 countries including the UK signed the San Francisco Peace Treaty with Japan. It came into force in April 1952. The Treaty provided for various categories of compensation to cover the damages and suffering Japan caused during the war.

In Article 14 of the Treaty, it was acknowledged that Japan should pay compensation for the damage and suffering it had caused during the war. Since Japan's resources were not sufficient to do this, it was agreed that Japan's obligations could be met by allowing each of the Allied Powers to dispose of certain types of Japanese property which they held. The British Government decided to distribute all of the funds realised under Article 14 to the former POWs and civilian internees.

In addition, Article 16 of the Treaty specifically provided compensation for the POWs. The funds for this were to come from Japanese assets in former enemy and neutral countries (including Switzerland).

The 1951 Peace Treaty settled the issue of compensation, but included in Article 26 a right to claim more if Japan signed subsequent agreements on a more favourable basis. Article 26 does not allow comparisons of the amounts received by individuals in compensation. What matters is whether subsequent agreements signed by Japan include new categories of compensation not covered by the 1951 Treaty.

After 1951, Japan signed a series of bilateral agreements. The majority of these were to implement the various Articles of the Peace Treaty and often covered other issues unrelated with the War.

Example 1: in 1960 the UK secured a further £500,000 in compensation (over £6 million in today's prices) from Japan for pre-war losses and damages in China. This implemented Article 18 of the Treaty. This was then distributed to the hundreds of British subjects and companies who had made claims.

Example 2: Under an agreement reached in 1965, Japan agreed to pay South Korea US\$ 300 million. This was to implement Article 4 of the Treaty which recognised that Korea was a special case (the compensation covered 35 years from 1910 when Korea was annexed by Japan and subsequently colonised). But the agreement was also designed to promote bilateral economic cooperation.

Nevertheless, there were a few agreements where the potential existed to re-open the compensation settlement under the 1951 Treaty by invoking Article 26. However, none of the 48 countries that signed the Treaty have tried to do so.

In 1955, the British Government considered whether it should attempt to invoke Article 26. This followed the agreements signed by Japan with Burma and Switzerland in 1954 and 1955 respectively. British officials believed that it might be possible to argue that these agreements provided greater advantages than the 1951 Treaty.

The Burma-Japan agreement was negotiated under Article 14 of the 1951 Treaty. This allows for additional reparations for countries which had been occupied by Japan. The agreement, however, went further than the provisions of Article 14 in that Japan agreed to provide products as well as services. The Switzerland-Japan agreement covered a different category of damage that was not explicitly included in the 1951 Treaty.

Officials in 1955 believed that it would be extremely difficult to determine what further benefits the UK could claim under Article 26 on the basis of these agreements. A decision was taken by the then FCO Minister, Lord Reading, that the Government would not attempt to invoke Article 26.

The Switzerland-Japan agreement was also important for the POWs. All Japanese assets in Switzerland had been frozen until agreement was reached on claims against Japan by Swiss nationals. With the signing of the 1955 agreement, the funds remaining after meeting the Swiss claims were then available for distribution as Article 16 compensation to the POWs. In an exchange of notes between the British and Japanese Governments, the British Government stated that they regarded the compensation paid by Japan as having fully discharged its obligations under Article 16 of the Treaty. The exchange was entered into in full knowledge of the implications of the Burma-Japan and Swiss-Japan agreements, and represented a conscious rejection of the possible right to reopen the issue of compensation under the 1951 Treaty. Since then, successive British Governments have made public statements accepting that the 1951 Treaty settled the issue of compensation.

We have looked carefully at whether it would be possible now to re-open the 1951 Treaty. The Government has received legal advice that it is today effectively barred from making a claim. This is based on the results of considerable research into the historical facts and a full consideration of the legal factors.



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

London SW1A 2AH

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✓ JEM  
JPO  
AC  
JBIMC

30 July 1998

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Dear Philip

Far Eastern Prisoners of War (FEPOWs)

On 10 June, the Prime Minister met Arthur Titherington (Chairman, Japanese Labour Camps Survivors Association), Keith Martin (Chairman, Association of British Civilian Internees Far East Region) and their lawyer, Martyn Day.

At that meeting, the FEPOWs representatives raised a legal opinion prepared by Professor Greenwood and Philippe Sands that they had faxed to the Prime Minister the previous day. The opinion argues that it might be possible to reopen the 1951 Peace Treaty and the issue of compensation. The Prime Minister undertook that we would consider the legal opinion and that Mr Fatchett would write back to Day giving our views on this.

FCO Legal Advisers have considered carefully the legal opinion which states explicitly that it was prepared at short notice, with little research and must be considered preliminary. They are of the view that the opinion deals with only one aspect of the matter: delay. It ignores other relevant circumstances and is based upon (wrong) assumptions about the effect of subsequent agreements signed by Japan, which were made without examining the texts. Our Legal Advisers have consulted the Law Officers who agree that the opinion does not in any way modify their view that the Government is effectively barred today from making a claim under Article 26 of the 1951 Treaty (Article 26 states that should Japan make a peace settlement with any country that confers greater advantages than those granted by the Treaty, then those advantages should be extended to the States which signed the Treaty).



On the advice of our News Department, we plan to break the news to the FEPOWs at the same time that we explain the results of our research into agreements signed by Japan after 1951. Day wrote to Mr Fatchett in May, listing these agreements which he suggested could be used to reopen the Treaty. Our Legal Advisers and Research Analysts have done considerable research into this question. A substantive reply to him explaining why this is not case is in preparation (we are currently discussing the draft with the Law Officers).

The FEPOWs are going to be deeply upset when we confirm our legal advice that it is not possible to reopen the Peace Treaty. Despite best efforts to dampen down their expectations, they are hoping for a positive response. This year has been difficult for them: they were disappointed by the enhanced reconciliation package announced when the Prime Minister visited Japan in January and the new apology by Prime Minister Hashimoto. Their bitterness increased when papers were subsequently found in the Public Record Office that showed the Government had decided in 1955 not to attempt to reopen the Peace Treaty. The visit by the Emperor in May heightened emotions. Titherington now feels so bitter that while before the visit he maintained good relations with the Japanese Embassy here, we understand that he has since rejected (apparently with considerable abuse) all attempts to re-establish contact.

In an attempt to soften the blow, we believe that short letters should also be sent to Titherington and Martin. Our legal advice will be attached to these letters, which will stress the Government's willingness to continue to raise their concerns with the Japanese. Our initial view is that these should be sent by Mr Fatchett at the same time that he writes to Day in greater detail. We should be ready to issue these letters within the next two weeks, before Mr Fatchett goes on leave.

*Yours ever  
Andrew Patrick*

(Andrew Patrick)  
Private Secretary

Philip Barton Esq  
10 Downing Street

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10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Principal Private Secretary

22 July 1998

*Dear Hugh,*

### FIRST WORLD WAR EXECUTIONS

Thank you for your letter of 21 July and the draft statement. The Prime Minister is content for the oral statement to go ahead. But he remains concerned that we should not seem to be undermining military discipline or the Armed Forces in any way. I understand that CDS is content with what is proposed. The Prime Minister is nevertheless keen that we should be on as firm ground as possible in explaining why we believe at least some of the 300 executed were not plain and simple deserters.

You may like to look again at the statement in this light, with a view to including more evidence to support the view that injustices may have been done. Meanwhile, I have suggested some changes to the draft, which the Prime Minister has agreed, which help to address some of his concerns. These are shown in manuscript on the attached copy.

I am copying this without enclosure to Ken Sutton (Home Office), Jenny Rowe (Lord Chancellor's Office), John Grant (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Kenneth Thomson (Scottish Office), Ken Lindsay (Northern Ireland Office), David Seymour (Law Officers' Department), Vanessa Scarborough (President of the Council's Office) and to Jan Polley (Cabinet Office).

  
JOHN HOLMES

H. D. Kernohan, Esq.,  
Ministry of Defence.

Top - JEM  
cc PB  
✓ AC



SECRETARY OF STATE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 0171-21 82111/2/3

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Prime Minister

The draft is not brilliant. I have suggested a few amendments to help the flow and meet your concern. But (21 July 1998) unless you want to reject the whole concept of the statement, I think it will pass muster.

Dear John,

Content? Comments?

FIRST WORLD WAR EXECUTIONS

I now attach the draft statement which the Defence Secretary and Dr Reid have agreed. It is explicit in stressing the importance of military discipline and in refusing to condone desertion (and similar offences). The Defence Secretary hopes that this satisfies the Prime Minister's concern.

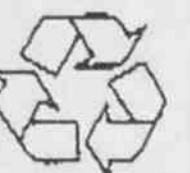
I am sending a copy of this letter to Ken Sutton (Home Office), Jenny Rowe (Lord Chancellor's office), John Grant (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Kenneth Thomson (Scottish Office), Ken Lindsay (Northern Ireland Office), David Seymour (Law Officers' Department), Jan Polley (Cabinet Office) and to Vanessa Scarborough.

Yours,

(H D KERNOHAN)  
Private Secretary

I still think we need to be  
an former ground is saying why  
some of these 300 weren't  
deserters & to distinguish them from  
those who betrayed their country.  
At present, this is to be attacked as  
undermining the force. Also are the  
general & CDS agreed?

J Holmes Esq CMG  
10 Downing Street



DRAFT

WORLD WAR 1 EXECUTIONS  
STATEMENT BY MINISTER (ARMED FORCES)

INTRODUCTION

WITH PERMISSION, I WILL MAKE A STATEMENT ABOUT EXECUTIONS OF SOLDIERS AND OTHERS IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR.

I DOUBT THAT ANYONE WHO HAS NOT GONE THROUGH THE AWESOME EXPERIENCE OF WAR CAN EVER TRULY IMAGINE ITS EFFECTS ON THE EMOTIONS OF HUMAN BEINGS. SOME 9 MILLION TROOPS FROM ALL SIDES DIED DURING THE GREAT WAR. ALMOST ONE MILLION BRITISH AND EMPIRE SOLDIERS FELL, HEROES TO THEIR NATIONS AND A TESTIMONY TO THE AWFULNESS OF WAR.

WE RIGHTLY REMEMBER THEM STILL, NOT ONLY ON THE 11TH OF NOVEMBER, BUT IN CEREMONIES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR AND THROUGHOUT THE GLOBE. TODAY, I AM SURE THAT I AM JOINED BY THE WHOLE HOUSE IN ONCE AGAIN PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE COURAGE AND FORTITUDE OF ALL WHO SERVED.

BUT FOR SOME OF OUR SOLDIERS AND THEIR FAMILIES THERE HAS BEEN NEITHER GLORY NOR REMEMBRANCE. JUST OVER THREE HUNDRED OF THEM DIED AT THE HANDS, NOT OF THE ENEMY, BUT OF FIRING SQUADS FROM THEIR OWN SIDE. THEY WERE 'SHOT AT DAWN', STIGMATISED AND CONDEMNED. A FEW AS COWARDS. MOST AS DESERTERS.

THE NATURE OF THOSE DEATHS AND THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THEM HAVE LONG BEEN A MATTER OF CONTENTION AND THEREFORE LAST MAY, I SAID WE WOULD LOOK AGAIN AT THEIR CASES.

METHODOLOGY

THE REVIEW HAS BEEN A LONG AND COMPLICATED PROCESS, AND I HAVE TODAY PLACED A SUMMARY IN THE LIBRARY OF THE HOUSE. I WILL OUTLINE SOME SALIENT FEATURES.



DRAFT

FIGURES

BETWEEN 4 AUGUST 1914 AND 31 MARCH 1920, APPROXIMATELY 20000 PERSONNEL WERE CONVICTED OF MILITARY OFFENCES FOR WHICH THE DEATH PENALTY COULD HAVE BEEN AWARDED. THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE CIVILIAN CAPITAL OFFENCES SUCH AS MURDER.

OF THESE 20000, SOMETHING OVER 3000 WERE ACTUALLY SENTENCED TO DEATH. APPROXIMATELY 90% OF THEM ESCAPED EXECUTION. THEY HAD THEIR SENTENCES COMMUTED BY THEIR COMMANDERS IN CHIEF.

THE REMAINDER, THOSE EXECUTED FOR A MILITARY OFFENCE, NUMBER SOME 306 CASES IN ALL. THIS IS APPROXIMATELY 1% OF THOSE TRIED FOR A CAPITAL OFFENCE, AND 10% OF THOSE ACTUALLY SENTENCED TO DEATH. THESE 300 OR SO CASES CAN BE EXAMINED BECAUSE THE RECORDS WERE PRESERVED. IN VIRTUALLY ALL OTHER CASES THE RECORDS WERE DESTROYED.

IT IS THE CASES OF THESE 300 THAT MANY MEMBERS OF THIS HOUSE, NOTABLY THE MEMBER FOR THURROCK, AND OTHERS OUTSIDE, INCLUDING THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION, HAVE ASKED US TO RECONSIDER WITH A VIEW TO SOME FORM OF BLANKET PARDON.

LEGAL AND MEDICAL

IN DOING SO, WE DO NOT CONDONE COWARDICE, DESERTION, MUTINY OR ASSISTING THE ENEMY. THEN OR NOW. ALL ARE ABSOLUTELY INIMICAL TO THE VERY FOUNDATION OF OUR ARMED FORCES. WITHOUT MILITARY DISCIPLINE, THE COUNTRY COULD NOT BE DEFENDED. AND THIS IS NEVER MORE IMPORTANT THAN IN TIME OF WAR.

WE HAVE CONSIDERED THE LEGAL BASIS FOR THE TRIALS (FIELD GENERAL COURTS MARTIAL). THE REVIEW HAS CONFIRMED THAT PROCEDURES FOR THESE COURTS MARTIAL WERE CORRECT, GIVEN THE LAW AS IT STOOD AT THE TIME.

However the particular circumstances of the First World War and the long-standing controversy about these executions, justify particular consideration. We have therefore reviewed every aspect of the cases.

## DRAFT

THE REVIEW ALSO CONSIDERED MEDICAL EVIDENCE. IF THOSE WHO WERE EXECUTED COULD BE MEDICALLY EXAMINED NOW, IT MIGHT BE JUDGED THAT THE EFFECTS OF THEIR TRAUMA MEANT THAT SOME SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED CULPABLE.

BUT CLEARLY WE CANNOT EXAMINE THEM NOW. WE ARE LEFT WITH ONLY THE RECORDS. AND IN MOST CASES THERE IS NO IMPLICIT OR EXPLICIT REFERENCE IN THE RECORDS TO NERVOUS, OR OTHER PSYCHOLOGICAL OR MEDICAL, DISORDER.

MOREOVER, WHILE IT SEEMS REASONABLE TO ASSUME THAT MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS MAY HAVE BEEN TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN THE 90% OF CASES WHERE SENTENCES WERE COMMUTED, THERE IS NO DIRECT EVIDENCE OF THAT EITHER, SINCE ALMOST ALL THE RECORDS OF THESE COMMUTED CASES HAVE LONG SINCE BEEN DESTROYED.

HOWEVER FRUSTRATING, THE PASSAGE OF TIME MEANS THAT THE GROUNDS FOR A BLANKET LEGAL PARDON ON THE BASIS OF UNSAFE CONVICTION JUST DO NOT EXIST.

OPTIONS

WE HAVE THEREFORE CONSIDERED THE CASES INDIVIDUALLY.

A LEGAL PARDON, AS ENVISAGED BY SOME, COULD TAKE ONE OF THREE FORMS. A FREE PARDON, A CONDITIONAL PARDON, OR A STATUTORY PARDON. WE HAVE GIVEN VERY SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO THIS PARTICULAR MATTER. HOWEVER THESE THREE TYPES OF PARDONS HAVE ONE THING IN COMMON - FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL CASE THERE MUST BE SOME CONCRETE EVIDENCE FOR OVERTURNING THE DECISION OF A LEGALLY CONSTITUTED COURT.

I HAVE PERSONALLY EXAMINED ONE THIRD OF THE RECORDS, APPROXIMATELY 100 PERSONAL CASE FILES. IT WAS A DEEPLY MOVING EXPERIENCE. REGRETTABLY, MANY OF THE RECORDS CONTAIN LITTLE MORE THAN THE MINIMUM PRESCRIBED FOR THIS TYPE OF COURT MARTIAL - A FORM

DRAFT

RECORDING ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS AND A SUMMARY - NOT A TRANSCRIPT - OF THE EVIDENCE. SOMETIMES THIS AMOUNTS ONLY TO ONE OR TWO HANDWRITTEN PAGES.

I HAVE ACCEPTED LEGAL ADVICE THAT, IN THE VAST MAJORITY OF CASES, THERE IS LITTLE TO BE GLEANED FROM THE FRAGMENTS OF THE STORIES THAT WOULD SERIOUSLY AID A LEGAL PARDON.

80 YEARS AGO, WHEN WITNESSES WERE AVAILABLE AND THE EVENTS WERE FRESH IN THEIR MEMORIES, THIS MIGHT HAVE BEEN A POSSIBILITY. BUT THE PASSAGE OF TIME HAS RENDERED IT WELL-NIGH IMPOSSIBLE IN MOST CASES.

AND SO, IF WE WERE TO PURSUE THE OPTION OF FORMAL, LEGAL PARDONS THE VAST MAJORITY, IF NOT ALL, CASES WOULD BE LEFT CONDEMNED EITHER BY AN ACCIDENT OF HISTORY WHICH HAS LEFT US WITH INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO MAKE A JUDGEMENT, OR EVEN WHERE THE EVIDENCE IS MORE EXTENSIVE, BY A LACK OF SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO OVERTURN THE ORIGINAL VERDICTS.

IN SHORT, MOST WOULD BE LEFT CONDEMNED, OR IN SOME CASES RE-CONDEMNED, 80 YEARS AFTER THE EVENT.

I REPEAT HERE WHAT I SAID LAST MAY WHEN I ANNOUNCED THE REVIEW. THAT WE DID NOT WISH, BY ADDRESSING ONE PERCEIVED INJUSTICE, TO CREATE ANOTHER. I WISH TO BE FAIR TO ALL AND IT IS FOR THAT REASON THAT I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT PURSUING POSSIBLE INDIVIDUAL LEGAL PARDONS FOR A SMALL NUMBER, THUS IMPLYING CONFIRMED GUILT FOR THE VAST MAJORITY, WILL BEST SERVE THE PURPOSE OF JUSTICE OR THE SENTIMENT OF PARLIAMENT.

HOWEVER, WE ~~WISH~~ ACCEPT, GIVEN THE STATE OF CURRENT MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE AND IN FULL RECOGNITION OF THE HORRIFIC CONDITIONS OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR, THAT INJUSTICES MAY HAVE OCCURRED.

THE POINT IS THAT WE CANNOT DISTINGUISH NOW THOSE WHO GENUINELY BETRAYED THEIR COUNTRY FROM THOSE WHO WERE NOT SIMPLY GUILTY OF COWARDICE OR DEFECTION.

## DRAFT

WE HAVE THUS DECIDED ALSO TO REJECT THE OPTION OF THOSE WHO HAVE URGED "LEAVE WELL ALONE - SAY NOTHING". TO DO NOTHING WOULD BE NEITHER COMPASSIONATE NOR HUMANE.

EXPRESSION OF REGRET

AND SO TODAY THIS HOUSE CAN DO FOUR THINGS.

FIRST OF ALL, WE CAN, IN THIS HOUSE WHICH SANCTIONED AND PASSED THE LAWS UNDER WHICH THESE MEN WERE EXECUTED AND WITH THE KNOWLEDGE NOW AVAILABLE TO US, EXPRESS OUR DEEP SENSE OF REGRET AT THIS LOSS OF LIFE.

ONLY A VERY FEW OF OUR FELLOW COUNTRYMEN REMAIN WHO HAVE ANY REAL UNDERSTANDING OR MEMORY OF LIFE AND DEATH IN THE TRENCHES, AND ON THE BATTLEFIELDS OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR. ~~OUR IMAGINATIONS CANNOT COPE WITH THE CATAclySMIC EVENTS OR THE DREADFUL CONDITIONS.~~

THIS YEAR MARKS THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF THE WAR. WE ARE RECALLING AND REMEMBERING THE CONDITIONS AND ALL THOSE WHO ENDURED THEM. THOSE WHO DIED AT THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY AND THOSE WHO WERE EXECUTED. AND THOSE WHO FULFILLED THEIR AWFUL DUTY IN THE FIRING SQUADS.

THE PARDON

SECONDLY, IN OUR REGRET, AS WE APPROACH THE NEW CENTURY, LET US REMEMBER THAT PARDON IMPLIES MORE THAN LEGALITY AND LEGAL FORMALITY. IT INVOLVES UNDERSTANDING, FORGIVENESS, TOLERANCE AND WISDOM. I TRUST THAT THE MEMBERS OF THIS HOUSE WILL AGREE WITH ME THAT, WHILST THE PASSAGE OF TIME HAS DISTANCED US FROM THE EVIDENCE, WHILST IT HAS RENDERED THE FORMALITY OF PARDON IMPOSSIBLE, ~~HISTORY HAS LIFTED THE STIGMA OF CONDEMNATION.~~

AND THE  
POSSIBILITY

OF DISTINGUISHING

GUILT AND

INNOCENCE,

IT HAS ALSO CAST GREAT DOUBT ON

## DRAFT

IF SOME MEN WERE FOUND WANTING, IT WAS NOT BECAUSE THEY ALL LACKED COURAGE, BACKBONE OR MORAL FIBRE. AMONGST THOSE EXECUTED WERE MEN WHO HAD BRAVELY VOLUNTEERED TO SERVE THEIR COUNTRY. MANY HAD PREVIOUS GOOD AND LOYAL SERVICE.

IN A SENSE THOSE EXECUTED WERE AS MUCH VICTIMS OF THIS WAR AS THE SOLDIERS AND AIRMEN WHO WERE KILLED IN ACTION, OR DIED OF WOUNDS OR DISEASE; AS THE CIVILIANS KILLED BY AERIAL OR NAVAL BOMBARDMENT; OR THOSE LOST AT SEA. ~~ALL WERE VICTIMS OF A CATAclysmic AND GHASTLY WAR.~~ AS THE CENTURY DRAWS TO A CLOSE, ALL DESERVE TO HAVE THEIR SACRIFICE ACKNOWLEDGED AFRESH.

*CATAclysmic  
AND  
GHASTLY* I ASK MEMBERS TO JOIN WITH ME IN RECOGNISING THOSE WHO WERE EXECUTED FOR WHAT THEY WERE: VICTIMS, WITH MILLIONS OF OTHERS, OF A ~~WAR WHICH TRANSFORMED THEIR WORLD.~~

WAR MEMORIALS

THIRDLY, WE HOPE THAT OTHERS RECOGNISE THIS TOO, AND WILL <sup>CONSIDER</sup> ALLOWING THE MISSING NAMES TO BE ADDED TO THE BOOKS OF REMEMBRANCE AND MEMORIALS THROUGHOUT THE LAND.

DEATH PENALTY

FINALLY, THERE IS ONE REMAINING THING AS WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE NEW MILLENNIUM. THE DEATH PENALTY IS STILL ENSHRINED IN OUR MILITARY LAW FOR FIVE OFFENCES, INCLUDING MISCONDUCT IN ACTION AND MUTINY. I CAN TELL THE HOUSE TODAY THAT DEFENCE MINISTERS WILL INVITE PARLIAMENT TO ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY FOR MILITARY OFFENCES IN THE BRITISH ARMED FORCES - IN PEACE AND IN WAR.

CONCLUSION

THERE ARE DEEPLY HELD FEELINGS ABOUT THESE EXECUTIONS AND I REALISE THAT WHAT I HAVE SAID WILL NOT SATISFY THOSE WHO SEEK FORMAL LEGAL PARDONS FOR INDIVIDUALS. NEVERTHELESS WE HAVE TRIED,

DRAFT

80 YEARS AFTER THE TERRIBLE EVENTS, TO DEAL WITH THIS SENSITIVE ISSUE AS FAIRLY AS IS POSSIBLE TO ALL THOSE INVOLVED.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF THOSE WHO DIED IN THE WAR, THE POPPY FIELDS OF FLANDERS BECAME A SYMBOL FOR THE SHATTERED INNOCENCE AND SHATTERED LIVES OF A LOST GENERATION. MAY THOSE WHO WERE EXECUTED, WITH THE MANY, MANY OTHERS WHO WERE VICTIMS OF WAR, REST IN PEACE.

AND LET ALL OF US WHO HAVE INHERITED THE WORLD WHICH FOLLOWED REMEMBER WITH SOLEMN GRATITUDE, THE SACRIFICES OF THOSE WHO SERVED THAT WE MIGHT LIVE IN PEACE.



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

VLB  
Historians file.  
cc PB  
AC  
JP

From the Principal Private Secretary

20 July 1998

Dear Tom,

**FIRST WORLD WAR EXECUTIONS**

The Prime Minister has seen the Defence Secretary's minute of 15 July and the accompanying material. He is sympathetic to the approach set out, and to an oral statement as proposed. However, he is concerned that we may be accused of saying in effect that desertion is not wrong. He would like to know before agreeing to a statement how we are going to deal with this argument, and what the proposed statement would say about it. Perhaps the easiest way of doing this would be to let us have quickly a draft statement.

I am copying this to Ken Sutton (Home Office), Jenny Rowe (Lord Chancellor's Office), John Grant (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Kenneth Thomson (Scottish Office), Ken Lindsay (Northern Ireland Office), David Seymour (Law Officers' Department) and Jan Polley (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever

JOHN HOLMES

Tom McKane, Esq.,  
Ministry of Defence.

eu



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
11 MILLBANK  
LONDON  
SW1P 4QE

Mr John Grant  
Principal Private Secretary  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
Downing Street  
LONDON  
SW1A 2AL

file  
MUG/7.

14 July 1998

JEH  
E.P.B.  
JPO  
AC

Dear John

**WAR MEMORIAL ON MESSINES RIDGE IN FLANDERS**

The "Journey of Reconciliation Trust", a cross-border body led by Glen Barr from Northern Ireland and Paddy Harte TD from the Republic of Ireland, is currently constructing a Celtic Tower and Peace Park at Messines, Belgium, to commemorate the sacrifice of the 16th Irish and 36th Ulster Division during the First World War. Not only is the endeavour cross-border, but it is also cross-community. For these reasons, my Secretary of State is supportive of the project, and significant help in kind has been given to the scheme to add to the financial contribution made by the Irish Government.

The project is making good progress and is to be the focus of a dedication ceremony on 11 November this year. We understand that the Taoiseach and President McAleese have been invited to attend, and we also understand that The Queen will be at Ypres that afternoon, attending another Armistice Day ceremony, only six miles from Messines, and the possibility exists that she might be able to make a short side trip to Messines.

Such a visit by Her Majesty, on the same day as President McAleese and the Taoiseach, would be an excellent way of demonstrating the positive relationship between the UK and Ireland and of promoting reconciliation within Ireland, both objectives to which the Government is giving increased emphasis following the conclusion of the Good Friday





Agreement. Similarly, if The Queen left Ypres without travelling the few miles to Messines on such a key day, this would give an inappropriately negative view of the relationships involved. My Secretary of State would therefore want to encourage the idea of a visit, and the purpose of this letter is to register that point with the Foreign Secretary.

I would welcome any indication which you can give on the possibility of a visit to Messines by the Queen.

I am copying this letter to John Holmes at 10 Downing St.

*Yours ever*  
*J. McKervill*

**J. MCKERVILL**



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

In 1948 the hearts of the British people went out to the citizens of Berlin as the Communist grip tightened around the city. They knew that, in spite of the differences that had divided us during the dark days of the Second World War, the bonds between us were strong. They knew we had to stand beside you to resist the Soviet threat and to support you with our Armed Forces while Berlin remained in the front line of the Cold War.

I pay tribute to the courage and dedication of the Allied airmen, some of whom are present today, who flew around the clock for eleven months until the blockade of Berlin was lifted.

Thankfully, the Cold War is now over. But in the last 50 years we have grown ever closer and the links between us have strengthened and endured. As Berlin emerges once again as the capital of a united Germany, we are proud to remember the past and look forward to facing the challenges of the future together.

Tony Blair

27 June 1998

MESSAGE FROM THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM TO THE  
PEOPLE OF BERLIN

"In 1948 the hearts of the British people went out to the citizens of Berlin as the Communist grip tightened around the city. They knew that, in spite of the differences that had divided us during the dark days of the Second World War, the bonds between us were strong. They knew we had to stand beside you to resist the Soviet threat and to support you with our Armed Forces while Berlin remained in the front line of the Cold War.

Thankfully, <sup>the Cold</sup> ~~that~~ war is <sup>now</sup> over. <sup>But</sup> in those <sup>last</sup> 50 years we have grown ever closer and the links between us have strengthened and endured. As we see Berlin once again emerge as the capital of a united Germany, we are proud to remember the past and look forward to facing the challenges of the future together."

I pay tribute to the courage and dedication of the Allied airmen, some of whom are present today, who flew ~~west~~ around the clock for eleven months until the blockade of Berlin was lifted.

Date 27 June 1998

(T) - computer signature.

FILE

WS



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

7 July 1998

You asked if we could let you have a copy of one of the photographs taken when you met the Prime Minister. I am delighted to enclose this.

**PHILIP BARTON**

Arthur Titherington, Esq.

AS

FILE

→ G/R

APS/Edwards vls



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

7 July 1998

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 26 June and for a copy of your book, which you handed to me on 28 May. I apologise for not writing earlier.

The second copy of your book was passed to the Emperor of Japan as you requested.

**PHILIP BARTON**

Jack Edwards, Esq., O.B.E.

MT.  
Could this have  
been Press, Arji<sup>ps</sup>  
or PB?

Say yes!

6, Albany Court,  
Beach Road,  
Penarth, Glam. CF 64. 1JU.  
Tel. 01222-708805.  
26/6/1998.

The Right Honourable, Prime Minister,  
Tony Blair, M.P.,  
Dear Prime Minister,

2. 30/6

The copies attached will refresh your memory of previous meetings I had with your Senior Ministers and your good self.

On 28th May I was in London from Hongkong, with the delegation of Ex-P.A.W.S and handed to your representative a copy of my book for you and the Japanese edition for their Emperor.

I am in U.K. again to attend an Investiture on 17th July and would be grateful for your confirmation your book was received and the other handed on to the Emperor of Japan.

My thanks again to you and the Ministers concerned for your help in Hongkong. Recent successes for your interest are enclosed.

Yours Sincerely,  
Jack Edwards.

JACK EDWARDS OBE, MBE.



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Office of the  
Leader of The Opposition

18 January 1996

Mr Edwards

Many thanks for your fax and enclosures addressed to Tony Blair on whose behalf I have been asked to reply. Please accept my apologies for the delay.

Please be assured that your comments concerning the issue of passports for the wives and war widows of ex-servicemen have been carefully noted. I have passed a copy of your letter to Robin Cook MP, Shadow Foreign Affairs Spokesperson for their information.

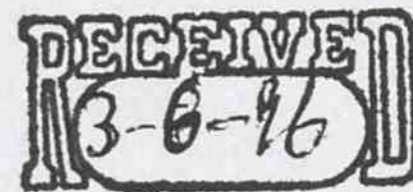
Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah Gibson".

Sarah Gibson  
Assistant to Tony Blair MP

Jack Edwards MBE  
Secretary  
The Royal British Legion  
1203 Sam Cheong Building  
G.P.O. Box 4747  
HONG KONG

From: Robin Cook MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Jack Edwards MBE  
The Royal British Legion  
Hong Kong and China Branch  
1203 Sam Cheong Building  
216-220 Des Voeux Road Central  
Hong Kong

24 May, 1996

*Dear Jack,*

I would like to express the Party's sincere apologies for the events leading to further delay of the Hong Kong (War Wives and Widows) Bill.

On my return from Hong Kong I discussed the situation of the war widows with my colleagues and it was agreed that the Labour Party would give its full support to getting the necessary legislation through Parliament as quickly as possible. Unfortunately due to a misunderstanding in the Whip's Office, when the Hong Kong (War Wives and Widows) Bill had its second reading on Friday 10 May, the Duty Whip objected not to the Bill, but to the procedure that would have enabled it to pass at a single sitting. The fault lay in the fact that no specific instructions had been left for the Duty Whip.

There is no question that this was anything other than an honest mistake, and one that I can assure you we are seeking to rectify as quickly as possible. We have already given the Government an undertaking that we will cooperate fully to pass the Bill at the earliest opportunity.

May I add that I am personally frustrated and deeply disappointed by the delay which I realise will have caused considerable distress to the wives and widows of the ex-servicemen. I can assure you that we remain committed to granting them citizenship, and will do everything to prevent any further delays. I would be grateful if you could pass on to them my most sincere apologies.

*Yours sincerely,*  
*Robin Cook*

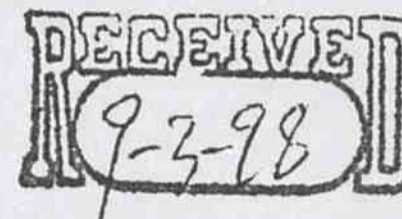
Robin Cook MP





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FAX: 813-3288-0010

*file 9/3/98*  
Mr. Jack Edwards, Chairman  
The Royal British Legion  
Hong Kong & China Branch  
1203 Sam Cheong Building  
216 - 220 Des Voeux Road  
Central Hong Kong



March 6, 1998

Dear Mr. Jack Edwards,

I am writing on behalf of Patrick Walker who you corresponded to back in January. Patrick has left the BBC and I have been asked to send you a copy of the news stories on Tony Blair's visit to Japan in regards to the POWs. I am sending you three stories related to the POW issue.

We have used your picture in one of the stories and apologise for not contacting you beforehand. We thank you for allowing us to have used this precious photo. I'm sorry for the delay in sending this tape, and hope no inconvenience occurred.

Yours truly

*Kiyoshi Matsukawa*  
Kiyoshi Matsukawa

N.B. THE PHOTO OF ME SHOWING HOW WE WORKED IN MINE TAKEN IN 1946 WAR CRIMES WAS USED FOR THE ROUND PLAQUE WITH MY LAST WORDS "NONE OF US SHOULD FORGET" ON THE MEMORIAL. THE SEVENTH TIME MY WORDS NOW USED FOR WAR MEMORIALS

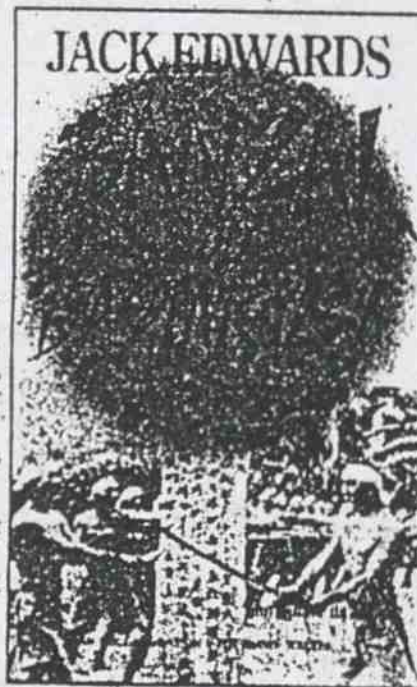
# 英老兵重返金瓜石悼戰友

## 愛德華回憶慘遭日軍虐待往事淚水盈眶 老兵不死出書立碑向日本討公道

文／林馨琴

正當大家還沈迷在陳進興的後續新聞熱潮，遭陳進興挾持，且打傷左腳的南非武官卓懋祺突然在上週日（二十三日）上午出現在碑的落成儀式上。卓懋祺左手拄著拐杖，左腿，但是他身穿整齊的軍服，頭戴紫色的鴨舌帽：「我是來向真正的英雄致敬的，就算負傷

也使得大家對金瓜石戰俘營更感到好奇，最後生的英國老兵傑克·愛德華（Jack Edwards）、喬治·威廉斯（George Williams）後五十二年，也回到戰俘營遺址，立碑悼念他們參加紀念儀式。英國、加拿大、紐西蘭、美國、英國協約國駐台使節、遊客、遊玩的人，大概都有個戰俘營遺址的牌匾建成公園，旁邊的碑費一年多的時間才立碑紀念。奇怪到現場見證的老兵都激動得流下了眼



他們是在1942年二月被捕，先是被關在新加坡石戰俘營。當時，他們一共有523人被俘，到時只剩下64人。

進入低於海平面八百公尺的金瓜石礦區工礦，餓肚子，也被虐待，因此，有好幾百個戰

威廉斯對自己能夠活著下來都表示很慶幸。二次大戰以後幾乎很少人知道在台灣金瓜石發誓要把戰犯受虐待的事公諸於世。三人最積極，他曾經把他在戰俘營中的經歷寫成日文，書名為「去你媽的萬歲」，英文名為「Bastards」，並且到處奔走，到聯合國尋求正義及賠償。這次金瓜石戰俘紀念碑促成的。

後，愛德華也回到金瓜石俘虜營，為軍方

不知道那一天才能夠被釋放，因此，只要有機會，他就在金瓜石附近的石頭上刻上：「nil experando」，也就是不要灰心的意思。他還說，細心的遊客說不定可以在石頭上發現他當年精心製作的痕跡。

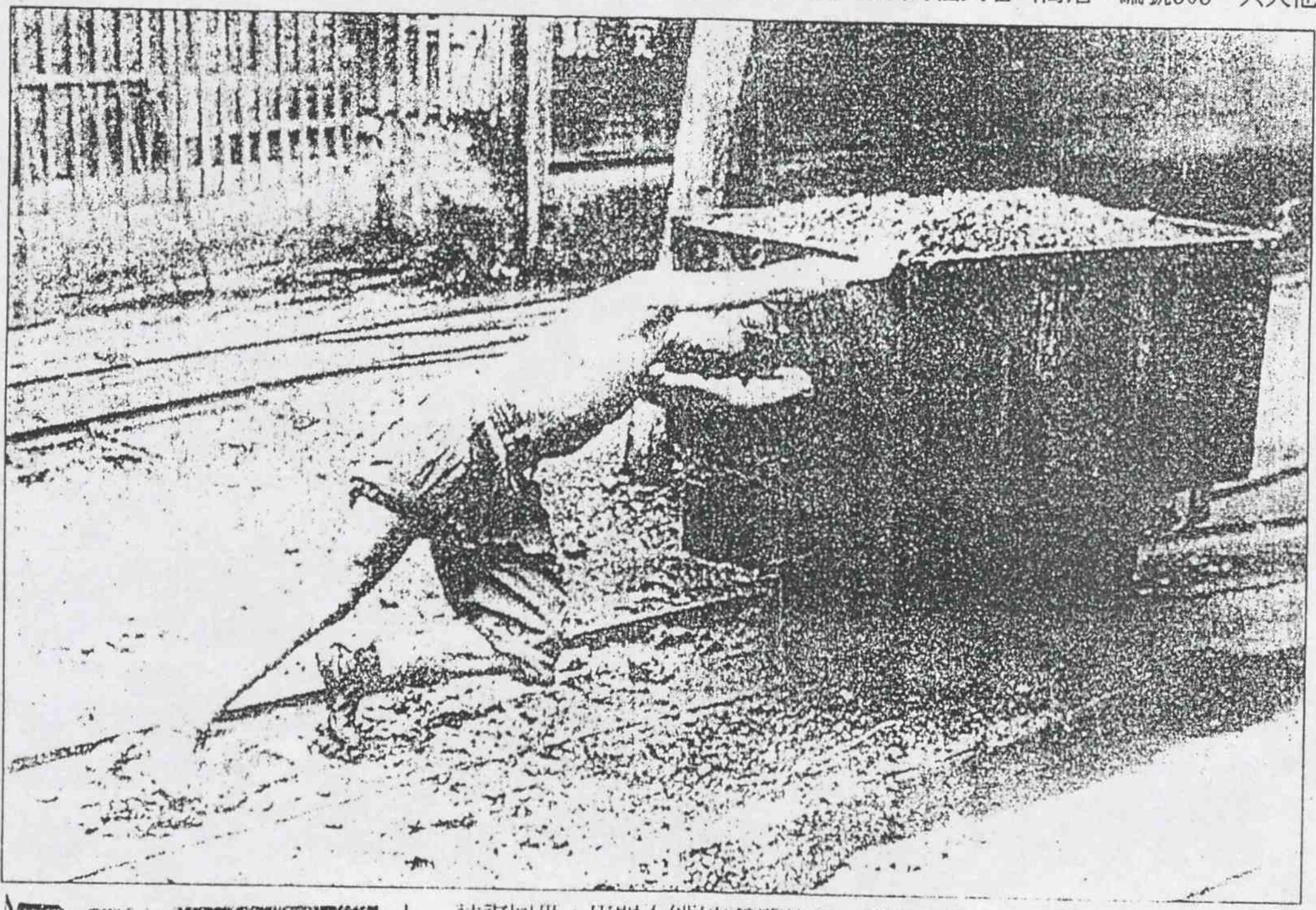
今年八十四歲的萊斯·戴維斯是第一次回到台灣來，他是從香港坐飛機來的，他在出發前一天還掙扎了一下，不知道該不該參加紀念碑落成儀式，後來告訴自己只是一個小小的舊地重遊而已，才過來。他說，當時很多人都喪失勇氣活下去，他則是抱定決心，告訴自己，絕不能被打倒。

據瑞芳鎮瓜山里的里長張文榮表示，民國三十一年十月末，日本佔據台灣期間，曾經把金瓜石地區一棟溫州人的工寮改成

俘虜營，把在東南亞地區俘虜的戰犯關在那裏，由於該地關的都是英國兵，因此，當地的居民都把戰俘營叫做「凸鼻仔營」。到現在，許多上了年紀的人也都有印象，在五十年前有幾百名英國俘虜曾經進入到金瓜石的礦坑裏做搬運工人。

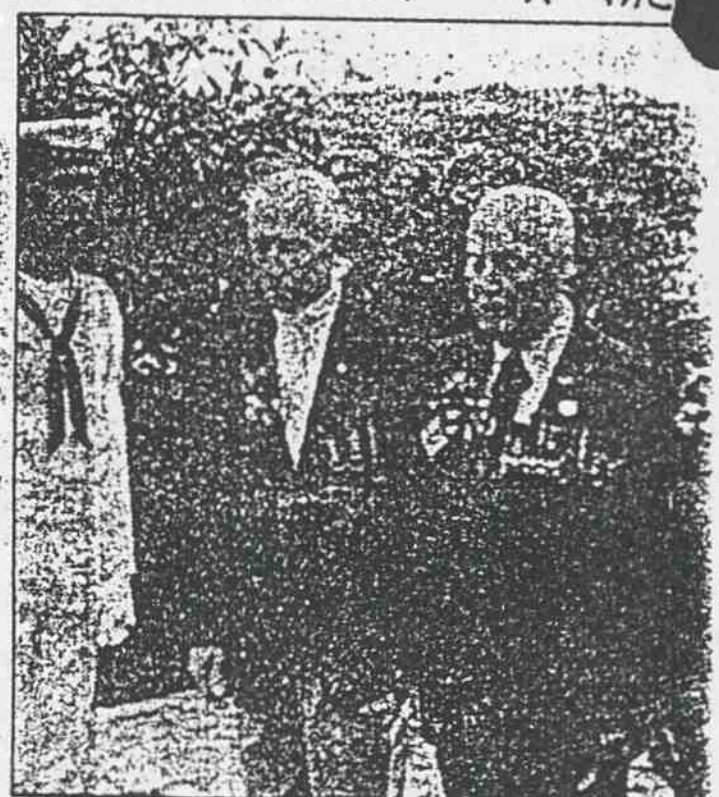
出生在金瓜石的歷史學家唐羽依稀記得，他那年還讀小學二年級，有一天下大雨，看到許多外國兵被押進去工寮，那時候日本老師還告訴同學「只能看不能笑，不能批評」。不過，小孩子們好奇，總會偷偷的跑到戰俘營附近看犯人在做什麼，看到有犯人光著上身，身上寫有英文的刺青都覺得很驚訝。

張文榮也表示那年他只有十八、九歲，有時候送東西去給戰俘吃，戰俘營裏有個人名叫喬治，編號503，只大他一歲，因



傑克·愛德華將他們在金瓜石戰俘營所受到的虐待寫成書出版（左上圖）。

傑克·愛德華1946年回到金瓜石，協助戰爭罪行調查小組調查戰俘營的情形，曾經親自示範他當年做礦工時，如何推車。（傑克·愛德華提供）



此，兩個人很談得來。

他還記得英國兵都不會拿筷子，吃碗麵，因此，台灣人都在笑。看到戰俘在自家也都很好奇。

張文榮還記得，民國三十四年六月，帶走，聽說是轉到木柵地區，俘虜營改十五日，日本戰敗，錄影帶播出日本天個面孔嚴肅。而第二天，英國兵馬上就要找一些當年曾經欺負過戰犯的人報仇已經死掉，還跑到那個人的墳墓上去踢中充滿了怒氣。

張文榮表示，當時金瓜石有不少居民偷拿一些東西給他們吃，他覺得為「阿應該做的事，也可教育後代青年，這裡

## 魏啟林 堅持 秉持行政中立 老蕭

身為政府主管全國公務員的人事掌櫃，行政院人事行政局長過去一向都被形容成是國民黨的「行政院組工會主任」，是選舉時幕後那隻看不見的「黑手」，很難做到所謂的「行政中立」，每逢選舉，就理所當然地成了在野黨攻擊的箭靶。不過新任的人事行政局長魏啟林卻很幸運，拜微笑老蕭之賜，讓他成了國內有史以來頭一個不必「不務正業」搞輔選的人事局長。

# China News

英文中國日報

Taiwan's Premier English Newspaper Since 1949

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MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1997

NT\$15



DAVE SMITH

Former prisoners of war in the Japanese camp at Kinkaseki (from left) Les Davis, Jack Edwards and George Williams, stand in front of the memorial plaque dedicated to the men who suffered at the camp during World War II.

## Taiwan's Allied POWs take rightful place in history

BY PHELM KYNE  
STAFF REPORTER

"We were here from the beginning of the war in Malaya until the bitter end of the war here in Taiwan," Jack Edwards said, tightly clasping the hand of his fellow Kinkaseki POW camp survivor Les Davis. "When we finally got evacuated onto an American battleship, we went up on deck to the back of the ship and watched the ship pull away from Taiwan, and we swore that we'd never forget what happened and that we'd get together whenever we could to remember those days.

"That's what we're doing here now in Taiwan," he said.

Fifty-two years after the allied victory in the Pacific, an important part of local and World War II history was finally granted public recognition yesterday in a solemn ceremony in the mountain village of Chin Kua Shr near Keelung.



DAVE SMITH

ABOVE: George Williams stands before the Kinkaseki memorial plaque, while an ROC Navy honor guard snaps to attention.

watched the ship pull away from Taiwan, and we swore that we'd never forget what happened and that we'd get together whenever we could to remember those days.

"That's what we're doing here now in Taiwan," he said.

Fifty-two years after the allied victory in the Pacific, an important part of local and World War II history was finally granted public recognition yesterday in a solemn ceremony in the mountain village of Chin Kua Shr near Keelung.

Under appropriately overcast skies, a two-man ROC Navy honor guard stood stiffly at attention during the one-hour dedication ceremony to a new memorial on the former site of the notorious Kinkaseki POW camp.

The result of years of planning and months of intense fundraising and organizing by the volunteers of the Kinkaseki Memorial Committee, the memorial dedication marked the beginning of a new chapter in the mostly forgotten history of the old Kinkaseki/Chin Kuo Shr camp.

"I really didn't know much about (the old camp) until a couple of months ago," admitted Chen Han-Ching, chairman of the Tong Shan Community Association who represented the community of Ching Kua Shr at the ceremony. "But all of the community fully supports the establishment of a memorial to mark what happened here during the war."

Addressing the mixed crowd of 150 Taiwanese and expatriate onlookers who attended the dedication ceremony, Kinkaseki Memorial Committee spokesperson Michael Boyden described the significance of the spot which the short grey obelisk of the memorial occupied. "The memorial faces West toward the setting sun, which for the men of Kinkaseki meant the end of another day of work and another day towards freedom," Boyden explained.

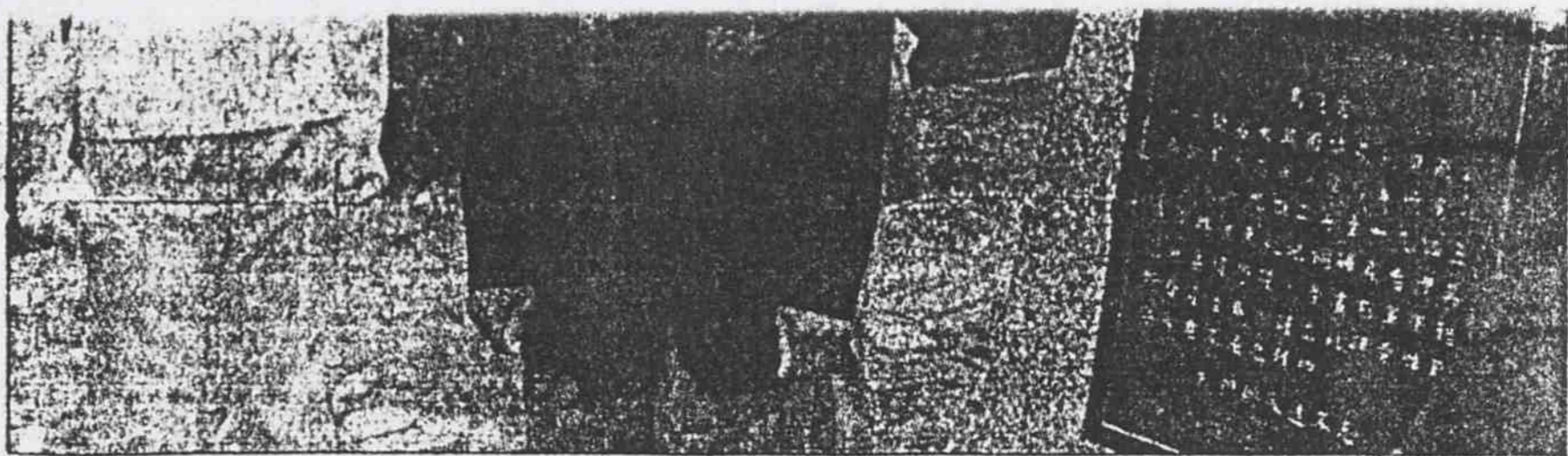
"The memorial also faces away from the place of their imprisonment and towards their homes across the sea."

The memorial plaque, the cost of which was raised by corporate and individual donations over the past six months, urges visitors to remember those "who suffered brutal and savage treatment here ... and in other places in Taiwan as prisoners of war of the Japanese from 1942-1945."

However, the choice of Ching Kua Shr as the memorial's location is particularly appropriate for it was there in the Kinkaseki mine that overwork, starvation and perpetual gratuitous cruelty at the hands of their Japanese captors claimed hundreds of the allied prisoners' lives.

For the three survivors of the Kinkaseki camp who came from Hong Kong, Canada and Britain to witness the dedication, the memorial is "a step in the right direction" survivors say, to a long-hoped-for greater public awareness of what the allied prisoners on Taiwan suffered during the war years.

"After the war (Kinkaseki survivors) were disappointed that no one seemed to know or want to know about the



DAVE SMITH

ABOVE: George Williams stands before the Kinkaseki memorial plaque, while an ROC Navy honor guard snaps to attention.



LEFT: McGill Alexander, the South African Military Attache to Taiwan, attended the ceremony and appeared in good spirits despite the harrowing ordeal his family had been through only days earlier, resulting in the gunshot wound to his leg.

to the camp to look for remnants of his own personal motto carved on rock faces around the area. "Whenever I had a chance, I wrote 'nil experando' on the rock," he said. "That means 'Don't Despair.'" Despair, however, marked the daily trials of the men who lived and died in Kinkaseki. "Why did we live and others died?" Les Davis muses. "So many just lost their will to live...I had the attitude that nothing that happened was going to get me down."

Along with the three camp survivors, members of the Kinkaseki Memorial Committee and representatives of the Commonwealth nations representative offices in Taiwan took part in yesterday's ceremony.

A surprise visitor to the dedication was Col. McGill Alexander, South Africa's now-famous military attaché to Taiwan. Still in visible discomfort from gunshot wounds received at the hands of Taiwan's former most-wanted Chen Ching-hsing, Alexander was quick to silence discussion of the hostage drama that ensnared he and his family earlier this week. "I'm here to honor the real heroes," Alexander said, motioning toward the memorial.

The presence at the dedication service of Kinkaseki Memorial Committee's official Patron, Admiral Soong of the ROC Navy, lent a semi-official nod of government recognition to the dedication service. "Chinese also suffered here in Ching Kua Shr at the hands of the Japanese," Admiral Soong emphasized. "More than 100 suspected 'sympathizers' were arrested and detained by the Japanese during the war."

Soong says the fate of those 100 individuals remains unknown.

Also attending the ceremony was 72 year old Mr. Chang, a long-time resident of Ching Kua Shr who epitomized those local residents praised by Jack Edwards as "those who showed by a word or a smile that they sympathized with us."

Chang praises the new memorial as "important" both for the foreign community and the local residents. "Only the old people around here really know about the camp and what happened," he lamented. "(The memorial) will teach younger people why this place is special."

Kinkaseki camp," says camp survivor Les Davis, 84.

"Seeing (the memorial) is something I never really expected to happen."

Camp survivor Jack Edwards and author of the gripping memoir of the ordeals of the Kinkaseki prisoners, "Banzai You Bastards", described the memorial dedication as a "step in the right direction."

"All I want to do is make sure more people know about (the camp)," Edwards said, explaining that the inflammatory title of his book had severely limited publication of the book, particularly in the US.

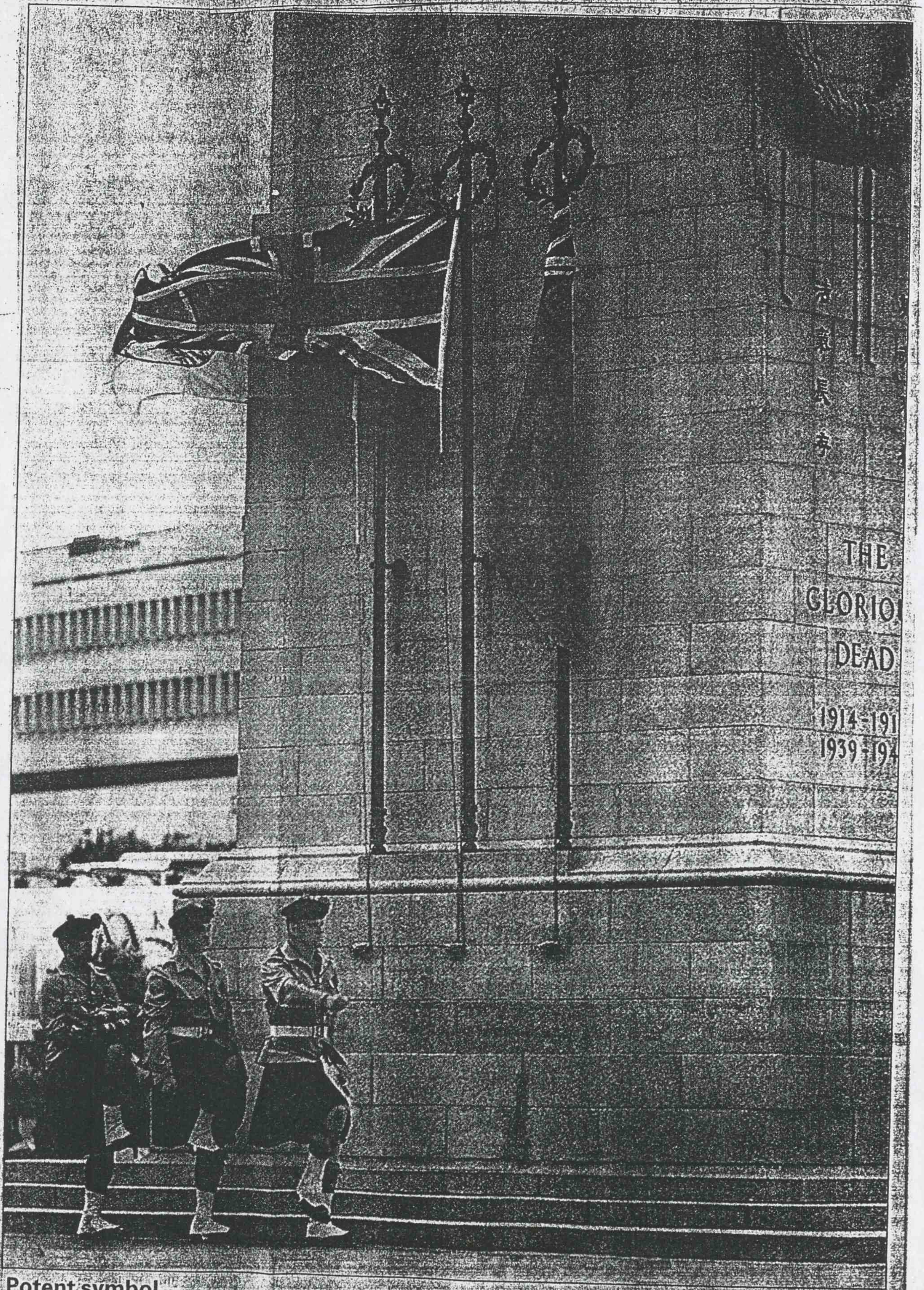
While Edwards has returned to Taiwan and the site of the old Kinkaseki camp several times since the end the war, for Les Davis his first return to Taiwan since being evacuated on an American battleship in 1945 was particularly poignant. "I hesitated a bit when I was about to take the flight from Hong Kong (to Taiwan)," Davis admits. "But in the back of my mind I just told myself 'This is just a visit.'"

George Williams, who returned to the then still-operational mine in Chin Kua Shr in 1972 with Jack Edwards, found his visit to the site of the memorial the day before the dedication an extremely emotional experience.

"We went walking around the site of the camp and then separated," Williams explained. "We each went to different parts of the old camp and meditated about 'Why me? Why did I survive when so many other men who had families and children died here?'"

Williams urged modern-day visitors

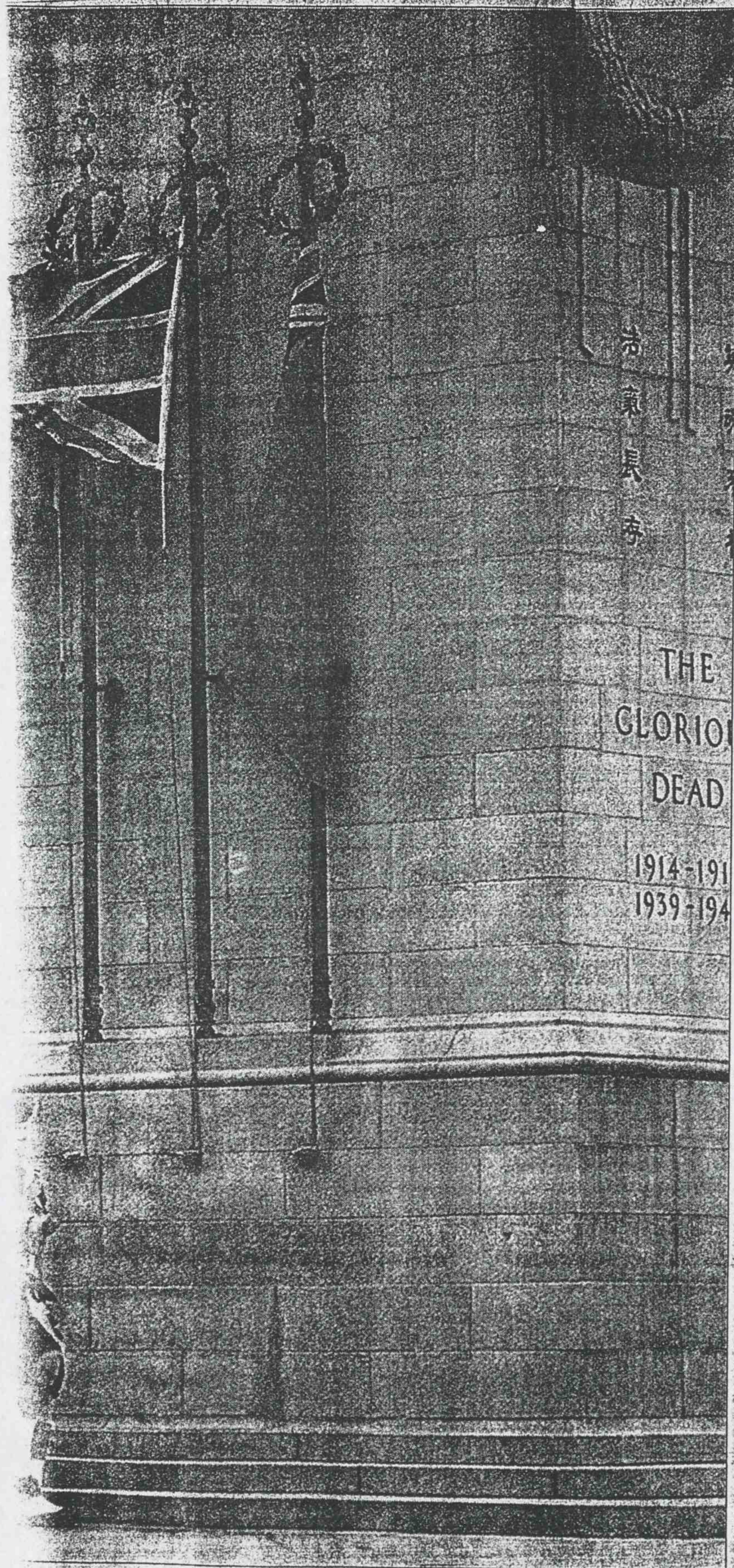
# HONG KONG



## Potent symbol

The Cenotaph in Central may arouse conflicting emotions during and after the handover, but its fate has not yet been decided.

K.Y. Cheng



K.Y. Cheng

ing emotions during and after the handover, but its fate has not yet been decided.

# Plea for role of Cenotaph to be preserved

RACHEL CLARKE

The fate of Hong Kong's most prominent war memorial remains unknown just three weeks before the handover.

British flags on the Cenotaph in Central will be lowered for the last time on June 30 but no decisions have yet been taken on whether Chinese flags will be raised from July onwards or even if the monument will stay in its prime position across from the Legislative Council Building.

Unlike the war cemeteries, the Cenotaph is not protected and pressure is about to mount for it to be safeguarded.

The chairman of the Hong Kong and China Branch of the Royal British Legion, Jack Edwards, said he would like to see the role of the Cenotaph remain unchanged, remembering the dead of two World Wars, albeit with a different military flags flying.

The monument has Chinese characters on it reading "Great Spirits Live Forever" and "Heroes' Spirits Will Never Die" to complement the English inscription "The Glorious Dead".

Crowns at the top of the flagpoles could be removed but laurel wreaths should remain as they pay tribute to those who died, he said.

"It's an easy solution," said Mr Edwards, a former prisoner of war.

"You carry on as normal after July 1 with the Chinese national flag in the centre, the bauhinia flag on its left and the third place left empty and used as it has been for the Australians, New Zealanders and Canadians on their remembrance days and for the four [British] societies who fly flags on their saints' days."

He said he would propose this in a letter to Chief Executive-designate Tung Chee-

hwa pointing out this would conform to the promise of former Chinese patriarch Deng Xiaoping that Hong Kong's way of life would remain unchanged for 50 years and could provide good publicity to the incoming garrison of the People's Liberation Army.

Mr Edwards already has permission to continue raising money for Hong Kong ex-servicemen through Poppy Day in November and hopes to see the Cenotaph remaining the focus of Remembrance Day and of Liberation Day which from this year onwards will be celebrated as Sino-Japanese War Victory Day.

The Stanley and Sai Wan cemeteries are protected by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and will be tended by the future British consulate-general.

Other sites such as the Gurkha Cemetery in the New Territories have been declared private and will also be maintained.

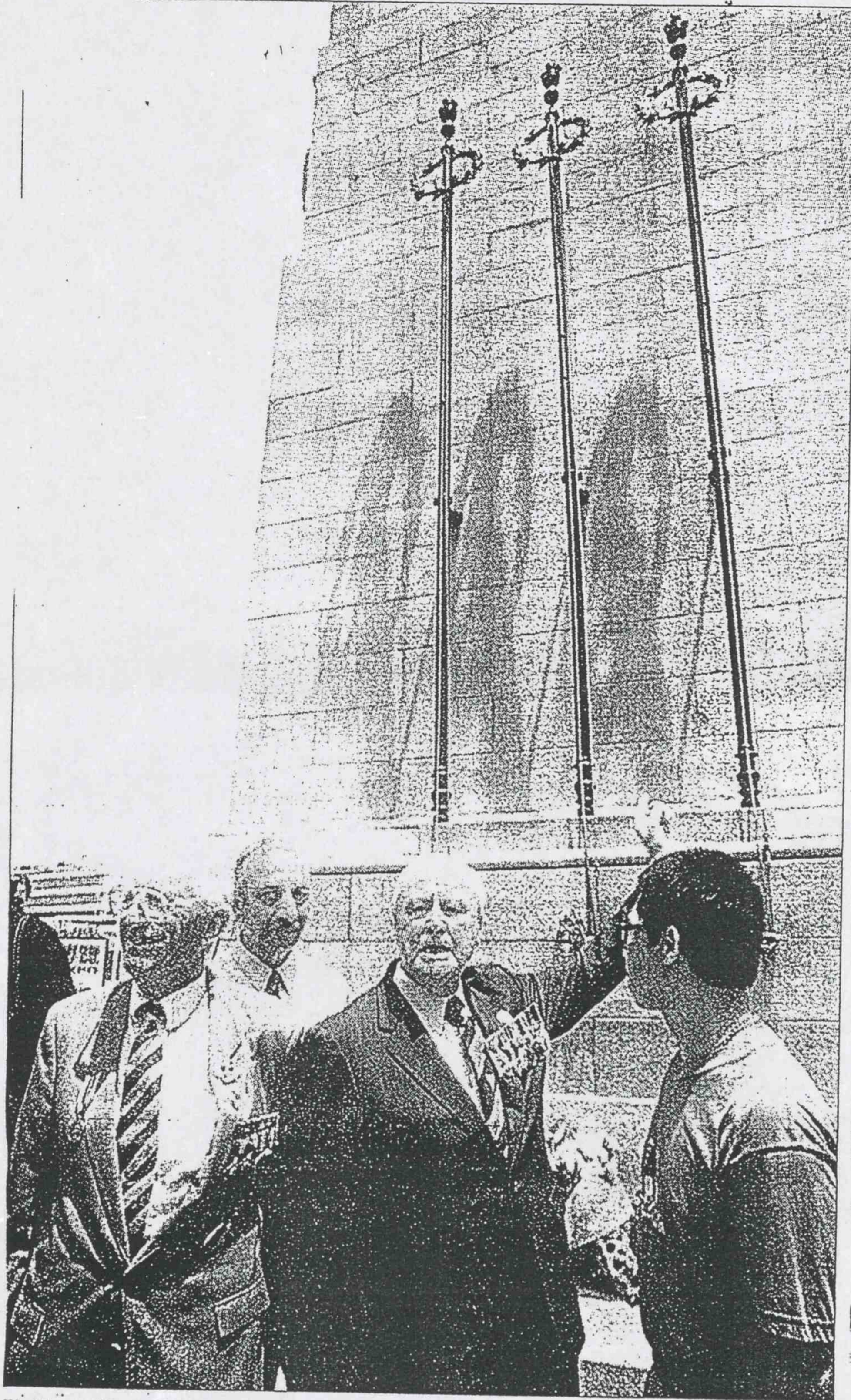
Last week the Commander British Forces, Major-General Bryan Dutton, said: "The Cenotaph is not a war grave, it's a national memorial. It was put up in the 20s and we are not in a position to dictate the future of that. It's for the SAR government."

A government spokesman said the current administration had no powers over the flying of flags or the future of the monument.

"At this stage, no one has been giving thought to the thing," she said.

A spokesman for Mr Tung said: "He does have the authority to decide where flags may be flown."

The national flag will be flown on all major government buildings but this particular question has not been considered.



**Flag hope: War veteran Jack Edwards wants to see the Chinese flag at the Cenotaph.**

# Welsh fly flag for St David ceremony

RACHEL CLARKE

Wind whipped around the Cenotaph yesterday as about two dozen people gathered to honour Welsh war heroes on St David's Day.

The Welsh flag was raised on the memorial at 8 am - the first non-Chinese flag to fly there since the handover - with the Chinese national and SAR flags, before a short service later in the morning.

A wreath was laid with the inscription: "In memory of Welsh women and men and their comrades of all races who lost their lives. None of us should forget."

Twelve-year-old Mariah-Ffiona Fleming was born and raised in Hong Kong, but said the Welsh flag meant most to her. Her mother, Mair Thomas-Fleming, said it was important for the annual ceremony by the St David's Society to continue after the handover.

"Seeing the flag is very important, it's remembering the dead," said Ms Thomas-Fleming, from Conwyl Elfedd, west Wales.

"I don't see why it shouldn't continue, you can't just forget the dead because it's a different time."

Organisers of the ceremony paid tribute to the Government and Urban Services Department for giving quick approval for the event and for arranging the raising and lowering of the flags.

The society's vice-president, Geraint Hughes, originally from Treorchy, south Wales, said: "It's important that we have been able to fly our flag, regardless of the fact that we are the first British nation to fly the flag after the handover. I hope it's a precedent for other societies."

"Today is for the Welsh who died to protect Hong Kong against the Japanese, who fought together with people from many nationalities. It's international."

The St David's Society of Hong Kong has celebrated the patron saint's day since 1911, including ceremonies held in the internment camps at Stanley during the Japanese occupation.



Proud to be Welsh: Rev Peter Ellis chats with a war veteran following the ceremony at the Cenotaph.

PICTURE BY WARTON LI

# Welsh war veterans honoured

By Valerie Bolcina

FOR the first time since the handover, an emblem other than the national flag or the SAR flag was hoisted at the Cenotaph yesterday.

In memory of Welsh war veterans, the green-and-white dragon was raised alongside the national flag and the SAR flag from 8 am to 6 pm as the Welsh community celebrated St David's Day.

Geraint Owen Hughes, vice-president of the St David's Society, laid a wreath at the Cenotaph in memory of the Welsh who died fighting in the Second World War.

"We hope this will set a precedent for other British flags to be raised at the Cenotaph in the future," he said.

Welsh residents and visitors joined in a prayer service and said they were proud to see all three flags flying together.

"This is an international thing, not a colonial thing," organiser Nick Poole said.

The St David's Society has been in Hong Kong since 1911 and has about 200 members.

H.K. STANDARD 2/3/98

South Wales Echo Thursday, February 26th, 1998

## Welsh flag will fly in Hong Kong

THE Welsh flag will fly over the cenotaph in Hong Kong on St David's Day as usual this year. The region's new government, however, has confirmed it will allow the flag to be raised.

The St David's Society in the former British colony meets at the cenotaph each year to remember the war dead, but they were worried that the new Chinese rulers, who took over last year, would not allow them to fly the flag. Jack Edwards, chairman of the Hong Kong branch of the Royal British Legion, who has homes in the former colony, and Penarth said: "It shows that they are committed to maintaining the way of life which existed when the British were here."

"S.C.M.P." 2/3/98



## St Patrick's cross to fly

FOR the first time, an Irish flag will be flown at the Cenotaph in Central today, to mark St Patrick's Day and soldiers from Ireland who died in the world wars.

The Cross of St Patrick will be hoisted side by side with the Hong Kong and national flags at 8am and will remain in place until 6pm.

A wreath-laying ceremony will be held at 11am.

Before the handover, flags were permanently in

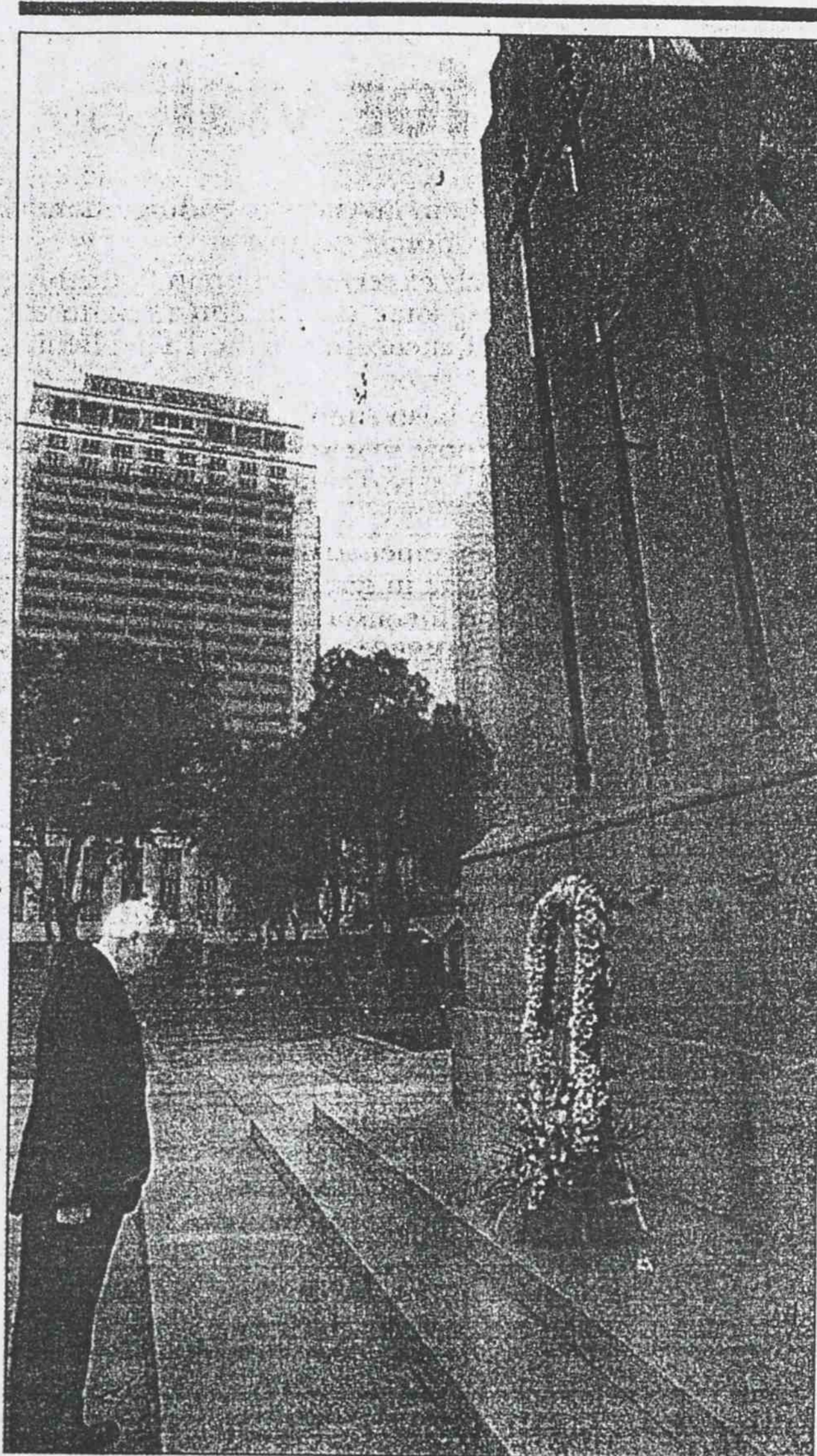
position at the Cenotaph, but are now only raised on special occasions.

Ian Candy, president of the St Patrick's Society, said his organisation would supply the flag.

War veteran Jack Edwards, 79, has been campaigning for the government to change its policy on flying flags at the Cenotaph.

He said he hoped that events like today's would convince the government.

Standard 17/3/98



**Victory flutter: Jack Edwards, the champion of veterans' rights, stands before the Cross of Saint Patrick and the national and SAR flags at the Cenotaph yesterday. Hoisting the cross on the saint's day was a triumph for Mr Edwards, who has fought to have flags at the memorial regardless of the sovereignty change.**

PICTURE BY AGNES CHEN

Standard 18/3/98

# St George faces Chinese dragon

FROM STUART WOLFENDALE IN HONG KONG

ST GEORGE'S DAY was marked in a ceremony at the Cenotaph in Hong Kong yesterday, ten months after the former colony was returned to China.

The red-and-white flag of the Special Administrative Region might be flying overhead, but it was remembrance as usual for the stayers-on and torch carriers of a departed patriotism.

It was remarkable there were flags flying there at all. The Cenotaph, a copy of Lutyens's Whitehall monument in London, is a rebuking presence in the flashy Central district.

A clutch of middle-aged white men in sober suits and three women stood pensively on the perimeter of the lawn before the ceremony.

One worried over the lack of numbers until the van of the congregation, ten Hong Kong Club men, strode from their door with a bugler from the Hong Kong Police. The crowd of now twenty, including a "taipan", a retired colonel, a lay preacher and Miles Jackson-Lipkin, a former judge

with bowler hat, broly and pinstripes, was briefed by the president of the St George Society. That personage wore a white-and-red decoration at his neck and looked faintly orange.

The ceremony was brief and hard to catch over the disrespectful roar of the morning traffic. Three of the group laid a solitary wreath.

A few passers by stopped at a distance. One dapper, elderly Chinese man came in closer, looking pleased. Probably, somewhere, some time, he had had something to do with, if not Queen and Country, at least the old regime. Most Chinese pedestrians averted their gaze.

Jack Edwards, former prisoner of war, indefatigable campaigner for the rights of overseas ex-servicemen and now remembrances, gave a brief homily which was largely lost in a surge from the traffic lights.

The gathering, satisfied that some sort of toehold had been kept, retired for a full English breakfast at the inexplicably named China Tee Shoppe.

TIMES 24 APRIL 1998

# HONG KONG



## In memory

Mark Southerland, Malcolm Kemp and Jack Edwards pay a silent tribute to fallen comrades at yesterday's St George's Day ceremony at the Cenotaph.

Dustin Shum

## Injury in crash left woman 'suicidal'

CHARLOTTE PARSONS

A library clerk became suicidal and took to weeping among the books after a traffic accident left her with an injured buttock, a writ said.

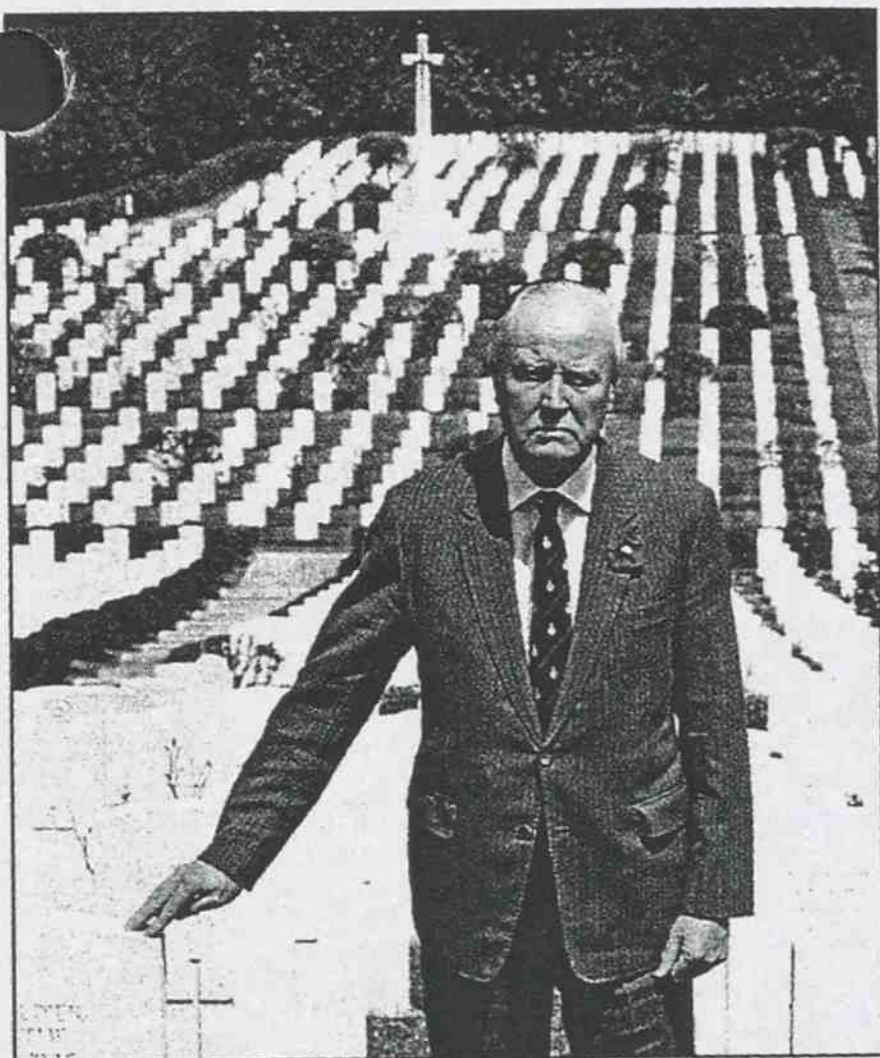
On April 17 last year, Chow Hoi-kong was driving his motorcycle along Hoi Kwai Road towards Tsuen Wan ferry pier when Betty Lam Ying-ye stepped out on to the pedestrian crossing.

Mr Chow's bike slammed into her from behind, throwing her more than 4.5 metres through the air, the High Court document said.

The motorcycle careered on, landing on the fallen woman's legs.

Ms Lam, 47, was left with pelvic injuries that cause her right buttock to ache after more than five minutes of sitting, the writ said.

She claims she needs to support herself when rising from a seated position and



## PROFILE

Jack Edwards

# Champion of Widows Of Hongkong Soldiers

Survivor of Japanese POW camp in World War II now fights for the right of elderly women to get British passports

By William McGurn

In January 1944 in the notorious Kinkaseki mining camp in northern Taiwan, the Japanese Camp Commandant singled out a British enlisted man and asked him if he prayed to his God. After a moment's hesitation, the soldier replied, "Yes." The Commandant then asked him what he prayed for. "For my family, home, peace, victory for the Allies and safety in the mine," said the soldier. The assembled Japanese officers laughed. But later one told him he had answered bravely.

The young POW who stood up to his captors was Sgt J. O. Edwards of the Royal Corps of Signals, taken in the fall of Singapore. When US marines marched into the Kinkaseki camp the following September, the Edwards they liberated had been reduced to skin and bones. But he had lost none of his pluck. Today, just shy of his 75th birthday, Jack Edwards has regained the lost weight but remains in fighting form. The irony is that his adversary these days seems to be as much the empire he fought for as the empire he fought against.

Not that the old boy has become one of those war veterans turned pacifist. Far from it: he credits the American decision to drop the bomb with saving his and countless other innocent lives. But it bothers him that Japan, unlike Germany, has never apologised for World War II. And it bugs him even more that the King and Country whom he served have no room for the spouses of the ethnic Chinese and Eurasians who also served — and often died — side-by-side. Thus Hongkong people know him as a crusader on behalf of the wives and widows of British veterans, while in Japan he has achieved some minor notoriety because of an autobiography that emphasised his demand for some sign of official repentance from Tokyo.

"I suppose my university was prison camp," says Edwards, relaxing at his office

in City One housing estate in Shatin. "The first lesson you learn in camp is respect. Until you earn that you get nowhere."

One sign of that respect from his native land hangs on the office wall: a framed "Member of the British Empire" signed by Queen Elizabeth in 1985. But Edwards has mixed feelings about the company the honour puts him in. "All these bloody OBES, CBES, KBES on their knees kowtowing to Peking every day," he says, referring to much of Hongkong's business and political establishment. "It's a bloody disgrace."

After a stint of Japanese hospitality at the notorious Changi prison camp, Edwards was packed off to work as a slave labourer in the Kinkaseki coal mine. But he never accommodated himself to the forced

**“ I told them anyone who took off his uniform was finished. And we survived. ”**

bow. Two decades later, as a Housing Authority official in Hongkong, he again found his back up against the wall as angry crowds of would-be Red Guards gathered outside his estate to throw rocks and chant Maoist slogans. When two of his workers asked to take off their uniforms because they bore the British Crown, Edwards drew the line. "They were dodgy times but that's exactly when you need to insist on respect," says Edwards. "I told them that anyone who took off his uniform was finished. And we survived."

He's also something of an entrepreneur. In 1988 he published a book he wrote about his wartime experiences. Entitled *Banzai You Bastards*, it included something of a scoop in reproducing a copy of the Japanese order to "kill them all" and "leave no traces" of Allied POWs once the war turned against them. Last year the book

was picked up by Souvenir Press in London, but the even greater shock was seeing it translated into Japanese. In July he attended a book reception in Tokyo, where a young Japanese woman asked him to sing *Rule Britannia*. "Imagine what that felt like, just a few miles from the heart of Tokyo," he said.

But the war widows remain closest to his heart. In a small patch out at Stanley Military Cemetery, Edwards points to the small, white headstone of Jimmy Kotwall, a 37-year-old Eurasian stock broker turned resistance leader who was beheaded on nearby Stanley beach by the Japanese Occupation for his British resistance work. A few feet down lies the grave of Jimmy Kotwall's brother, George, beheaded a year earlier on the same beach for the same reason.

Out of his pocket Edwards takes a copy of a faded letter, scratched in pencil, that Jimmy Kotwall managed to scribble before his execution. He urges his wife, Doris, now 78, to bring their children up in the Christian faith and insists his sacrifice was not in vain. "I die with love in my heart for my family, my country, and relatives and friends." Edwards points to the British coat of arms on the headstone and shakes his head. "They'll give it to the dead on their graves but they won't give it to the living widows on their passports."

All his battles notwithstanding, persistence seems to be paying off. In true Asian fashion, old age has brought its rewards to the Welshman whom the Chinese residents of City One call *ah yeh*, or grandfather. There is his wife, Polly. His book has sold 3,000 copies in Japan, and recently a legislative councillor told him the Hongkong Government would find some way to take care of the war widows, now down to 25. Asked what it all means, Edwards pauses for a second and breaks into a broad smile. "I suppose it means they think me a wee bit of a nuisance." ■



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

25 June 1998

*Dear Hugh,*

**50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE BERLIN AIRLIFT**

Thank you for your letter of 24 June. We discussed the Prime Minister's message to the people of Berlin, which the Defence Secretary will deliver on 27 June. I enclose a slightly revised version, including a reference to Allied airmen.

*Yours ever,*

*Philip*

**PHILIP BARTON**

H D Kernohan Esq  
Ministry of Defence

*h*

File

**From:** Philip Barton  
**Date:** 25 June 1998

**PRIME MINISTER**

**cc:** Jonathan Powell  
John Holmes  
Alastair Campbell  
Magi Cleaver  
James Purnell  
Hilary Coffman

**50TH ANNIVERSARY OF BERLIN AIRLIFT**

You will spend 15 minutes at Northolt tomorrow morning on the way up to your constituency to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of the Berlin airlift. A RAF Dakota of the type used in the airlift will be there just before flying to Berlin to participate in the anniversary events.

You are due to arrive at 0915. George Robertson will meet you, together with the German Ambassador, and introduce you to the Air Attachés from Allied countries. You will then have a chance to chat to some of the veterans of the airlift at the steps of the Dakota and have your picture taken. Magi will decide in the morning whether you should be miked for this, or speak to the press direct immediately afterwards. You then depart on a BAe 125 for Teeside, after which the Dakota will fly off to Berlin.

Magi will go down in advance to check the arrangements. Hilary and James will be with you. I attach:

- points to make to the press;
- a background brief and glossy brochure from the MOD;
- a list of those attending.

*Philip*  
**PHILIP BARTON**

aps\airlift mel

## POINTS FOR PRESS

- Start of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of the Berlin Airlift.
- Want to pay tribute to the people of Berlin and the brave men and women who had the vision and the determination to airlift supplies into that beleaguered city when Stalin tried to starve it into submission.
- An honour to meet the members of the Airlift Association assembled here who were among those who defied Soviet aggression and ran the blockade. Delighted also to meet Mrs Waite, whose husband played such an important role in planning the operation.
- Today, it is almost impossible to imagine the effort required to supply and maintain a city of 2 million people entirely by air. Aircraft, like the Dakota that we have here, were responsible for saving the city and its defending garrison from starvation.
- Success testament to the tenacity of the Berliners and the resolve of the Allied nations to confront aggression.
- The Dakota is flying off to Berlin now to participate in a number of commemorative events this weekend. George Robertson will be representing the Government at these celebrations where he will deliver a message to the people of Berlin on my behalf.

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**BACKGROUND BRIEF FOR THE PRIME MINISTER  
COMMEMORATIONS FOR THE  
50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BERLIN AIRLIFT**

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Berlin Airlift in Brief:

Following rising tension between the Soviet Union and the Allied Powers, on 24 June 1948 Stalin cut off all road and rail links with the city of Berlin.

With a Third World War looking increasingly likely, Ernie Bevin, the Foreign Secretary, decided that Britain, and her Allies should make a stand against the Soviets but avoid engaging in open hostilities. The idea for an airlift to relieve the Allied outpost was already a military contingency plan. However, the notion that the same aircraft could carry enough supplies to relieve the entire city was the idea of Air Commodore Rex Waite. The airlift scheme was considered ludicrous by policy makers but Bevin gave it his backing and Operation Plainfare, as the enterprise was named, took off on 26 June 1948.

The entire operation lasted some 11 months until 12 May 1949, In that time, some 2,325,809 tonnes of supplies were delivered. To put this event in some context, although airlifts had been undertaken by the Germans in the relief of Stalingrad, and by the British in supplying of the Fourteenth Army in Burma, nothing quite like the Berlin Airlift has been achieved before or since. The closest is the airlift to Yugoslavia which lasted from July 1992 to January 1996 and lifted over 160,000 tons; a total which was exceeded by the Berlin operation during March 1949 alone.

A brochure giving an account of the British involvement in the Airlift, produced by the Air Historical Branch, provides additional information and is attached.



#### Commonwealth Involvement in the Airlift:

Australia, New Zealand and South Africa each contributed around one squadron of aircrew who flew RAF aircraft and were rotated on a regular basis. One Australian and one South African were killed during the Airlift.

#### RAF Dakota Aircraft:

The Douglas DC-3 Dakota (ZA947) participating in the Berlin Airlift commemorative events is part of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight but has been re-liveried in the colours of No 77 Squadron which participated in the Airlift. It was manufactured in March 1942 and issued to the United States Army Air Force. In September that year the aircraft was transferred to the Royal Canadian Air Force and served mainly in Canada, but was latterly used in Europe until declared surplus to requirements in 1971. The aircraft was adopted by RAF Strike Command and issued to the BBMF in March 1993. The Dakota earns her keep as the workhorse of the BBMF, participating in a number of displays and fulfilling her normal tasks of training and support. The aircraft headed up the flypast for the Queen's official birthday earlier this month and will provide the focus for the event at RAF Northolt on 26 June. After the Prime Minister's departure, the Dakota will leave Northolt and overfly the unveiling ceremony at Gatow that afternoon. During the weekend it will participate in a number of other events.

#### British Military Aircraft involved in the Airlift:

##### **At Northolt:**

Douglas DC-3 Dakota - A US built transport with a capacity of 2½-3½ tons. It was the smallest RAF aircraft on the Airlift. RAF Dakotas lifted more than 100,000 tons in total.

##### **At Allied Museum, Berlin:**

Handley Page Hastings - British built transport which entered service in November 1948, five months into the Airlift. It was the largest RAF aircraft on the Airlift and lifted 55,000 tons in total.

### **Other Aircraft:**

Aside from these aircraft, the RAF also flew Avro Yorks and Short Sunderlands. The York was a derivative of the Lancaster Heavy Bomber and lifted some 233,000 tons - the highest total of any other British aircraft. The Sunderland was a flying boat and flew between the Elbe River and Havelsee lake.

### British Berlin Airlift Association:

The British Berlin Airlift Association (BBAA) was formed in 1994 and now has some 400 members. The Association's President was Air Chief Marshal Sir Nigel Maynard who died last Friday aged 76. The Vice-President is Air Marshal Sir John Curtiss who is expected to attend the Berlin events.

### Commemorative Stamp:

There has been significant lobbying by the British Berlin Airlift Association and a number of MPs to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Berlin Airlift in a suitable way, focusing on the issue of a commemorative stamp.

The Royal Mail has considered this and advised that they are unable to issue any stamps for this purpose during 1999 as they are focusing on a Millennium theme. They have agreed however, to make available a Commemorative Label and a Philatelic Medallion Cover which will be available from next May. A Press Notice will be released on 26 June.

The Defence Postal and Courier Service Agency have produced a commemorative cover which will be available from 26 June 1998. Andrew Dismore MP has tabled a PQ on this subject.

### Air Commodore Rex Waite

The late Air Commodore Rex Waite had the idea to stretch the Airlift operation to include the civilian population of Berlin as well as the Allied forces stationed there. His widow, Mrs Jessamy Waite, will be at Northolt on Friday and will accompany Chief of the Air Staff to Berlin later in the morning.

Channel 4 intend running a Secret History programme on 29 June about Air Commodore Waite and the Airlift. It is likely that it will be critical of the lack of recognition he has received from the Government for his part in the Airlift. In spite of recent press coverage, Air Commodore Waite did not invent the Airlift concept. The Germans had attempted a relief of Stalingrad by air, the British had used aircraft to supply the Fourteenth Army in Burma and an Airlift to supply western forces in Berlin had always been a military contingency plan. What Waite did do was to extend the Airlift operation to include the civilian population of Berlin as well as the military forces stationed there. He was highly instrumental in influencing his superiors and convincing the Americans and French that the operation was feasible.

Statistics and Anecdotes:

British Aircraft consumed over 35 million gallons of aviation fuel, flew more than 30 million miles, and spent more than 200,000 hours in the air flying to and from Berlin.

It was reported that when contemplating the difficulty of living in a blockaded city, one Berliner turned to another and said "Aren't we lucky. Think what things would be like if the Allies were blockading us and the Russians were running the Airlift."

Other Commemorative Events (June 1998 - May 1999):

Friday 26 June:

- \* Event at RAF Northolt to mark the departure for Gatow of the RAF Dakota (PM & SofS & CAS)
- \* Unveiling of Plaque at Gatow and overflight by RAF Dakota (CAS & AMP)
- \* Warburg Prize Presentation (CAS & AMP)

Saturday 27 June:

- \* Templehoff Open Day (CAS & AMP)

- \* Opening of Allied Museum (SofS Speech & CAS & AMP)

Outline of opening ceremony at Allied Museum, Berlin:

- \* Each National Delegation will arrive in sequence accompanied by an appropriate piece of music.
  - \* Welcoming remarks by Dr Trotnow, Museum Director
  - \* Remarks by Prof Stolzl, Chairman of the Governing Body
  - \* Speech by Governing Mayor of Berlin, Eberhard Diepgen
  - \* Some further music
  - \* Speeches by the three ministers - US, FR and UK. Sequence yet to be determined but as the senior minister, SofS might be invited to speak last.
  - \* Final speech by Volker Ruhe (copy attached)
  - \* National anthems
  - \* Tour of exhibits
- 
- \* Signing of Golden Book (a visitors book for the city) and reception at Schloss Charlottenburg (SofS remarks & AMP)
  - \* Ceremony at Airlift Memorial (SofS & AMP)
  - \* Torchlight Tattoo (SofS & AMP)

Sunday 28 June:

- \* Templehoff Open Day (AMP)

12 May 1999

Fiftieth Anniversary of End of Airlift:

- \* Expected to be major celebration, again in Berlin. No invitations as yet but PM and SofS likely to be invited.
- \* May 1999 - BBAA holding a service at RAF St Clement Danes. No invitations yet but PM & SofS likely to be invited.

CVs Attached for:

German Ambassador (Northolt)

BERLIN AIRLIFT EVENT - 26 JUN 98 - ATTENDANCE

VIP GUESTS

Herr Gebhardt von Moltke  
Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany  
German Embassy

Brigadier General E Fischer  
Defence and Military Attache  
German Embassy

Colonel H Kortge  
Air Attache  
German Embassy

Group Captain P Layton  
Air Adviser  
High Commission for Australia

Wing Commander J Jones  
Air Adviser  
High Commission for New Zealand

SENIOR HOSTS

The Prime Minister

George Robertson MP  
Secretary of State for Defence

Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Johns  
Chief of the Air Staff

Air Commodore Gordon McRobbie  
Director of Public Relations(RAF)

Group Captain Jerry Witts  
Station Commander RAF Northolt

Sebastian Cox  
Head of Air Historical Branch(RAF)

GUESTS FROM THE BRITISH BERLIN AIRLIFT ASSOCIATION

Mrs Waite

Mrs Jessamy Waite, widow of Air Commodore Rex Waite.

She will be accompanied by her daughters, Miss Romilly Waite and Mrs Joanna Sullem. The Waites will also accompany CAS to Gatow.

Mrs Waite lives in Southampton.

Veterans

Mr Max Chivers  
Lives in High Wycombe, Bucks.

Mr Eric Chambers  
Lives in Woking, Surrey.

Mr C L Godwin AFC  
Attained the rank of Air Commodore, lives in Milton Keynes, Beds.

Mr L Hacke  
Attained the rank of Squadron Leader and was on Dakotas, lives in Gt Wilbraham, Cambridge.

Mr F Jeggo  
Lives in Lydd, Kent and will be accompanied by his wife.

Mr E F Kirby  
Attained the rank of Wing Commander and was on Avro Yorks, lives in Cobham, Surrey.

Mr Ray Paul AFC  
Attained the rank of Squadron Leader and was on Dakotas, lives in Wallingford, Oxon.

RAF DAKOTA (ZA 947) CREW AND PASSENGERS

Crew Members

Squadron Leader Dave Thomas  
Pilot

Flight Lieutenant Tony Dixon  
Navigator

Squadron Leader Chris Perkins  
Air Loadmaster

Corporal Gordon Ballantine  
Engineering Technician

Junior Technician Gary Millman  
Airframe Technician

Junior Technician John Caldaralo  
Air Electrical Technician

Passengers

Andrew Gilligan  
Sunday Telegraph Journalist

Tom Levene  
Berlinzeitung Journalist

TBA  
Berlin Regional Television Cameraman

TBA  
Lincolnshire Journalist



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 0171-21 82111/2/3

SECRETARY OF STATE

MO 14/3J

24 June 1998

f

C-SEH  
AH  
ML  
JB  
AC  
JPO  
BUP

Dear Philip,

The Prime Minister has agreed to attend the event at RAF Northolt this Friday to commemorate the Berlin Airlift.

The event will mark the departure for Berlin of an historic RAF Dakota aircraft which will participate in a number of commemorative activities. The German Ambassador, Defence and Air Attachés, as well as those from Commonwealth countries involved in the Airlift and Airlift veterans, will attend, with the Defence Secretary and Sir Richard Johns, Chief of the Air Staff. The event will provide a media opportunity to help redress some of the negative comments that have appeared in the Press about the extent of Government involvement in Airlift celebrations. The programme is designed to allow the Prime Minister to spend time talking to veterans. I attach an outline programme, some speaking notes for addressing the assembled media and background material.

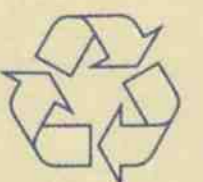
I also attach, for the Prime Minister's approval, the text of a message from him to the people of Berlin, which the Defence Secretary will deliver on Saturday.

Do let me know if you require any additional details.

yours,  
*[Signature]*

(H D KERNOHAN)  
Private Secretary

Philip Barton Esq  
10 Downing Street



Recycled Paper



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NORTHOLT FACILITY 26 JUNE 1998 - SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

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Ser	Time	Event	Comment	Press Activity
1	0815	Airlift veterans, Air Advisors and Press arrive at VIP lounge (Churchill Room)	Coffee and biscuits available.	Opportunity to speak to veterans.
2	0835	Briefing (of all at Ser 1)	By DPR(RAF)	In Churchill Room
3	0840	CAS arrives.	Met by Station Comd.	Nil
4	0845	SofS and German Ambassador arrive by car on Apron.	Met by CAS & DPR(RAF). Escorted into Churchill Room. Meet veterans.	German media may wish to film Ambassador arriving. Subsequently they can join other press via door to Royal lounge.
5	0900	SofS makes brief address to gathering. Reply by German Ambassador. Presentation of gifts by Ambassador to veterans.	In Churchill Room.	Media free to film from Royal lounge/Churchill Room divide.
6	0905	Band takes up position.	Remains in position throughout. Music lowered to background volume while PM is on the Apron.	
7	0910	All move outside to Apron.	SofS, Ambassador, CAS & Air Advisors to meet PM's car. Veterans stand by Dakota door (Crew to chat to them).	Press pack to enclosure. Pool photos (TV cameraman and Stills) to position to cover greeting by official party.
8	0912	PM's car arrives at front of Air Terminal.	TV technician "wires" microphone to PM.	Nil.
9	0915	PM's car arrives on Apron .	Greeted by SofS & Ge Ambassador. Briefly meets Air Advisors	Pool photos in attendance. Main press pack observe/photograph from their enclosure.
10	0917	PM walks to aircraft/veterans	"Lead" veteran identified to ensure conversation opens naturally.	As Ser 9.
11	0924	PM joined by SofS and German Ambassador.	Farewell to veterans	As Ser 9.
12	0925	PM, SofS and Ge Ambassador	PM stops briefly at press enclosure	Available to all media.

13	0930	walk to PM's aircraft. PM's aircraft taxis out.	to answer "planted" question. Dakota starts engine as PM disappears into his aircraft. Moves off when ready. Officials and veterans return to Churchill room To photograph Dakota take-off.	Further opportunity for press to speak to veterans. Opportunity for interviews with SofS and Ge Ambassador. Remaining press may depart as they wish. Photography as media wish. Nil
14	0932	Photographers on bus to runway vantage points.		
15	0945	Dakota takes off.		
15	0959	CAS departs for Berlin	With Mrs Waite (widow of Air Commodore Wait) & 2 daughters. Buffet for veterans with hosts. VIP guests may remain, depending on their schedules.	
15.	1000	End of facility.		Press leave the Station.

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**WET WEATHER PROGRAMME**  
(As normal programme until Ser 5)

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Ser	Time	Event	Coment	Press Activity
6	0912	PM's car arrives at front of Air Terminal	TV technician "wires" microphone to PM.	Nil
7	0915	PM's car arrives on Apron	Greeted by SofS and German Ambassador.	Press may film outside. Afterwards escorted indoors via door to Royal lounge.
8	0916	PM escorted into Churchill Room	Meets veterans. Opportunity to view airlift photographs.	Pool TV cameraman and stills phot cover. Remainder may film from divide between lounges.
9	0923	PM moves to his aircraft.	Accompanied by SofS and Ge Ambassador. Dakota starts engines as PM enters his. Veterans/Air Advisors remain in Churchill Room.	Press may film outside.
10	0930	PM's aircraft taxis out; Dakota follows.	SofS and Ge Ambassador return to Churchill Room.	Press may film indoors.
11	0931	Photographers board bus to runway vantage points.	See take-off of Dakota at 0945.	Those press who wish to depart may do so. Opportunity for others to speak with veterans, SofS and Ge Ambassador.
12	1000	Facility ends.	Buffet for veterans with hosts. VIP guests may remain, depending on their schedules.	Press leave the Station.



UK Presidency of the European Union

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Beckett MP  
President of the Board of Trade



Secretary of State  
**Department of  
Trade and Industry**

1 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0ET

Direct Line: 0171-215 5430

Enquiries: 0171-215 5000

E-Mail Address:  
TLO.beckett@TLO.dti.gov.uk

John Holmes Esq  
Principal private Secretary  
to the Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
London  
SW1A 2AA

22 June 1998

*file  
22/6*

*TOP- JEH  
C: PB  
JB  
APPS.*

*Dear Tom*

**ENEMY PROPERTY: APPOINTMENT OF LORD ARCHER AS THE INDEPENDENT PERSON**

Following a meeting with the President earlier this week Lord Archer of Sandwell has accepted the role of an independent advisor on the Enemy Property report.

Following a consideration of the history he will advise on a scheme for the restitution of property to victims of Nazi persecution. He will decide at that stage whether he wants to carry on to the implementation stage.

We propose to announce Lord Archer's appointment on Monday.

I am copying this letter to John Grant (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Paul Williams (HM Treasury), Rupert Huxter (Minister without Portfolio's Office) and Jan Polley (Cabinet Office).

*Yours*

*Tom MK*

*PP*

ANTONY PHILLIPSON  
Private Secretary

**dti**

Department of Trade and Industry



R 18/6  
2

Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

London SW1A 2AH

18 June 1998

Dear Philip

Japan: letter from Royal British Legion

On 2 March, the Secretary-General of the Royal British Legion (RBL), Ian Townsend, wrote to the Prime Minister requesting a meeting with him for the then Chairman, Graham Downing. Advice on this letter was contained in a letter to PS/No.10 on 29 April.

? where  
is it

We were in close contact with the RBL about prospects for this meeting following receipt of Mr Townsend's letter. When a decision was taken that the Prime Minister could not meet Graham Downing, Mr Townsend was immediately informed by telephone and the situation explained. We do not recommend that a written reply is sent. Mr Townsend is aware and understands the decision. Furthermore, Graham Downing is no longer Chairman: he lost badly a re-election bid last month. It is highly unlikely that the new Chairman would wish to brief the Prime Minister on a visit to Japan led by his predecessor.

*Yours ever*

*Andrew Patrick*

(Andrew Patrick)  
Private Secretary

Philip Barton Esq OBE  
10 Downing Street



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

APS Townsend AS

2

cc FCS

From the Private Secretary

19 June 1998

Dear Mr Townsend,

Graham Downing wrote to the Prime Minister in May, enclosing a photograph of the delegation that he led to Japan earlier this year. We understand that Mr. Downing is no longer Chairman of the Royal British Legion. I would be grateful if you could pass on to him the Prime Minister's thanks. As you know, the Prime Minister had hoped to meet him and other members of the delegation to Japan. Unfortunately, the press of events, not least in the run up to the referendum in Northern Ireland, prevented him from doing so.

On a separate note, the Government is particularly grateful to Piers Storey-Pugh, Head of the Royal British Legion's Pilgrimages Department, who arranged last month's joint visit to South-East Asia for British and Japanese veterans. This was highly successful despite the short notice for organising the trip and its potential sensitivities.

The Government hopes that the Royal British Legion will continue its activities to promote reconciliation between Britain and Japan. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office would certainly like to remain in close contact with you on this.

Yours sincerely,

Philip Barton

PHILIP BARTON

I. G. Townsend, Esq.

R1816



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

London SW1A 2AH

(T)

18 June 1998

Dear Janice

Letter to the Prime Minister from Graham Downing

Your letter of 2 June refers.

On 20 May, the then Chairman of the Royal British Legion (RBL), Graham Downing, wrote to the Prime Minister. Downing enclosed a photograph of the delegation that he led to Japan on a reconciliation visit earlier this year. This trip was jointly funded by the British and Japanese Governments.

Downing failed in his bid to win re-election as Chairman at the RBL annual conference on 23 May. We therefore do not recommend that the Prime Minister replies to him (or his successor), as you suggested. Nevertheless, we wish to encourage the RBL to continue in its activities to promote reconciliation with Japan. We suggest instead that a Private Secretary reply is sent to Ian Townsend, RBL Secretary-General, who was closely involved in the organisation of the visit to Japan. A draft response to him is enclosed.

...

*Yours ever*

*Andrew Patrick*

(Andrew Patrick)  
Private Secretary

Mrs Janice Richards  
10 Downing Street

*Rem*

(Townsend fco)

SCANNED

**DRAFT LETTER FROM PS/NO. 10 TO IAN TOWNSEND**

Mr Ian Townsend  
Secretary-General  
Royal British Legion  
48 Pall Mall  
London SW1Y 5JY

Graham Downing wrote to the Prime Minister in May, enclosing a photograph of the delegation that he led to Japan earlier this year. We understand that Mr Downing is no longer Chairman of the Royal British Legion. I would be grateful if you could pass on to him the Prime Minister's thanks. As you know, Mr Blair had hoped to meet him and other members of the delegation to Japan.

On a separate note, we are particularly grateful to Piers Storey-Pugh, Head of the Royal British Legion's Pilgrimages Department, who arranged last month's joint visit to South-East Asia for British and Japanese veterans. This was highly successful despite the short notice for organising the trip and its potential sensitivities.

We hope that the Royal British Legion will continue with its activities to promote reconciliation between Britain and Japan. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office would certainly like to remain in close contact with you on this.



Downing

1716



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Assistant Private Secretary

AM 2 June 1998

Dear Andrew,

I enclose a copy of a letter which the Prime Minister has received from Mr Graham Downing.

I should be grateful if you would provide a draft reply for the Prime Minister's signature, to reach this office by Wednesday 17 June.

Yours sincerely,

*Janice Richards*

MRS JANICE RICHARDS (PB)

Andrew Patrick Esq  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

THE ROYAL BRITISH  
LEGION

FROM: NATIONAL CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE

**R** PR Week Campaign of the Year

The Royal British Legion  
48 Pall Mall  
London SW1Y 5JY

Telephone 0171 973 7  
Fax 0171 973 7  
Switchboard 0171 973 7200

Legion line 0345 725 725  
<http://www.britishlegion.org.uk>

Our reference

Your reference

Mr Tony Blair MP  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
London  
SW1A 2AA

FLW/PM

230

20

May 1998

Dear Prime Minister

I have much pleasure in forwarding to you a photograph of The Royal British Legion delegation to the Cross of Sacrifice in the British section of the Commonwealth War Grave at Hodogaya, Japan. The group had just held a small service of Remembrance at which we were joined by members of the All Burma Veterans Association of Japan. They also laid a wreath.

The delegation then visited the Commonwealth sections of the Cemetery. A small ceremony of Remembrance comprising of the Act of Homage and the laying of a wreath was carried out at each. I have sent a photograph of the group to their respective Prime Ministers and ex-Service organisations of the Commonwealth countries commemorated in Hodogaya.

Yours sincerely,

Graham Downing

NATIONAL CHAIRMAN



Patron Her Majesty The Queen President Air Marshal Sir Roger Austin KCB AFC FRAeS RAF (Ret'd)  
Chairman G G Downing Vice Chairman J G H Champ C Eng MI Mech E General Treasurer J A Tedder FCA  
Secretary General I G Townsend FI Mgt Assistant Secretary R D Hanscomb OBE

A Registered Charity. Charity No. 219279.

I:\May\NC.14\ajc



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

15 June 1998

Dear Hugh,

**50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF BERLIN AIRLIFT**

Thank you for your letter of 21 May. As I told you on the phone last week, we agreed that the Prime Minister should do a photocall at Northolt on Friday, 26 June to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Berlin Airlift. As things stand, we plan on the Prime Minister arriving at Northolt at 0915 and departing at 0930 for his constituency. We are in touch with the RAF direct about a BAe 125 for this.

I am copying this letter to Dominick Chilcott (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Rupert Huxter (Office of the Minister without Portfolio) and Jan Polley (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,

Philip

PHILIP BARTON

Hugh Kernohan Esq  
Ministry of Defence

From: The Rt. Hon. The Lord Archer of Sandwell Q.C.

L. JEM

Tel: & Fax: 01784 483136



House of Lords

London SW1A 0PW

XXXXXXXXXXXXXX,  
XXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
XXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Highcroft  
Hill View Road  
Wraysbury, Staines  
Middx TW19 5EQ

09 JUN 1998

The Rt Hon Tony Blair MP  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1A 2AA

DCO papers.  
Attached files

6th June 1998

No reply  
needed.  
File  
JEM

*Tony,*

Thank you for your letter relating to the restoration of assets impounded under the Trading With The Enemy legislation.

I am grateful to you for addressing the problem since, as you say, some of us have been concerned about it for a considerable period of time.

I would be happy to assist if I can. I am arranging to meet Margaret, so that we may discuss what would be entailed. When we have done that, I will write to you again.

*Yours ever,*  
*John*

TPM 8/06

# Prime Minister's Correspondence

## Log Entry Printout

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### Correspondent

NA LORD ARCHER OF SANDWELL  
House of Lords

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### Correspondent Comments

### Incoming Correspondence

Date Of Letter 11/05/98

Subject Enemy Property  
Independent Third Party

### Reply

Date Of Reply 02/06/98

Reply Code 0

Comments No incoming letter  
Letter dated 11/05 JEH to DTI

### Government Department

Date Departmental Reply Exptd.

Referred to Department

---

### Office Use

Action	PM
Pending	
File	DCO papers
Officer	AStenson

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10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

2 June 1998

Law Poston,

I am writing to you about an important and delicate task which I hope you will consider taking on. It concerns property seized by the British Government, at the outset of the Second World War, under the Trading With the Enemy legislation. Some of this property belonged to victims of Nazi persecution.

On 3 April, Margaret Beckett announced the publication of a history, written by Foreign and Commonwealth Office historians, of the British policy towards enemy property. Margaret also apologised on behalf of the Government that those who dealt with these matters after the War were sometimes insensitive to the plight of Nazi victims. She accepted the general principle that confiscated assets placed in the UK by victims of Nazi persecution should be returned to them by the UK, where practicable and where claims can be validated, and announced the Government's intention to establish a claims procedure and to make an initial £2 million available.

She also announced that we would approach a suitable independent individual to consult with all interested parties about the report and advise on the form of the scheme the Government should adopted. I know that you have taken an interest in this issue. Your comment that "We need to settle the account and lay the ghosts to rest" sums up the Government's approach to this complex and

AD

sensitive issue. I also believe that your background and experience qualify you well for the task.

One major problem is the difficulty of establishing criteria for restitution which ensure that victims of Nazi persecution are treated with sympathy, while ensuring that claims are properly validated: a problem compounded by the incompleteness of the Government records. We therefore need good advice on how to set up a claims procedure which meets the standards expected when spending public money. If you decide to take on this role, you will of course have your own ideas on how you would like to go about this, but we will provide suitable assistance via the Department of Trade and Industry. Clearly the issues need to be approached with some urgency. Holocaust survivors will rightly expect action to be taken quickly.

If you would find it helpful Margaret would be very happy to discuss the terms of reference with you before you take a final decision. I do hope you will feel able to take on this difficult but rewarding task.

Yours truly  
-  
Tina

The Right Honourable The Lord Archer of Sandwell, QC.



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 0171-21 82111/2/3

SECRETARY OF STATE

D/Parliamentary/12/5/P

10th June 1998

Dear Janice

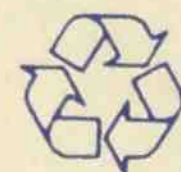
... I enclose a draft reply you may wish to send to Malcolm Wicks MP about posthumous pardons for those First World War soldiers executed by firing squads.

Yours,  
*Elaine Kerr*

ELAINE KERR

Mrs Janice Richards  
10 Downing Street

Rem 3/06



Recycled Paper



DRAFT REPLY TO MALCOLM WICKS MP

Thank you for your letter of 14 May about those executed in the First World War and enclosing the petition from veterans. As you are aware Dr John Reid, Minister of State for the Armed Forces, is currently reviewing the issue and he expects to be able to report the results soon. I can assure you that the Government wishes to bring this matter to a close in a way that is fair and humane.



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

2 June 1998

Dear Peter,

I am writing to you about an important and delicate task which I hope you will consider taking on. It concerns property seized by the British Government, at the outset of the Second World War, under the Trading With the Enemy legislation. Some of this property belonged to victims of Nazi persecution.

On 3 April, Margaret Beckett announced the publication of a history, written by Foreign and Commonwealth Office historians, of the British policy towards enemy property. Margaret also apologised on behalf of the Government that those who dealt with these matters after the War were sometimes insensitive to the plight of Nazi victims. She accepted the general principle that confiscated assets placed in the UK by victims of Nazi persecution should be returned to them by the UK, where practicable and where claims can be validated, and announced the Government's intention to establish a claims procedure and to make an initial £2 million available.

She also announced that we would approach a suitable independent individual to consult with all interested parties about the report and advise on the form of the scheme the Government should adopt. I know that you have taken an interest in this issue. Your comment that "We need to settle the account and lay the ghosts to rest" sums up the Government's approach to this complex and

AB

sensitive issue. I also believe that your background and experience qualify you well for the task.

One major problem is the difficulty of establishing criteria for restitution which ensure that victims of Nazi persecution are treated with sympathy, while ensuring that claims are properly validated: a problem compounded by the incompleteness of the Government records. We therefore need good advice on how to set up a claims procedure which meets the standards expected when spending public money. If you decide to take on this role, you will of course have your own ideas on how you would like to go about this, but we will provide suitable assistance via the Department of Trade and Industry. Clearly the issues need to be approached with some urgency. Holocaust survivors will rightly expect action to be taken quickly.

If you would find it helpful Margaret would be very happy to discuss the terms of reference with you before you take a final decision. I do hope you will feel able to take on this difficult but rewarding task.

Yours ever  
-  
Tony

The Right Honourable The Lord Archer of Sandwell, QC.



UK Presidency of the  
European Union

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Beckett MP  
President of the Board of Trade



Secretary of State  
**Department of  
Trade and Industry**

1 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0ET

Direct Line: 0171-215 5430

Enquiries: 0171-215 5000

E-Mail Address:  
TLO.beckett@TLO.dti.gov.uk

John Holmes Esq  
Principal Private Secretary  
to the Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON  
SW1A 2AA

26 May 1998

*Handwritten notes:*  
G.A.  
A1. Netzke to PM's  
27/5

*Handwritten notes:*  
cc PB  
AC

*Handwritten:* Dear John

**ENEMY PROPERTY: INDEPENDENT THIRD PARTY**

Thank you for your letter of 11 May indicating that the Prime Minister is content with the suggestion that Lord Archer should be approached about filling the role of Independent Third Person (ITP). I attach a draft letter for the Prime Minister's signature.

You also suggested that we might consider Emrys Davies. However, we believe that he will be fully occupied with the Tripartite Gold Commission for several months. Furthermore, we understand that his Civil Service background may be seen, by some in the Jewish community, as not sufficiently independent for the role of the ITP.

I am copying this letter to John Grant (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Paul Williams (HM Treasury), Rupert Huxter (Minister without Portfolio's Office) and Jan Polley (Cabinet Office).

*Handwritten:* yours

*Handwritten signature:* Anthony

ANTONY PHILLIPSON  
Private Secretary



UK Presidency of the  
European Union

Lord Archer of Sandwell  
House of Lords  
London  
SW1A 0PW

*taking on.*  
I am writing to you about an important and delicate task which I hope you will consider. It concerns property seized by the British Government, at the outset of the Second World War, under the Trading With the Enemy legislation. Some of this property belonged to victims of Nazi persecution.

From your remarks during the House of Lords debate instigated by Lord Janner in February on the restitution of assets to Nazi victims. I know that you have taken an interest in this issue. Your comment that "We need to settle the account and lay the ghosts to rest" sums up the Government's approach to this complex and sensitive issue.

You will therefore be aware that on 3 April, Margaret Beckett announced the publication of a history, written by Foreign and Commonwealth Office historians, of the British policy towards enemy property. Margaret also apologised on behalf of the Government that those who dealt with these matters after the War were sometimes insensitive to the plight of Nazi victims. She accepted the general principle that confiscated assets placed in the UK by victims of Nazi persecution should be returned to them by the UK, where practicable and where claims can be validated, and announced the Government's intention to establish a claims procedure and to make an initial £2 million available.

*also believe*  
*The doc*  
~~Part of Margaret's announcement~~ *is* that we would approach a suitable independent individual to consult with all interested parties about the report and advise on the form of the scheme the Government should adopt. I know it is not an easy task but, I feel that your background and experience qualify you well for the task. We are committed to the principle that confiscated assets placed in the UK by victims of Nazi persecution should be returned to them by the UK, where practicable and where claims can be validated. *the* A major problem is the difficulty of establishing criteria for restitution which ensure that victims of Nazi persecution are treated with sympathy, while ensuring that claims are properly validated: a problem compounded by the incompleteness of the Government records.



*Therefore*

We need good advice on how to set up a claims procedure which meets the standards expected when spending public money. If you decide to take on this role, you will of course have your own ideas on how you would like to go about this. Clearly, the issues need to be approached with some urgency. Holocaust survivors will rightly expect action to be taken quickly.

~~We will, of course, provide suitable assistance via the DTI.~~  
If you would find it helpful Margaret would be very happy to discuss the terms of reference with you before you take a final decision.

*I do hope you will feel able to take on this difficult but rewarding task.*

*but we will provide suitable assistance via the DTI*

FILE

AS  
2



cc MoD  
FCO

10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

24 May 1999

Dear Mr Townsend,

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 19 April about former Prisoners of War from the Far Eastern theatre of the Second World War.

The Government has enormous sympathy for the former Prisoners of War and well appreciates the frustration and distress that has resulted from the decision last year of the Tokyo District Court. It has reminded the Japanese Government of the depth of feeling that the issue of further compensation arouses in Britain. The Japanese Government has said in response that, while there is no prospect of further compensation, it understands the continuing concern in this country. The Government continues to work with the Japanese Government on measures to promote reconciliation between Britain and Japan.

For many of the former prisoners and their dependants, reconciliation is difficult, if not impossible. Nevertheless, the Prime Minister believes that it would be wrong to perpetuate this bitterness down the generations. To do so would be to fail to understand the achievement of those who fought for freedom in the Far East.

The Government is aware of the recent decision by the Canadian Government. The different Allied countries have all adopted their own method of responding to the needs of their populations, including their ex-service personnel and all those detained by our former enemies. Your views on this aspect are understood. But, as you know, it has been the common policy implemented by successive British governments that financial compensation of this sort is not the best way to address such needs in this country. Rather the emphasis is on the maintenance of our health services and pensions to provide support to those citizens who are in need. There are no plans to change this policy.

WS

With regard to the matter of recent awards to former miners, these payments are not the result of an ex-gratia award by the Government, but rather the result of successful civil court action against British Coal for negligence.

I am sorry to send what I know will be a disappointing response, but hope that it at least clarifies the position.

*Yours sincerely,*  
*Philip Barton*  
**PHILIP BARTON**

I. G. Townsend, Esq.

---





pb

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

TOWNSEND I

Telephone 0171-21 82111/2/3

SECRETARY OF STATE

D/Parliamentary 12/5(1933)/98/P

(5)

11/4/99 May 1999

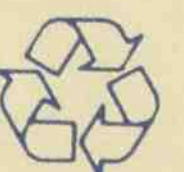
Dear Janice,

I attach a draft reply you may wish to send to Mr I G Townsend of the Royal British Legion.

Yours,  
Elaine

ELAINE KERR

Mrs Janice Richards  
10 Downing Street



Recycled Paper

SCANNED

DRAFT REPLY TO MR I G TOWNSEND OF THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of the 19 April about former Prisoners of War from the Far Eastern theatre of the Second World War.

The Government has enormous sympathy for the former Prisoners of War and well appreciates the frustration and distress that has resulted from the decision last year of the Tokyo District Court. It has reminded the Japanese Government of the depth of feeling that the issue of further compensation arouses in Britain. The Japanese Government has said in response to our representations that, while there is no prospect of further compensation, it understands the continuing concern in this country, and we continue to work together on measures to promote reconciliation between Britain and Japan.

We understand that for many of the former prisoners and their dependants, reconciliation is difficult, if not impossible, but, as the Prime Minister said last year, it would be wrong of us to perpetuate this bitterness down the generations. To allow this to happen would be to fail to understand the achievement of those who fought for freedom in the Far East.

The Government is of course aware of the recent decision by the Canadian Government. I should explain that the different Allied countries have all adopted their own method of responding to the needs of their populations, including their ex-service personnel and all those detained by our former enemies.

Your views on this aspect are of course understood but, as you know, it has been the common policy implemented by successive British governments that financial compensation of this sort is not the best way to address such needs in

this country. Rather our emphasis is placed on the maintenance of our health services and pensions to provide support to those citizens who are in need. There are no plans to change this policy.

With regard to the matter of recent awards to former miners, while I appreciate the impression these have created, these payments are not the result of an *ex-gratia* award by the Government, but rather the result successful civil court action against British Coal for negligence.

I do appreciate that this will be a disappointing response, but hope that it clarifies the position.

TS.

Mr IG TOWNSEND

13-5-99

PB



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Assistant Private Secretary

✓ Ack 28 April 1999

Dear Lisa

I enclose a copy of a letter which the Prime Minister has received from Mr I G Townsend of the Royal British Legion.

I should be grateful for your advice, together with a draft reply for Private Secretary signature, to reach this office by 13 May.

If your Department is not responsible for this subject, please let us know as soon as possible to which Department the correspondence has been forwarded.

Yours ever

*Jamie Richards*

MRS J K RICHARDS

AS

Miss Lisa Farrington  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office



Meeting request

*The Secretary General*

The Royal British Legion  
48 Pall Mall  
London SW1Y 5JY

Telephone 0171 973 7218  
Fax 0171 973 7399

<http://www.britishlegion.org.uk>

FCO/Adv+PS

The Rt Hon Tony Blair, MP  
The Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON  
SW1A 2PW

S1

20 APR 1999

19 April 1999

Dear Prime Minister,

You will recall that in a much appreciated special message to our national Annual Conference in May 1998 you said: "I am very conscious of the great debt we all owe the Royal British Legion in its support of the ex-Service community.....I look forward to working with you on behalf of all ex-Servicemen and women who have served their country so faithfully".

It is with these sentiments very much in mind that I am now writing to you on a very important matter which will be discussed at this year's Legion Annual Conference at Bournemouth from May 29 to 31. Namely the special case of the British survivors of the Japanese prisoner of war camps and their widows - numbering some 10,000 people - which I am asking you to consider in the light of very important new information now available to us.

May I say at the outset that in raising this matter with you at this particular time, I am well aware of the strains and pressures being placed on you by the situations in Kosovo and Northern Ireland, in addition to the normal burdens of your office. But I hope you will agree that there have been new developments recently in relation to our Far East PoWs which do warrant your attention.

You will know of the Canadian Government's recent decision to make an ex-gratia payment to all its former prisoners of the Japanese and their widows of \$23,940 (almost £10,000) "as an extraordinary payment to extraordinary individuals who suffered extraordinary hardship while in captivity" and as an "expression of the gratitude which Canadians feel for their suffering and sacrifice". This payment is in addition to the sums they received in the 1950s which were about six times greater than compensation paid to British Far East prisoners of war at that time. The Canadians also receive a minimum, monthly compensation payment of \$866 in addition to any War Pension they may receive.

Cont/....



in looking further into the question of our former prisoners of war and their quest for payment of compensation in recognition of the inhuman conditions they suffered at the hands of their captors (more than 25% of the prisoners died in captivity) some startling new evidence came to light in the Public Records Office which does, in our view, raise important questions about the role of previous British Governments. For example, Article 26 of the 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty with Japan states that should Japan make a peace settlement or war claims settlement with any State, granting that State greater advantages than those provided by the San Francisco Treaty, those same advantages shall be extended to the parties to the San Francisco Treaty.

In 1954 the Japanese concluded a peace treaty with Burma and in 1955 a war claims agreement with Switzerland. The terms of both these were more favourable than those agreed by the original signatories, thus opening the way for the British Government, among others, to claim comparable levels of compensation. However, a Foreign Office briefing document dated 25 May 1955 recommends against this in the interests of the restoration of the Japanese economy and then adds later, "unless there is a material change in circumstances." It goes on to recommend: "We should not of course give any publicity to this decision."

A hand written note on the document, by Lord Reading, then Minister of State at the Foreign Office, says: "I agree. We are at present unpopular enough with the Japanese without trying to exert further pressure which would be likely to cause the maximum of resentment for the minimum of advantage". There is also a response from HM Treasury on 19 September 1955 concurring with "the conclusion you had reached on general grounds of foreign relations, despite the possibility of domestic political embarrassment".

The statements about the Japanese economy surely show that there had been a "material change in circumstances" and that they were such as to enable the Japanese Government confidently to make agreements in 1954 and 1955 with Burma and Switzerland and during the 1950s and 1960s, with other nations.

Yet in the British Ambassador's report on Japan in January 1955, he reported on their economy: "The position of Japan showed a marked improvement at home and abroad....Japan enjoyed a substantial surplus in her balance of payments throughout the year.....The prospects in 1956 seem to be as fair as in 1955". All this indicates that the Government of the day decided deliberately not to reopen negotiations with the Japanese Government and in effect, therefore, acted against the best interests of those British citizens who had been prisoners of the Japanese.

You will be aware of the so far abortive efforts of the Japanese Labour Camp Survivors' Association and the Association of British Civilian Internees: Far East Region to secure through the Japanese courts any compensation from the Japanese Government. It is against this background that the various organisations representing our Far East prisoners of war have approached the Legion for help.

Cont/.....

I firmly believe that the actions of the Canadian Government, noted above, and by former British Governments have produced an entirely new situation which presents your Government with a new opportunity to recognise the unique claims of our Far East prisoners of war as well as the responsibility of previous British Governments who neglected to resolve this matter when they clearly had an opportunity to do so. It would be wrong to suggest that the policy of successive Governments to claim that the health and pensions services which are available to all members of the general public, together with War Pensions, have adequately compensated the prisoners, who in many cases, have obtained any benefits they do receive only with great difficulty.

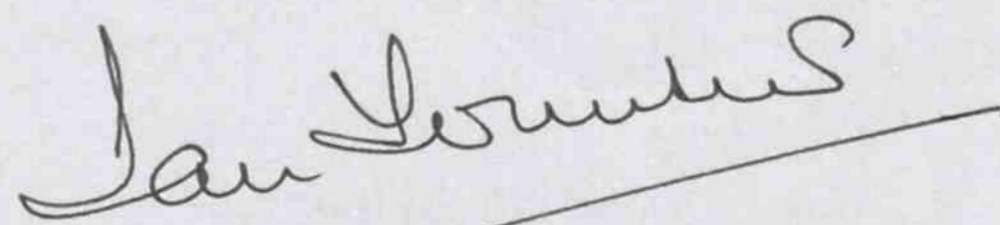
In recent years, the principle of Government making retrospective compensation payments has become well-established. For example, at the end of March a much-deserved payment to miners suffering from lung disease was announced, which will cost the Government about £2 billion, thus demonstrating that where there is a deserving cause, even a very large sum can be found. Indeed, I noticed that you were quoted as welcoming this announcement as "a debt we all owe".

I believe that your intervention at this point in the long-drawn-out Japanese prisoners of war dispute could bring an end to the differences between the British and Japanese people over this matter once and for all and so pave the way for a new chapter in the economic and political relations between our two countries.

A motion supporting the concept of the payment of a single gratuity by the Government to surviving Far East prisoners of war and their widows is due to be debated by the Legion's Annual Conference at Bournemouth. This motion, which doubtless will be carried, will require me to convey to you the wishes of the 685,000 Legion members represented there and by inference the wishes of some 15 million members of the ex-Service community, that something must be done to bring this matter to a successful conclusion, particularly as we approach the millennium.

I should be grateful for a meeting with you in advance of our Conference, to discuss how we might proceed.

Yours sincerely,



**I G Townsend**  
**Secretary General**



SECRETARY OF STATE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 0171-21 82111/2/3

cc COS  
FA/PS  
PA/PS  
AC  
Press (JB)  
SCU

MO 29/4T

21 May 1998

Dear Philip,

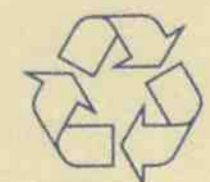
The Prime Minister answered a question from Gisela Stuart in the House on 13 May and will have seen the recent articles in one or two newspapers suggesting that the Government might do more to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift.

RAF personnel and aircraft are fully involved in a series of events, which quite rightly centre on Berlin, and the level of planned British representation is in line with the other nations involved. However, the visit before the G8 Summit by President Clinton to Berlin grabbed media attention and we need to ensure that our own involvement is properly recognised.

The Defence Secretary will be attending events in Berlin between 27-28 June to mark the 50th anniversary of the start of the Airlift, along with the Chief of the Defence Staff and Chief of the Air Staff. The Federal Republic also plan events on the 12 May next year to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the ending of the Blockade. Invitations are likely to be extended to the heads of Government of the nations involved in the airlift. The Defence Secretary would recommend that the Prime Minister should accept such an invitation. It would be helpful to know whether this is likely, in order that I might let our Defence Attache in Bonn know.

That said, the Prime Minister's involvement now in an Airlift related event in this country now deliver a very positive media message. We plan a press conference and photocall at RAF Northolt on Friday 26 June to mark the departure for the commemorative events in Berlin of a Dakota aircraft of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. The aircraft will bear the colours of a squadron that participated in the Airlift. The Prime Minister's presence would raise the profile of the UK's involvement and I know that the British Berlin Airlift Association would be hugely grateful for his support.

Philip Barton Esq  
10 Downing Street

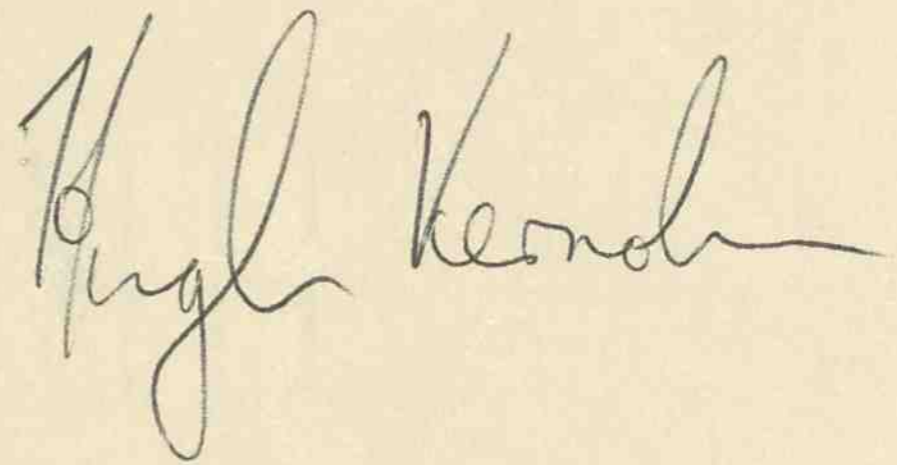


Recycled Paper



If this is feasible and the Prime Minister is interested in taking up the opportunity,  
our press offices could discuss the details.

I am copying this to John Grant, Rupert Huxter and Jan Polley.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Hugh Kerohan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

(H D KERNOHAN)  
Private Secretary



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

bc JP  
JEH  
AC

From the Private Secretary

15 June 1998

Dear Hugh,

**50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF BERLIN AIRLIFT**

Thank you for your letter of 21 May. As I told you on the phone last week, we agreed that the Prime Minister should do a photocall at Northolt on Friday, 26 June to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Berlin Airlift. As things stand, we plan on the Prime Minister arriving at Northolt at 0915 and departing at 0930 for his constituency. We are in touch with the RAF direct about a BAe 125 for this.

I am copying this letter to Dominick Chilcott (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Rupert Huxter (Office of the Minister without Portfolio) and Jan Polley (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,

Philip

**PHILIP BARTON**

Hugh Kernohan Esq  
Ministry of Defence

AS

WICKS MP, Malcolm

3/06



AS

10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Assistant Private Secretary

ack 20 May 1998

Dear Elaine,

I enclose a copy of a letter which the Prime Minister has received from Mr. Malcolm Wicks about posthumous pardons for those First World War soldiers executed by firing squads.

I should be grateful if you would provide a draft reply for the Prime Minister's signature, to reach this office by Wednesday, 3 June.

Yours sincerely,

Janice Richards (RR)

MRS. JANICE RICHARDS

Ms Elaine Kerr,  
Ministry of Defence.

R



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Principal Private Secretary

11 May 1998

*Dee Antony,*

**ENEMY PROPERTY: INDEPENDENT THIRD PARTY**

Thank you for your letter of 7 May, giving the President's recommendations on who should be the Independent Third Party to advise on the form of the claims procedure. The Prime Minister would be content with the suggestion of Lord Archer of Sandwell. The Prime Minister has also nothing against the other candidates mentioned in your letter. We have received a separate suggestion of Emrys Davies, currently director of the Tripartite Gold Commission. You may like to consider him too.

On the assumption that your first choice remains Lord Archer of Sandwell, I would be grateful if the speaking note attached to your letter could be turned into a draft letter for the Prime Minister to send Lord Archer.

I am copying this to John Grant (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Paul Williams (H.M. Treasury), Rupert Huxter (Minister without Portfolio's Office) and Jan Polley (Cabinet Office).

*John Holmes*  
*[Signature]*  
JOHN HOLMES

Antony Phillipson, Esq.,  
Department of Trade and Industry.

*[Handwritten mark]*



UK Presidency of the European Union

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Beckett MP  
President of the Board of Trade



Secretary of State  
Department of Trade and Industry

1 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0ET

Direct Line: 0171-215 5430

Enquiries: 0171-215 5000

E-Mail Address:  
TLO.beckett@TLO.dti.gov.uk

John Holmes Esq  
Principal Private Secretary  
to the Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON  
SW1A 2AA

07 May 1998

*Prime Minister*  
*Best to go with the*  
*Tanner candidate, as long*  
*as he is sensible (as he is).*

*Peter M. (note below) suggests an*  
*ex-diplomat called Kenny*  
*Davies. He is OK, and I*  
*would ensure the OTI look*  
*at him, but I see no reason*  
*not to go with Archer.*

*TOP - JEH*  
*LC: PB*  
*JSH*  
*PJ*  
*Prell.*  
*8/5.*

Dear John

ENEMY PROPERTY: INDEPENDENT THIRD PARTY

On 3 April, the President of the Board of Trade announced that the Government would set up a claims procedure for victims of Nazi persecution whose property had been confiscated by the British Government under wartime legislation.

The President also said that the Government would invite an independent third party of stature to advise on the form of the claims procedure. In view of the difficulty of the task, and its potentially unattractive nature, she believes that an approach would be better received if it came with the Prime Minister's authority.

We have consulted Lord Janner and the Holocaust Education Trust. Their preferred candidate, supported by Lord Clinton-Davis and Lord Haskell is:

**Lord Archer of Sandwell**, aged 71, Solicitor-General between 1974 and 1979, who is greatly respected in the Jewish community, and spoke in the recent House of Lords debate on enemy property

We believe that a legal background would be helpful, given the skills that will be needed in refining criteria and perhaps subsequently advising or deciding on difficult cases. Should Lord Archer be unable to take on this task, the

dti

Department of Trade and Industry



UK Presidency of the  
European Union

Lord Chancellor's Department has supplied the names of two former judges who might be approached:

**Sir John Knox**, aged 73, a retired High Court (Chancery) Judge

**Sir Christopher Slade**, aged 70, a former Lord Justice of Appeal

We can also put forward a senior legal figure outside the judicial field:

**Sir David Calcutt**, aged 67, currently chairman of the City Panel on Takeovers and Mergers, a distinguished lawyer and widely experienced in consultative work, though the range of his commitments may make him reluctant to take on another

I attach a speaking note, and a draft of possible terms of reference, which we imagine anybody considering taking this job would want an early sight of.

I am copying this letter and attachments to John Grant (FCO), Paul Williams (HMT), Rupert Huxter and Jan Polley (Cabinet Office).

yours  
Anthony

ANTONY PHILLIPSON  
Private Secretary

## ENEMY PROPERTY : TRUSTED THIRD PARTY

### Speaking Note

- There is an important and delicate job to be done, which I hope you will consider
- The issue is the property seized by the British Government at the outset of the War, some of which belonged to victims of Nazi persecution:
  - The Government has accepted the general principle that confiscated assets placed in the UK by victims of Nazi persecution should be returned to them by the UK, where practicable and where claims can be validated
  - On April 3 Margaret Beckett made available a history of the issue prepared by the Foreign Office historians, announced that we would establish a claims procedure, and said that we were prepared to make an initial £2 million available
- Margaret Beckett also announced that we would approach a suitable independent individual to:
  - provide an independent assessment of the report
  - advise on the form of the scheme the Government should adopt, following consultation with all interested parties
- I would very much appreciate it if you would take this on.
- This is not an easy task:
  - it will be difficult to establish criteria for restitution which ensure that victims of Nazi persecution are treated with sympathy, while ensuring that claims are properly validated
  - Government records are incomplete. But we are committed to the principle that confiscated assets placed in the UK by victims of Nazi persecution should be returned to them by the UK, where practicable and where claims can be validated. We need good advice on how to set up a claims procedure which meets the standards expected when spending public money
- All this needs to be done as a matter of some urgency. I can provide you with draft terms of reference which leave the timescale open, but Holocaust survivors will expect an early solution
- You will have your own ideas on how you would like to go about this. We will of course provide suitable assistance via DTI

DRAFT

## CLAIMS PROCEDURE: INDEPENDENT REVIEW

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

In the light of the decision of the President of the Board of Trade to establish a procedure for considering claims from individuals in respect of property confiscated by HM Government under Trading with the Enemy Legislation during the 1939-45 war:-

- (1) to provide an assessment of the FCO historians' report on the treatment of enemy property during and after the Second World War;
- (2) taking into account the general principle that confiscated assets placed in the UK by victims of Nazi persecution should be returned to them by the UK where practicable and where claims can be validated, and following consultation with representatives of HM Government and interested parties, to recommend to the President a scheme for determining claims (including recommendations as to the person or body to operate the scheme) by [ ] 1998;
- (3) to give to the persons administering the scheme such assistance as they may require for the purpose of enabling them to carry out their functions.



**CONFIDENTIAL**



**CONFIDENTIAL**