

This is the official submission for the institution of the United Kingdom National Defence Medal  
It supersedes all other submissions which should be destroyed

**SUBMISSION FOR THE INSTITUTION  
OF THE  
UNITED KINGDOM  
NATIONAL DEFENCE MEDAL**



**UK NDM/504/05/12 – 3 MAY 2012**

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## **SUBMISSION FOR THE INSTITUTION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM NATIONAL DEFENCE MEDAL**

### **1 Executive Summary**

The submission for the institution of the UK National Defence Medal (NDM) explains the unique nature of employment in the Armed Forces; highlights why former servicemen and women consider their service, in keeping the nation safe and secure, has been ignored through the absence of medallic recognition and outlines the background to the NDM campaign.

It describes the commitment by the Coalition Government to a review of the medal rules, which have been assessed as contributing to the inconsistency and injustice of medallic recognition; it also draws attention to the subsequent discredited MoD medal review and comments on the remit of the fresh medal review now underway.

A case for the institution of the NDM is made, recognising the risk and rigour of daily service life; describes the absence of medallic recognition of those involved in significant events such as the Cold War, Berlin Airlift, Nuclear Testing, National Service and Republican Extremism; and highlights the anomalies surrounding the award of Long Service, Coronation and Jubilee medals to Armed Forces personnel.

Attention is drawn to the wide spectrum of support for the NDM; it points to National Defence Medals already awarded by Her Majesty the Queen to Australian and New Zealand Armed Forces and their veterans; and criticises the failure of successive UK Governments to make similar recommendations to Her Majesty for the institution of a UK Defence Medal. The NDM submission does not attempt to determine eligibility criteria for the medal, leaving that to be addressed by a working group. However, the validity of the MoD's estimate of costs for the medal and its administration are questioned with alternative assessments provided.

Finally, it concludes that there is substantial evidence to support the institution of the NDM; recommending the medal is awarded in ceremonies up and down the country in time for it to be worn at the November 2012 Remembrance Day Parades.

## **2 Background**

### **2.1 A Unique Form of Employment**

A citizen, on joining the Armed Forces, takes the oath or affirmation of allegiance to the Sovereign. By doing so they accept that at any time in their service, they may be required to risk their life in keeping the Nation and its interests safe and secure. Consequently, there is no normal way of life for those in the Armed Forces and it is a unique form of employment. As such the Government, on behalf of the Nation, have a responsibility to ensure those who serve or have served and their families are properly cared for, treated with respect and with dignity. Symbolic in this military covenant is appropriate medallic recognition.

### **2.2 Service to the Nation Ignored**

The MoD continually assure the veteran community that the Government and the Nation as a whole hold the professionalism, courage and contribution of all of those who serve, and have served in the Armed Forces in the highest regard. However, despite this assurance, over the past 67 years, many thousands of veterans believe the service they have given to the Nation has been completely ignored and that they have been the victims of inconsistency and injustice in respect of medallic recognition. Submissions for medallic recognition from campaign groups such as the Berlin Airlift, the Yangtze Incident, National Service, Korea Post Armistice, Nuclear Testing, Cold War veterans, and many more besides have all been turned down or ignored by either the MoD or the Committee for Honours, Decorations and Medals (HD Committee) on behalf of successive governments.

### **2.3 The National Defence Medal Campaign**

Since the ending of the Second World War, there has been a failure of successive governments, to positively tackle the myriad of medallic submissions by campaign groups, and a failure to address the inconsistency and injustice of medallic recognition, which has been experienced by those who have served in the Armed Forces. As each year went by, the activities for recognition from the various medal campaign groups dwindled, as activists got fewer due to old age, illness or in many cases died. For example, the youngest of those campaigning for recognition of the Berlin Airlift are now in their 80s. Consequently, in 2007, the NDM

campaign was first launched with support of these groups. Its intention was to make one last concerted attempt at achieving recognition of their service, through the institution by Royal Warrant, of a medal awarded by Her Majesty The Queen.

In June 2009 the campaign activists delivered a written submission for the NDM to the Ministry of Defence (MoD). Within three months the bid for the medal had been unceremoniously dismissed by the MoD who refused to meet with veterans to discuss the medal, declaring the matter closed.

At a briefing, attended by MPs and Lords of the main political parties, the NDM campaign was re-launched in the autumn of 2009. As a direct result of NDM campaigning an 'Early Day Motion' was placed before Parliament calling for the award of the medal, it achieved almost 200 signatures; support from veteran icons such as Dame Vera Lynn soon followed together with support from a myriad of service organisations; political parties also officially supported the institution of the medal within their policies. As a consequence of campaigning by veterans and in particular the NDM campaign, a myriad of commitments were made to convene a medal review.

## **2.4 Commitment to a Medal Review**

In June 2008, a Conservative shadow defence minister, wrote<sup>1</sup> on behalf of the then shadow Defence Secretary, Dr Liam Fox MP:

*'We will revise the HD Committee on entering office and instruct the new Committee to conduct a review of all outstanding claims'*

The leader of the opposition, the Rt Hon David Cameron MP, now Prime Minister, subsequently commissioned a study in 2008 into what had been termed the broken military covenant. Inter alia the study highlighted concerns surrounding medallic recognition of those who had served and who serve in the Armed Forces, concluding that<sup>2</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup> Dr Murrison's response dated 7 June 2008 to Mr Farrar, Korea Post Armistice campaign.

<sup>2</sup> Military Covenant Commission report dated 23 September 2008, page 7

*'A future Conservative Government should review the structure, membership and terms of reference of the HD Committee<sup>3</sup>. The reconstituted HD Committee should then review outstanding claims that will 'draw a line in the sand.'*

A commitment was subsequently made in the Conservative Party General Election manifesto of 2010<sup>4</sup>, acknowledging the inconsistency of medallic recognition and that they would review the HD Committee, as well as the rules governing the awarding of medals and as part of a review, all outstanding medal cases, would be examined.

With strong support for the medal review from both the Conservative Party and the Liberal Democrat Party, it was understandable that the Coalition Government, in May 2010, would include, within its 'Programme for Government', a commitment to carry out a review of the rules governing the award of medals. The commitment that a review of the rules governing the award of medals, as part of the government's decision to rebuild the Military Covenant was confirmed in the Armed Forces Covenant document<sup>5</sup>, launched in early 2011 by the then Defence Secretary, the Rt Hon Dr Liam Fox MP. This was further reiterated in a letter by Dr Fox to one of his constituents<sup>6</sup>, a National Service veteran.

The common theme running throughout all of these commitments was explicit, review the HD Committee, review the rules governing the award of medals and then review all outstanding medal cases.

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<sup>3</sup> The HD Committee is the principal government body concerned with honours, awards and medals. The Committee is chaired by the Cabinet Secretary, other members are: The Private Secretary to the Queen, Permanent Secretary of the Prime Minister's office, **Permanent Secretary MoD, Defences Services Secretary MoD**, Permanent Secretary FCO, Permanent Secretary Home Office, Secretary of the Central Chancery of Orders of Knighthood, Head of Honours and Appointments Secretariat and Ceremonial Officer of the Cabinet Office (Secretary). The committee rarely meets and carries out its business in secret and by email.

<sup>4</sup> A New Covenant for the Armed Forces dated 21 April 2010, page 28

<sup>5</sup> The Armed Forces Covenant Today and Tomorrow - 2011 page 58

<sup>6</sup> D/S of S/LF MC02470/2011 dated 16 May 2011

## 2.5 The 2010 MoD Medal Review

By the time the Defence Secretary's commitment to carry out the Medal Review was being published in the Armed Forces Covenant document, information came to light that the review had already been completed. A response<sup>7</sup> to a Freedom of Information Act request also identified that the remit of the review had been lost in translation. The Veterans Minister had directed<sup>8</sup> that the medal review should:

*'Carry out a review of the rules governing the award of military medals **to ensure they are being appropriately applied** in relation to current medal decisions. In addition to **review the application of these rules** in relation to medallic recognition for past service.'*

The Minister's direction was contrary to the Military Covenant Commission report recommendations, contrary to the Conservative Party election commitment and contrary to the Coalition Government's commitment, all of which were understood to have a common objective of:

- Reviewing the HD Committee, which the MoD could not do, it could only be carried out by the Cabinet Office;
- Reviewing the rules governing the award of medals considered to have been responsible for the inconsistency and injustice surrounding medallic recognition, this assumed a revision of the rules;
- Review of all outstanding medal claims, which was envisaged, would be carried out against revised rules.

Problems with the 2010 medal review were not limited to just the failure to meet the Government's commitment. The MoD had failed to promulgate the terms of reference for the review<sup>9</sup>; failed to promulgate the start and finish dates of the review; inexplicably failed to include groups of medals such as those for long service; failed to review the way the MoD had allocated the award of Coronation

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<sup>7</sup> MoD reply dated 16 March 2011 to FOI 17-02-2011-114317-004.

<sup>8</sup> Review of Military Medallic Recognition – Terms of Reference dated 19 November 2010, only obtained as a result of a FOI Act request

<sup>9</sup> Email response from John Glen MP dated 13 Dec 2010 to a constituent who requested details of the MoD Medal Review and what its terms of reference were, 'I have hunted for the answers to the questions you raise but unfortunately the information does not seem to be in the public domain'.

and Jubilee medals, responsible for significant inconsistency and injustice; failed to consult with medal campaign groups; used out of date rules or misapplied rules governing the award of medals to make decisions<sup>10</sup>; and abrogated totally the government's commitment to transparency and openness. In addition, information, refused by the MoD in respect of a Freedom of Information Act request, but released on appeal<sup>11</sup>, identified the review had been a desk based, paper exercise. In a little over two weeks<sup>12</sup>, it had rejected or totally disregarded all outstanding claims for medallic recognition stretching over 65 years, affecting millions of former service personnel and without speaking to a single veteran.

The Defence Secretary signed off the final medal review report on 16 February 2011<sup>13</sup>: It was then passed to the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister for endorsement but rejected by both, as there had been a total failure to consult with veterans; the report was down graded to a draft. On 25 May 2011, MoD circulated to medal campaign groups, the part of the review report findings specific to their submission for comment by the end of June. This appeared in conflict with an HD Committee document, obtained later under a Freedom of Information Act request, which showed that the Committee, in concert with the MoD were actively involved in preparing a Written Ministerial Statement together with an announcement on the final review to be made public in late May<sup>14</sup>.

The various campaign groups submitted comments on the review findings they had not been involved in and totally disagreed with. They received no feedback and no further updates on the review from MoD, until letters dated 29 September

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<sup>10</sup> **The Five Year Rule**, introduced in 1946 by George VI, stated no gallantry awards would be considered after 1950 (i.e after five years). The rule has subsequently been used to turn down medallic submissions that have nothing to do with gallantry awards. The Cabinet Office (who hold the HD files) letter FOI 315136 dated 11 July 2011, released in response to a Freedom of Information Act request, confirmed the rule **has not been** officially redefined, amended or extended post 1950 to cover **all medals** awarded to the Armed Forces post WW2.

<sup>11</sup> Independent internal MoD review D/CIO/3/18/1/565 dated 7 Sep 2011 as a result of a complaint about the failure to provide information in respect of an FOI request.

<sup>12</sup> DCDS PERS-SPOO-ACDS DS SEC (Murray, David AVM) dated 19 November 2010 1300

<sup>13</sup> On 16 Feb 2011, Secretary of State for Defence, Rt Hon Dr Liam Fox informed the House the military medal review had been completed, he had signed off the report, which would be published and discussed in the House, before Easter (2011) HC Deb 16 Feb 2011, c1037

<sup>14</sup> Cabinet Office Honours and Appointment Secretariat memo 03 May 2011 15:16 – HD7934v3

2011<sup>15</sup> arrived thanking campaign groups for their comments; notifying them the review was close to completion; that the report was awaiting endorsement, and would be published in the near future.

The MoD medal review had been in total contradiction to the personal commitment the Rt Hon David Cameron MP had provided to NDM veterans, in a letter to the Rt Hon James Arbuthnot<sup>16</sup>, when he wrote:

*'We have stated that a future Conservative Government would review the rules set out by the HD Committee governing the award of medals. During this review, all medal issues will be considered and rules will be drafted to ensure that all medal decisions are thought through and applied consistently.'*

Leaders of the active medal campaign groups (Yangtze Incident, British Nuclear Test Veterans Association, British Cold War Veterans, National Service Veterans Association, Korea Post Armistice Veterans, National Malaya and Borneo Veterans Association and the UK National Defence Medal), representing the veteran community at large, wrote a joint letter, dated 27 October 2011, to the Secretary of State for Defence, Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP. They raised their concerns about the whole medal review process and modus operandi, which they had found utterly disappointing<sup>17</sup>. But also expressed their view that they continued to have confidence, and hope, in the commitment by the Coalition Government to address outstanding medal issues in an open and transparent way<sup>18</sup>. Unbeknown to the veteran groups, just hours before their joint letter was being received by MoD; Lord Astor of Hever, a defence Minister, during a late evening debate on the Armed Forces Bill<sup>19</sup>, made the following statement in the House of Lords:

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<sup>15</sup> Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans MSU 4/4/2/12/cc dated 29 Sep 2011

<sup>16</sup> RCDC dated Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2010

<sup>17</sup> Secretary of State for Defence, Rt Hon Dr Liam Fox, appears to have been misled. In a letter to a constituent D/S of S/LF MC02696/2011 dated 20 June 2011 he stated, 'the Terms of Reference for the Review have been set within the pledge identified in the Coalition's Programme for Government and the review has been conducted with due diligence and propriety.'

<sup>18</sup> Joint Letter from the leaders of various medal campaign groups to Secretary of State for Defence the Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP dated 27 October 2011

<sup>19</sup> Lords Hansard text for 26 Oct 2011, 1022 pm column 857

*'I have consulted with ministerial colleagues, including the Deputy Prime Minister<sup>20</sup>, who have agreed that there should be a fresh review of the rules which guide the HD Committee in making its recommendations to Her Majesty.'*

The veterans' confidence in the Coalition Government's commitment had not been ill placed.

## **2.6 A Fresh and Independent Medal Review**

The 2010 MoD medal review was flawed and its findings discredited. As a consequence, by November 2011, a year on from when the review first commenced, a decision was made that a fresh and independent review of the rules governing the award of medals should be carried out<sup>21</sup>. It would be sponsored by the Cabinet Office, led by an independent reviewer; with terms of reference in line with the Coalition Government's commitment; provide an opportunity for medal campaign groups to resubmit their respective medal claims; facilitate face to face discussions between the medal campaign groups and independent reviewer, and with an undertaking the whole process would be transparent.

Veteran medal campaign groups welcomed the notification. The reconstituted medal review would provide an opportunity, for the many justifiable medal bids, previously rejected or ignored by the previous flawed and discredited review, to be resubmitted and independently reviewed against updated medal rules/principles.

On 30 April 2012, the Prime Minister, the Rt Hon David Cameron MP announced an independent review<sup>22</sup> of the rules and principles governing the awarding of military medals would be carried out. Unfortunately, the review Terms of Reference excluded, yet again, the Long Service and Good Conduct medals, assumed to mean all medals for long service awarded in recognition of Service in the Armed Forces, and State medals awarded at specific periods in Her Majesty's reign such as the Coronation and Jubilee medals. This has raised questions in the veteran

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<sup>20</sup> The Deputy Prime Minister is both a strong supporter of the reconstituted medal review and also the institution of the NDM.

<sup>21</sup> Letter D/Min(DPWV)/AR MC05178/2011 from the Rt Hon Andrew Robathan MP to the Rt Hon Desmond Swayne MP

<sup>22</sup> Written Ministerial Statement 30 April 2012 Military Medals Review

community about the ability of the review to finally draw a 'line in the sand' in respect of medallic recognition. It was the criteria for the award of these medals, which was responsible for some of the inconsistency and injustice that the award of the NDM seeks to address.

### 3 The Case for the UK National Defence Medal

#### 3.1 Aim

The aim of the institution of the UK National Defence Medal is to provide medallic recognition of service, within specific criteria<sup>23</sup>, to Regular and Reserve service men and women and those who have served in the Armed Forces, since the ending of the Second World War.

#### 3.2 Recognition of Service

There are four categories of medals available to members of the UK Armed Forces:

- Medals for individual brave and meritorious service such as the Victoria Cross and Military Cross
- Medals for specific operational campaigns such as Northern Ireland, Iraq and Afghanistan
- Medals in recognition of periods of service in the Regular, Reserve and Cadet Forces
- Medals in recognition of service at specific times in Her Majesty's reign, such as the Coronation, Silver, Golden and Diamond Jubilees for which the MoD are responsible for determining the criteria for the award to the Armed Forces in consultation with the HD Committee.

It is clear from the latter two categories of medals that the institution of the NDM would not create a precedent in awarding a medal in recognition of service. Indeed, Joint Service Publication (JSP) 761 identifies a number of medals, which have been instituted within the Armed Forces in recognition of service during the past 60 years, **see Appendix One**. The Queen's Diamond Jubilee medal and the Pingat Jasa Malaysia (PJM) medal are the most recent medals to be awarded in recognition of service and have yet to be included in JSP 761.

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<sup>23</sup> A working group, composition of which has yet to be determined, should determine the criteria for the award of the UK National Defence Medal.

### **3.2.1 Risk and Rigour of Service Life**

The NDM is a new medal; it recognises service; it does not contravene any of what are now referred to as ‘the guiding principles’<sup>24</sup> for the institution of medals. Indeed, the only contravention appears to be of the MoD assertion that ‘medals are not awarded solely as a record of service’<sup>25</sup>, a misleading statement when considering Appendix One. As the NDM is not an operational campaign medal, it does not require the same high degree of risk to life and limb or exposure to arduous conditions.<sup>26</sup> However, the medal does recognise the day-to-day risk and rigour that perpetually pervades life as a member of the Armed Forces and it recognises combat operations for which no campaign medal may have been awarded. It also recognises the unique requirements of military service which are substantial and include a commitment of service to the crown; liability for operational service; being subject to military discipline and life style; acceptance of imposed constraints on employment conditions; and constraints on personal freedom.

### **3.2.2 Keeping the Nation and its Interests Safe and Secure**

In keeping the Nation and its interests safe and secure, conditions are particularly hazardous to service personnel when deployed to areas post the ending of conflicts and wars. Examples include: service in Europe<sup>27</sup>, Africa and Asia post World War Two; service in Korea post armistice; and mine clearance after the Falklands War; the list is endless. Inexplicably, successive governments have been reluctant to acknowledge the inherent risk and rigour of daily service life and the many situations, outside of those specifically designated as campaigns, in keeping the Nation and its interests safe and secure; yet every soldier, sailor, airman and marine has a story to tell. The NDM is a medal through which the Government and

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<sup>24</sup> The Five-Year Rule, the Double Medalling Rule or the Risk and Rigour Principle.

<sup>25</sup> Minister for Defence Personnel Welfare and Veterans letter D/Min(DPWV)AR MC00543/2011 dated 14 February 2011 to Mr Mark Hunter MP

<sup>26</sup> Not all who receive campaign medals are exposed to such conditions, the South Atlantic medal and the first Gulf War medal, there are others, were awarded to service personnel outside of the Theatre of Operations, in recognition of their service in a support roll. This is a further anomaly and inconsistency within the medal system.

<sup>27</sup> Active Service was deemed to have continued to exist in the British Army of the Rhine area in Germany post Second World War until May 1955

the Nation as a whole are able to express their appreciation and recognise the professionalism, courage and contribution of all those who serve and have served in the Armed Forces.

### **3.3 Inconsistency and Injustice of Medallic Recognition**

Research has identified, that since the ending of the Second World War in September 1945, there has been a distinct reluctance to openly review the rules governing the award of medals, relying instead on subjective interpretation of a number of rules and principles that are outdated, for decision making. Precedents have been created, which fail to stand up to close scrutiny, and have subsequently been the cause of considerable inconsistency and injustice in respect of medallic recognition of those who have served. However, before highlighting a number of significant events over the past decades for which medallic recognition has been rejected or ignored by successive governments, but which provide substantial supportive evidence as to why the institution of the NDM should be recommended; it is important to study the PJM medal scenario which recently added to the inconsistency permeating the decision making in medallic recognition of service.

#### **3.3.1 Pingat Jasa Malaysia**

The King and Government of Malaysia awarded the Pingat Jasa Malaysia medal to British and Commonwealth Forces who served in Malaysia during the Malayan Emergency and the Malaysian–Indonesian confrontation periods. As an exception to current medallic rules, the HD Committee recommended veterans be allowed to accept the medal, this was agreed by Her Majesty the Queen<sup>28</sup>. Permission was not however recommended for the PJM to be worn by veterans as the majority had previously been awarded the British General Service Medal (GSM) for their campaign service in the region and this would contravene the Double Medalling Rule.<sup>29</sup> However, there was a period of time, between 1960 and 1962 and from mid-1965 onwards when the ‘risk and rigour’<sup>30</sup> was not deemed sufficient within

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<sup>28</sup> Her Majesty has also given approval for other foreign medals to be accepted but not worn, such as the Saudi Arabia and the Kuwait medals for the first Gulf War.

<sup>29</sup> Double Medalling Rule whereby an individual may not be awarded more than one medal in recognition of the same period of military service

<sup>30</sup> The Risk and Rigour Principle requires there should be a significant degree of risk to life and limb and deployed personnel will be exposed to arduous conditions in excess of what might normally be expected

the rules by the MoD to recommend the award of the GSM to British troops stationed in the area.

Malaya and Borneo veterans put forward a submission to the 2010 Medal Review for the PJM to be worn. Like all other medallic submissions, the MoD 'paper based' review turned the submission down and circulated its decision in late May 2011. However, due to support from a number of Peers in the House of Lords and MPs in the Commons during the debate on the Armed Forces Bill in October 2011, the Medal Review decision was over turned at almost the same time as the MoD medal review report was 'pulled' by Government. Within weeks the HD Committee made an exception to its rules, in time for the November 2011 Remembrance Day parades, thereby enabling the foreign medal to be officially worn<sup>31</sup>.

The PJM is not a campaign medal; it is a medal, which recognises service. The recent HD Committee decision has meant that a number of veterans, who served Queen and country and left the Armed Forces without any UK medallic recognition, are now able to wear a Foreign Government's medal<sup>32</sup> in recognition of their service. It is the right decision but creates yet another anomaly in the current medal system, specifically in respect of medallic recognition of service, which the following events portray and the institution of the NDM would rectify.

### **3.3.2 The Cold War**

The Cold War saw a formidable threat to Western society from the Soviet Union and countries of the Warsaw Pact. Real guns, real enemy and very real threat involving strategic and tactical nuclear weapons. The freedom experienced today and very way of life, is due in no small part, to the dedication and professionalism of those who served during the Cold War era to deter an invasion. A Freedom of Information Act<sup>33</sup> request identified 4,889 service personnel had died on duty between 1948 and 1959; MoD was not able to confirm how many had been in North West Europe. However, the Ministry did identify 833 service men and women died on duty in North West Europe during the Cold War between 1960 and

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<sup>31</sup> Statement by Lord Astor House Lords 26 October 2011 Hansard column 857

<sup>32</sup> The reason put forward by the MoD is because the PJM is awarded by a Commonwealth country

<sup>33</sup> DASA FOI Act reply PF29-12-2008-134812-022 dated 28 January 2009

1989; statistics for those discharged as a result of injuries sustained whilst deployed in this confrontation are not available. The reason given by MoD was:

*'Information on casualties prior to 2003 is not held centrally and has not been compiled as under the FOI Act 2000 we are not obliged to compile new information'.*

Failure by Government to honour the achievement of those deployed in the Cold War through medallic recognition has led to a commercial organisation, Award Productions Limited, producing a Cold War medal. This commemorative medal has been widely purchased and is worn by Cold War veterans in the absence of an official medal awarded by Her Majesty.<sup>34</sup>

The British Cold War Veterans were disappointed at being excluded from the MoD the 2010 Medal Review<sup>35</sup> and are still actively pursuing medallic recognition for the Cold War. However, they strongly support the case for the institution of the NDM.

### **3.3.3 Berlin Airlift**

One of the most critical situations of the Cold War was the Berlin Airlift. Royal Air Force personnel and those from allied air forces worked tirelessly, in treacherous conditions, to keep West Berlin alive and its citizens fed, watered and warm whilst under siege during the Berlin Blockade of 1948–49. Failure would have had far reaching implications, not only for Berlin but also for the conduct and outcome of the Cold War, which was to continue for over 40 more years. Thirty-nine service personnel of the UK and Commonwealth Air Forces died in this operation.

At the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to mark the ending of the airlift<sup>36</sup>, the Labour Government Veterans Minister, Kevan Jones MP said,

*" The airlift veterans deserve our respect and pride. They truly showed Britain at its best."*

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<sup>34</sup> The medal is available at a cost of £39.50 plus £4.00 p&p to all who served in the Cold War from 1945 to 1991, their next of kin or direct dependents. A percentage from sales is donated by Award Productions Limited to the National Cold War Exhibition at the RAF Museum in Cosford.

<sup>35</sup> BCWV letter to Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (Personnel) Secretariat dated 12 August 2011.

<sup>36</sup> Held at the National Memorial Arboretum Staffordshire on Saturday 26 September 2009

This is an example of where the 'Risk and Rigour Principle' was met by those who served yet was not honoured by medallic recognition. Many of these 'airlift' veterans are resigned to the fact the best they can hope for now is medallic recognition through the institution of the NDM.

### **3.3.4 Nuclear Testing**

Probably the most scandalous example of ill treatment of our service personnel in the Cold War was in regards to nuclear weapon testing. Twenty eight thousand members of the UK Armed Forces were used as 'guinea pigs' in a series of nuclear tests conducted in Australia and the Pacific Ocean area. None had protective clothing, and were subjected to high levels of radiation. Less than 3,000 of these veterans are still alive today<sup>37</sup> and it is assessed that 30% of those deceased, died in their 50s of cancers. Many were National Servicemen and like many hundreds of thousands of those who served since the Second World War, their calls for medallic recognition, along with those who were used for chemical and biological experimentation at Porton Down, have been ignored.

In 2002, Her Majesty The Queen as Queen of New Zealand, on the advice of Her New Zealand Ministers, awarded the NZ Special Service Medal, to those who participated in any atmospheric nuclear test between 1956 and 1973. However, the 2010 MoD medal review concluded that:

*'It would be divisive to offer Service personnel a medal simply for being involved in this 'project' when those who have undertaken other special duties would be excluded from receiving any award.'*

Members of the Nuclear Testing Medal campaign still hope for specific recognition, however they accept that medallic recognition may only come in the form of the National Defence Medal, which they strongly support.

### **3.3.5 National Service – Post Second World War**

The safety and security of the Nation, together with its interests overseas, during a significant part of the Cold War, was achieved through National Service. Over two

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<sup>37</sup> The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Defence, Nuclear Test Veterans (Compensation) debate, Hansard 4 December 202, Column 260WH

million young men, between the age of 18 and 25, were compelled under an Act of Parliament to serve in the Armed Forces for up to two years with a further four years reserve service liability. They were taken away from their homes, their families and their normal way of life; they did not volunteer.

Many of those called up for National Service saw active service in the Korean War; in Cyprus during the EOKA crisis or other post war campaigns and were entitled to the specific campaign medals awarded by the Crown. However, many of those deployed to Korea post the armistice experienced hazardous conditions but were denied recognition and in the case of the EOKA crisis failed to fulfil the extraordinary time requirements of 120 days for medallic recognition. National Servicemen also experienced other hazardous duties outside of operational theatres for which no medals were awarded. This lack of medallic recognition, despite their service at the time being so important to the safety and security of the Nation, is a grave injustice. The reason provided by the MoD, on behalf of successive governments, for not recommending the award of a National Service medal has been similar to that expressed by the current Coalition Government Defence Minister responsible for Veterans, the Rt Hon Andrew Robathan MP:

*'It would be divisive and I have to say curious, to offer national servicemen a medal simply for being conscripted, when those who volunteered for service would be excluded from receiving the same award.'*<sup>38</sup>

Scores of former National Servicemen are now dead and the remainder are in their seventies and eighties. They and their next of kin still wait in hope for the official medallic recognition by Her Majesty the Queen that has so far eluded them. However, the National Service Veterans Association (NSVA) has now ceased to campaign for recognition through the award of a National Service Medal. Instead, those who were conscripted have now chosen to fully support the institution of the NDM. The award of the defence medal provides the last opportunity for this Coalition Government to address the past failures of successive governments to recognise those who completed National Service.

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<sup>38</sup> NDM debate Westminster Hall 8 February 2011

### 3.3.6 The Threat from Republican Extremism

There is still quite a high national awareness of the Northern Ireland campaign against the IRA but many have forgotten that for a number of years, not only were members of the Armed Forces considered legitimate targets of the war outside of Northern Ireland but so were their families. Republican extremism on the streets of the UK main land and in Germany was responsible for the murder of over fifty servicemen and a number of service wives and children.

During this time, there was no normal way of life for service personnel or their families and certainly no safe haven, indeed the threat was so severe that service personnel did not wear uniform outside of barracks; the risk of death or injury was an ever present reality. Checking under their cars for booby trap bombs became a daily routine, which they ignored at their peril. The Commandant General of the Royal Marines was blown up in his car in London and lost a leg; nine soldiers were blown up in their barracks in Duisberg; ten Royal Marine bandsmen killed and 20 more injured when the Military School of Music was blown up in Deal; a coach crowded with soldiers and their families was blown up on the M62 whilst returning to their barracks after a weekend away – eleven dead including a Corporal, his wife and their two children aged five and two; a Colchester based Staff Sergeant lost both legs when he was blown up in his car; a Colonel was shot in Bielefeld; an Army Corporal shot at a set of traffic lights in Munster and a RAF Corporal and his four-month-old baby shot and killed at a petrol station in Wildenwrath. The list goes on and on of those killed and injured.

In a letter<sup>39</sup> to the Rt Hon Denis MacShane MP, the then Secretary of State for Defence the Rt Hon Dr Liam Fox MP wrote,

*‘While I appreciate these callous acts may not result in the award of a medal due to these casualties not necessarily serving on operations, they were murdered as a result of terrorist action and as a result their next of kin are eligible to receive the Elizabeth Cross as a symbol of the nation’s respect for their sacrifice.’*

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<sup>39</sup> Secretary of State for Defence ltr D/S of S/LF MC05426/2010 dated 30 December 2010

There was no recognition for those who were injured so badly they had to leave the Service. This situation provides a stark reality check of the daily risks and rigour of service life, which exist as a direct result of taking the oath or affirmation of allegiance to serve. The NDM is not a medal for 'just turning up' or a medal to be awarded, 'solely as a record of service'; it is a medal that recognises what service to the Crown entails.

### **3.3.7 Long Service Medals**

Inexplicably, the MoD has continually been reluctant to review the long service medals. They were specifically excluded from the 2010 review at the direction of the Veterans Minister and they have been excluded from the 'fresh review', presumably at the request of the MoD, without any explanation. This is despite comments made by medal campaign groups in the last review that such medals should be included. It is a situation, which would appear to be in contravention of the Coalition Government's commitment to review all outstanding medal cases.

Within the Regular, Reserve and Cadet Forces there are understandably differing criteria in respect of eligibility for the group of medals awarded for long service. However, there appears to be no logical explanation for much of these differing criteria, which have been responsible for much inconsistency and injustice in the military medal system over many years. For example, the Cadet Forces Medal (CFM) is awarded in recognition of 12 years effective service<sup>40</sup> as an officer or uniformed adult instructor with clasps available for additional periods of six years. All ranks in the Reserve Forces, including officers, qualify for the Volunteer Reserves Service Medal after only 270 actual days in uniform, spread over 10 years of non-operational service. Regular Armed Forces personnel are awarded the Long Service and Good Conduct medal; fifteen years (5,475 days) full time service is required to qualify for the medal, this was reduced from 18 qualifying years of service on 1 December 1977. However, Regular Army officers are excluded from receiving this medallic recognition regardless of how many years they may serve.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> A year of effective service for the Cadet medal is classed as 40 parade nights each of 2.5 to 3 hours, plus 15 days on an annual training camp.

<sup>41</sup> Queen's Regulations paragraphs 5.393 – 5.396 and 10.008 – 10.0011

There is little doubt the institution of the NDM would contribute considerably to alleviating some of the injustice suffered by veterans in respect of the award of the Long Service group of medals, especially if they continue to be excluded from medal reviews, which does seem to be contrary to the Government's commitment.

### **3.3.8 Coronation and Jubilee Medals**

Medals in recognition of service are also awarded at particular times in a Monarch's reign such as Her Majesty's coronation and specific jubilees. These are categorised as State medals and appear to have been excluded from the reconstituted medal review. This would appear to be contrary to the commitments made to review of all outstanding medal claims in rebuilding the Military Covenant. The overarching criteria is set by the HD Committee but the criteria for the award within the Armed Forces is determined by the MoD in consultation with the HD Committee. As they have been the cause of much inconsistency and injustice they have also contributed to the case for a generic medal in recognition of service.

A brief<sup>42</sup> to the Secretary of State for Defence, informed him that strict qualifying criteria existed for the Coronation and Jubilee medals; this is not the case. The award of the Coronation medal, Silver Jubilee medal (QSJM) and the Golden Jubilee medal (QGJM) within the Service community has resulted in significant inconsistency and injustice of medallic recognition. The Diamond Jubilee medal (QDJM) has continued the questionable way in which such medals have been awarded in the Armed Forces.

### **3.3.9 The Queen's Coronation and Silver Jubilee Medals.**

The Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (SPVA), a MoD Agency, identified that the practice up to 1977, which covered both the award of the Coronation and Silver Jubilee medals, was done on a quota basis and not on any eligibility criteria. UK authorities decided the total number of medals to be produced and then allocated a proportion to each of the Commonwealth countries and Crown dependencies. In the UK the available medals were then distributed among the various governmental departments. It is not known how many Coronation medals were issued to the Ministry of Defence for the Armed Forces but it is known that

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<sup>42</sup> An internal MoD loose minute dated 3 September 2009, obtained under the FOI Act, briefed the Secretary of State for Defence that, 'The only medals issued for simply having served in the Armed Forces are the Coronation and Jubilee medals for which there are strict qualifying criteria.'

anomalies did exist, for example, Service personnel deployed on the ground received the medal but many of those taking part in the air did not.

An economic crisis in the Labour Government in 1976 almost led to the 1977 QSJM being ditched to save money. It was however awarded but in very limited numbers. Only 9,000 medals were eventually allocated in the quota system to the complete Regular and Reserve Armed Forces. The limited number of QSJMs meant that in the Army for example, Major units, 500 and above personnel, received six medals and Minor independent units, less than 500 personnel, received one or two. There were no criteria for eligibility; it was left to the discretion of Commanding Officers as to who received the medal<sup>43</sup>. This resulted in substantial injustice to those serving at the time and was to fuel the inconsistency in the way this group of medals have been awarded to the present day. In addition, secret Government papers released to the National Archives under the 30 year rule, revealed the opinion of the medal committee at the time to be that, '*the general issue of medals was in this day and age no longer appropriate*'.<sup>44</sup> If this is also an opinion held by the HD Committee, it might explain the paucity of medallic recognition of service in the Armed Forces, as the two senior appointments within the MoD responsible for such recognition are also members of the HD Committee.

SPVA confirmed a lack of regulations for the award of both the Coronation medal and the QSJM<sup>45</sup> and only those who received the medal at the time from the MoD Medal Office should wear it. Surprisingly, in the same response, SPVA appeared to encourage the purchase of the medals by indicating that Award Productions Limited now issue these medals and provided their address.<sup>46</sup> Significant injustice due to a reduced quota being set through lack of finance; no qualifying criteria determined; and secretive medal committee opinions now exposed, provide an opportunity for the Independent Reviewer to consider recommending the

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<sup>43</sup> JPAC Enquiry Centre SPAV MoD UK email Friday 13 January 2012, 0902

<sup>44</sup> 'The battle for the Jubilee medal' 1976 government papers by Dominic Casciani – [news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk\\_politics/6212949.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/6212949.stm)

<sup>45</sup> JPAC Enquiry Centre SPVA MoD UK email Thursday 12 January 2012, 1718

<sup>46</sup> The cost of the Coronation Medal and the QSJM from this commercial organisation is £32.50 each plus p&p - Award Productions Limited, March 2012 catalogue

retrospective award of both the Coronation and Silver Jubilee medals. These anomalies provide further evidence for justification of the institution of the NDM.

### **3.3.10 The Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal.**

The Golden Jubilee was considered an important milestone in Her Majesty's reign and for the Nation. Therefore it was a surprise to many former servicemen and women that although the medal was not awarded on a quota basis, it had very limiting eligibility criteria attached to it; consequently its award was surrounded by controversy. Regular Service personnel with five Calendar years (a total of 1826 days) service and Volunteer Reserve Forces who had completed five annual bounty earning training years (a total of 135 days) on or prior to 6 February 2002 qualified for the medal. However, former Regular serving officers, still retained as unpaid reserves on the Regular Army Reserve of Officers roll and liable for call up, were denied the medal<sup>47</sup> as were all other veterans even though many fulfilled the criteria of five or more years service during Her Majesty's reign.

The award of the QGJM added to the inconsistency and injustice of medallic recognition of those who had served and serve in the Armed Forces. Regardless of the Coalition Government's commitment in October/November 2011 to reconstitute the medal review, the MoD were still indicating in letters to veterans as late as the 24 January 2012<sup>48</sup> that the rules would not be reviewed:

*'I understand that there remains disappointment from those who were serving at the time of The Queen's Coronation and The Queen's Silver Jubilee, who did not receive the associated commemorative medals, and latterly The Queen's Golden Jubilee commemorative medal. However, there are strict rules relating to the retrospective issue of medals and there are currently no grounds to revisit the regulations.'*

### **3.3.11 The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal**

The Diamond Jubilee represents 60 years of Her Majesty's reign. A unique occasion and one that is unlikely to be mirrored again by any other monarch in

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<sup>47</sup> SPVA ministry of Defence Medal Office letter SPVA/MODMO/HISTORIC/ARMY/1769341 dated 2 December 2011

<sup>48</sup> DCDS (Pers) Sec ltr BAU00321/2011 dated 24 January 2012 to Mr J Ireland

this century and possibly the next. On 30 June 2011, in response to the news of the award of the Diamond Jubilee medal to the Armed Forces<sup>49</sup>, the then Secretary of State for Defence, Rt Hon Dr Liam Fox MP said:

*'As Defence Secretary, I see the unique nature of the service our Armed Forces give their Queen and country every day.'*

And the Chief of the Defence Staff, General Sir David Richards stated:

*'This medal recognises the important and difficult job our Armed Forces have carried out defending our nation and its interests, both at home and abroad, and it is a fitting tribute to their dedication and professionalism.'*

However, controversy already surrounds the award of the QDJM, which is compounding further the injustice of medallic recognition of those who have served Her Majesty. As far as the Armed Forces are concerned, the eligibility criteria for the medal is the completion of a minimum of five years service and have still been serving, in either the Regular or Reserve forces, on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2012. However, despite the warm words of appreciation by the Defence Secretary and CDS in respect of those who have defended our nation and its interests; the reality is, the medal has been denied to the many thousands of veterans who have served for lengthy periods of time during Her Majesty's 60 years reign, and to those who are currently serving in both the Regular and Reserve Armed Forces with less than five years service, regardless of their operational deployments.<sup>50</sup>

A window of opportunity had presented itself for the Coalition Government and MoD to significantly ease the frustrations surrounding the lack of medallic recognition, spanning the past six decades, by awarding the QDJM to all those who have served in the Armed Forces during Her Majesty's reign. This opportunity was not taken, conceivably because the QDJM was also awarded to those outside of the Armed Forces. The institution of the NDM provides one further chance for the government, probably its last, to alleviate the inconsistency and injustice experienced by so many veterans; not only in respect of the Coronation and

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<sup>49</sup> MoD website, Defence News dated 30 June 2011

<sup>50</sup> The QDJM is now on sale by Award Productions Ltd, for those who wish to purchase it, at a cost of £32.00.

Jubilee medals but the overall failure of medallic recognition of service. The award of the defence medal would enable that proverbial 'line in the sand' to be drawn and appears to be in full accord with the recent sentiments expressed, by both the Defence Secretary and CDS, in respect of the recognition of service by the QDJM.

### **3.3.12 Case Study**

As frequently identified in this submission for the NDM, there has been significant inconsistency and injustice of medallic recognition of those who have served in the Armed Forces throughout the reign of Her Majesty. This is due to the failure of successive governments, to make the appropriate recommendations to the Sovereign. An example of the experience of many thousands of veterans is vividly portrayed in this case study of a former senior RAF officer and the comparison with a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO).

The RAF officer was a highly trained navigator of fast jets on the inner German Border during the Cold War and left as a Group Captain on redundancy after 30 years service. He received no medallic recognition for the Cold War; was not one of the few who were awarded the QSJM; his redundancy took place less than a year before the award of the QGJM but he did not receive this medal even though he had reserve liabilities covering the date of the award; and as a Regular Officer he was not eligible for the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. The former Group Captain does not attend Remembrance Day parades, as he has no medal in recognition of his service in the Armed Forces.

The Police Community Support Officer in a County Police Force completed five years service and was still serving on 6 February 2012; he is a member of a trades union and went on strike in the summer of 2011; he recently received the QDJM. The retired Group Captain, now a veteran, will not be awarded the QDJM, despite his 30 years service to the Nation in the reign of Her Majesty.

The comparison is not in anyway meant to be a criticism of the Government's decision to award the QDJM to PCSOs. It is however, intended to highlight the significant anomalies that portray why the 'line in the sand' needs to be drawn on what has become, over the decades, an extremely emotive issue for those who have served. A recommendation to Her Majesty, for the institution of the award of

the UK National Defence Medal, would help ameliorate the unsatisfactory situation which the Group Captain has experienced and that of many thousands of other veterans.

*'If the implementation of a National Defence Medal is agreed upon, it may well be the biggest step forward towards government honouring its promise to meet the commitments of the military covenant.<sup>51</sup>'*

### **3.3.13 The Service of Last Resort**

The Armed Forces, in addition to their combat, peace making and peace keeping roles, are the service of last resort with a 'can do' culture. Used to establish and assist in the operation of prisons, act as an auxiliary fire service or more recently be prepared to provide tanker drivers to deliver fuel during industrial disputes; provide an additional emergency service in extreme weather conditions such as snow, floods, and in dealing with the threat to communities from outbreaks of contagious animal diseases. The demands are endless and often come when the Services are already over stretched due to operational commitments.

Consequently, the impact on a service man or woman is significant and wide-ranging: loss of leave; extended working hours; atrocious working and living conditions; disruption to family and personal life; and invariably carrying out the work of those on strike who are on substantially greater remuneration or working alongside non service personnel who are in receipt of additional financial rewards. That is what the Armed Forces do, why it can always be relied upon, why it is a unique occupation, why it is the service of last resort and why those who serve in it are worthy of medallic recognition in the form of the UK National Defence Medal.

## **4 Support for the NDM**

### **4.1 Wide Spectrum**

There is a substantial and wide spectrum of support for the institution of the UK National Defence Medal to address the failure of past medallic recognition. An Early Day Motion (EDM 327), placed down by former Lt Col Michael Mates MP in the last Parliament, received impressive cross party support of 189 signatures of

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<sup>51</sup> Letter Will139/1 dated 5 August 2011 from Mr Don Foster MP to a retired Royal Naval Commodore

MPs with many more declaring their full support. In the current Parliament the medal is supported by a substantial number of MPs in the Coalition Government, including Cabinet Ministers and many Labour Party Members of Parliament. The award of the NDM is also the official party policy of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) and that of the Liberal Democrat Party. In addition, a number of Lords and other public dignitaries and celebrities together with veteran icons such as Dame Vera Lynn support the defence medal as do a number of serving and former serving senior officers of the Armed Forces. It is also supported by many service organisations throughout the UK, representing tens of thousands of veterans.

## 4.2 The Royal British Legion

The official policy of the Royal British Legion (RBL) is that although they provide information on medals, their welfare focus means they do not campaign on medal issues.<sup>52</sup> This position was further confirmed in a letter from the RBL National Chairman on 13 June 2011<sup>53</sup>:

*Our campaigns Committee, which I chair, met last week. The Committee renewed its decision that the Legion should not campaign on medal issues. It is therefore, not for us to take a position either on the NDM or a Medal Review.*

Despite this policy, many RBL branches and individual RBL members have pledged support for the institution of the NDM. Worthy of note is that the Australian equivalent of the RBL strongly support the institution of the UK NDM<sup>54</sup>.

It is however, disappointing that a number of years ago, although strongly supporting the medallic recognition of National Servicemen, the RBL chose to generate income for the Legion's activities by forming a commercial partnership with Award Productions Ltd.<sup>55</sup> They encouraged the purchase of an unofficial

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<sup>52</sup> National Chairman of the RBL letter to Co-Chairman of the NDM campaign dated 26 May 2011

<sup>53</sup> National Chairman of the RBL letter to Co-Chairman of the NDM campaign dated 13 June 2011

<sup>54</sup> The National Chairman of 'The Returned & Service League of Australia Limited, which has 260,000 members, the Australian equivalent of the RBL, has written on behalf of his organisation supporting the institution of the UK National Defence Medal. R3-1-3/sb dated 15 June 2011

<sup>55</sup> See [www.awardmedals.com/national-service-medal-p-794.html](http://www.awardmedals.com/national-service-medal-p-794.html)

National Service medal instead of supporting the institution of an official medal awarded by Her Majesty the Queen. Recently, a full-page advert for the unofficial medal, appeared in the Daily Mail,<sup>56</sup> proclaiming the Royal British Legion sponsor the medal. It also stated that the RBL receive 10% of every National Service medal sold<sup>57</sup> by Award Productions Ltd. This medal was the first of quite an array of what have been termed, commemorative medals, to be produced by Award Productions and now worn extensively by former service personnel.<sup>58</sup> The revenue generated may well be for a good cause but it has inadvertently created a conflict of interest for the RBL National Headquarters in respect of medal issues.

### 4.3 The Ministry of Defence

The previous Secretary of State for Defence, the Rt Hon Dr Liam Fox MP; the current Defence Secretary, the Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP; and the Shadow Defence Secretary, the Rt Hon Jim Murphy MP support the medal review. Surprisingly, despite the Armed Forces Minister, the Rt Hon Nick Harvey's strong support for the NDM, the MoD's official line is more circumspect about the medal:

*'Medals in recognition of Service are earned, and the institution of a National Defence Medal would be nothing more than a further extension to the record of service.'*<sup>59</sup>

*'There are many professions where a similar argument for a medal could apply, and there needs to be a compelling argument as to why service in the armed forces should be completely different.'*<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Daily Mail Tuesday, April 17, 2012 - page 63. Advertised cost of medal £39.50 plus £4.00 p&p

<sup>57</sup> RBL have received around £500,000 for the 'Poppy Appeal' as the 10% from Award Production's sales of the unofficial National Service medal, over a number of years. Award Production advertise their medals as the same high quality as those medals which are officially produced

<sup>58</sup> Medals not officially authorised should be worn on the right breast or on the left breast below official medals, they should not be worn on the bar with official medals.

<sup>59</sup> D/Min(DPWV)/AR MC00543/2011 letter to Mark Hunter MP dated 14 February 2011

<sup>60</sup> DCDS(Pers) Sec MoD letter TO01286/2011 to Ms J Westbury dated 21 February 2011

Within parts of the MoD there has also been a tendency to use the existence of the veterans badge, as a reason why it would be inappropriate to recommend to Her Majesty the Queen, the institution of the National Defence Medal; claiming the badge already officially recognises service in the Armed Forces and the award of the NDM would be a duplication of such recognition.

## 5 The Veterans Identity Lapel Badge

### 5.1 Officially Sanctioned but not an Official Award

The External Relations Unit of the MoD Defence Business Improvement Division defines the Veterans Badge as officially sanctioned by the MoD but not an official award<sup>61</sup>. Its aim is to raise the profile of veterans by assisting the wider public to recognise them. However, there is clearly confusion within the MoD and by some outside of the Ministry as to just why the Veterans' identity lapel badge, referred to during the past few years as the Armed Forces Veterans Badge, was introduced. For example a former Chief of the Defence Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Jock Stirrup, in a letter to a veteran wrote<sup>62</sup>,

*'The introduction of the Armed Forces Veterans Badge (AFVB) a few years ago was considered an appropriate way for veterans to demonstrate that they had served their country as members of the Armed Forces and the lapel badge was considered to be more discreet and adaptable for daily wear than a medal.'*

The CDS did however qualify his statement by also stating that he was not suggesting it would not be possible to introduce a National Defence Medal.

On 15 September 2010 the Rt Hon Andrew Robathan MP, the minister responsible for veterans, wrote to John Thurso MP<sup>63</sup>:

*'Although it is not a medal, official recognition for those who have served in the Armed Forces is awarded in the form of the HM Armed Forces Veterans Badge.'*

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<sup>61</sup> D/DBI/03/01/02/02 dated 22 December 2009

<sup>62</sup> D/CDS/1/1/5 dated 5 February 2009

<sup>63</sup> D/Min(DPWV)/AR MC03975/2010 dated 15 September 2010

In a debate on the NDM in Westminster Hall, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence and Veterans Minister, Mr Andrew Robathan, incorrectly asserted:

*Official recognition by the Government for service in the Armed Forces is awarded in the form of Her Majesty's Armed Forces Veterans Badge.<sup>64</sup>*

It is therefore of paramount importance, in submitting the case for the NDM, to dispel the myth that the veterans badge was introduced and awarded to former service personnel in recognition of service and that the institution of the NDM would be a duplication of such official recognition. Details of the background to the introduction of the badge and its official status are therefore analysed below.

## **5.2 Why the Badge was Introduced**

In response to a Freedom of Information Act request<sup>65</sup> the MoD Veterans Policy Unit identified, the veterans badge was the instigation of the, then Minister for Veterans Ivor Caplin MP. The original concept behind the MoD initiative was for it to be made available to those Second World War veterans who applied for the Heroes Return Scheme in 2004/05, which formed part of the celebrations for the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the events that led to the end of the Second World War. This scheme formed part of the 'Veterans Reunited' programme, which focussed on overseas visits for veterans.

Initially the badge was only intended for issue to veterans returning to the battlefields of the Second World War<sup>66</sup>. The badge was also limited by funds available<sup>67</sup> but was later extended to include First World War veterans. Eventually, its availability was further extended to those who had served after the Second World War, in an effort to raise the profile of veterans in the community. The badge was later issued to service personnel on leaving the Armed Forces. A MoD document, dated 09 Jun 08, obtained under a further FOI Act request<sup>68</sup>, stated:

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<sup>64</sup> Official Report of 8 February 2011 Hansard column 50WH – 58WH

<sup>65</sup> MoD Veterans Policy Unit letter SP5.10.10.2.9 dated 14 October 2008

<sup>66</sup> MoD Veterans Policy Unit letter SP5.10.10.2.9 dated 14 October 2008

<sup>67</sup> D/SP Pol VPU/7/35 dated 10 Dec 04

<sup>68</sup> PW-14-12-2010-142552-002-Gray dated 14 December 2010

*'The extended availability of the UK Armed Forces badge was to raise the profile of veterans by assisting the wider public to recognise them.'*

In addition, the response from DCDS (Personnel) Secretariat<sup>69</sup>, to the Freedom of Information Act request in respect of the badge, stated:

*'It's symbolism is intended to unite all veterans in recognising the commonality of service, to encourage a sense of unity and community between surviving veterans and to ignite public recognition of current veterans and their continuing contribution to society.'*

The MoD web site, in further describing the veterans badge explains:

*'To promote recognition of veterans by the wider public the unique and unifying symbol of the HM Armed Forces Veterans Badge is available to all those who have served in the Armed Forces.'*<sup>70</sup>

### **5.3 The Official Status of the Badge**

The identification lapel badge did not require a debate in Parliament or Parliamentary approval; it did not require the HD Committee or Her Majesty's approval. It is a lapel badge, introduced by a former Government Defence Minister for 'every day wear', to enhance identification of veterans within the community and to each other. Although thousands of veterans are proud to wear the badge it does not represent Her Majesty's official recognition of service of those who have taken the oath or affirmation of allegiance. A MoD internal briefing document<sup>71</sup>, for the Private Secretary to the Under Secretary of State for Defence explained:

*'The Veteran's badge only marks service in the Armed Forces.'*

The evidence provided in this submission dispels the myth that the veterans badge, albeit officially sanctioned by the MoD, is an official award in recognition of service.

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<sup>69</sup> PW-14-12-2010-142552-002-Gray dated 23 March 2011

<sup>70</sup> MoD website UK Armed Forces Veterans Lapel Badge as at 12 April 2012

<sup>71</sup> D/SP Pol VPU/7/21 dated Sep 05

This finding removes, what appears to have been one of the pivotal reasons, for denying official medallic recognition of service for so long to so many veterans.

## **6 National Defence Medals Awarded by Her Majesty**

### **6.1 Australia and New Zealand**

The governments of both Australia and New Zealand have withdrawn from the Imperial Medal System. Consequently both Commonwealth countries are now able to determine their own medallic recognition of their Armed Forces. Both countries have declared how unique a profession the Armed Forces are and how much is demanded of those who serve. In 2006 and 2010 respectively, the governments of Australia<sup>72</sup> and New Zealand<sup>73</sup> recommended to Her Majesty, the institution of a defence medal, which was duly agreed by Royal Warrant and awarded to those currently serving and those who have served in their Armed Forces.

### **6.2 A Failure of Government**

The MoD have asserted on many occasions<sup>74</sup> that the United Kingdom government does not have to follow what other Commonwealth governments do in respect of the institution of medals. However, veterans of the UK Armed Forces, often having served along side their Australian and New Zealand contemporaries in the same locations, and experiencing the same risks, find it difficult to understand why successive UK Governments, who express the same admiration and appreciation of their Armed Forces as Australia and New Zealand, have been reluctant to recommend to Her Majesty that she also award them a defence medal. This situation raises significant questions as to why the veterans identification lapel badge together with irrelevant medal rules and principles continue to be used inappropriately by the MoD, on behalf of the government, to deny such appropriate medallic recognition of those who have served in the UK Armed Forces. A position, which now appears to be in direct conflict with the Coalition Government's wish to address the past failures of medallic recognition.

## **7 Eligibility**

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<sup>72</sup> See [www.defence.gov.au/medals/content/+047 ADM+ANSM/+070 ADM/](http://www.defence.gov.au/medals/content/+047+ADM+ANSM/+070+ADM/)

<sup>73</sup> See [www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2011/0088/latest/DLM3590801.html](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2011/0088/latest/DLM3590801.html)

<sup>74</sup> D/Min (DPWV)/AR MC01354/2011 dated 22 March 2011 to Mr Ashley Fox MEP

## **7.1 Criteria for NDM Recipients**

Outdated rules and principles, often misinterpreted in respect of medallic recognition together with questionable criteria or lack of it for eligibility, have been responsible for the current situation that finds so many former service personnel feeling aggrieved that their service to the Nation has been ignored. Consequently, whatever criteria is decided for the award of the NDM must be well founded, transparent and avoid compounding the inconsistency and injustice, which it seeks to ameliorate. Not surprisingly a myriad of differing views exist as to what that eligibility criteria should be for defence medal recipients. There is however, common agreement that it would be inappropriate, for those who have been dishonourably discharged from Her Majesty's Service or have failed to complete basic training, to be eligible for the medal albeit such personnel appear to be eligible to apply for a veteran's identification badge. For these reasons, the submission for the institution of the NDM makes no attempt to construct eligibility rules or guidance, preferring instead to leave that task to a working group.

## **8 Finance**

### **8.1 Estimated Cost of the NDM**

The banking crisis has contributed to significant government debt, which in turn has created a period of austerity within the UK. In addition, questionable past procurement processes of equipment by the MoD, has led to a departmental overspend, which in turn has resulted in the curtailment, modification and the delay in a number of defence projects. Consequently, although Ministerial statements have indicated that cost alone would not be a reason for refusing to support the award of the NDM, there can be little doubt that in this present financial climate, funding of the institution of the medal is a major concern.

There would be significant cost attached to the production, administration, processing and distribution of the NDM. As previously identified, MoD consider the potential number of applicants for the NDM could be in the region of four million, who could apply for themselves or on behalf of deceased relatives. Indeed the dilemma facing the Coalition Government, having committed themselves to addressing the failures of successive governments to address the outstanding medal claims, would be similar to that confronting the Government in

1976 when a decision was almost made to cancel the 1977 Silver Jubilee medal, due the economic situation that existed at the time. Although the financial climate may not be considered as severe as in the Wilson and Callaghan administrations of 1976/77, the number of medals to be produced are significantly greater and therefore the costs higher. Consequently in the NDM debate in Westminster Hall<sup>75</sup> the Veterans Minister, the Rt Hon Andrew Robathan, made the following statement:

*'The medal would cost a huge amount of taxpayers money, especially in the current financial climate. To justify such expense would be hard, particularly when the grounds for doing so appear somewhat thin.'*

The MoD has calculated the defence medal would cost in the region of £300M. This figure is based on £25.00 for each actual medal and £50.00 administrative costs for each one; making the total cost of each NDM £75.00. However, the MoD calculations are considered excessive and have been queried but no reply received.

Two independent medal specialists have separately assessed the MoD costs as excessive. Each have produced estimates in the region of between £2.50 to £3.50 for a cupro-nickel medal (38mm), ribbon and light cardboard box, similar to the medal produced for the Northern Ireland campaign. In addition, expenditure by both the Australian and New Zealand governments have been shown to be substantially below the MoD figure of £75.00, at an inclusive cost, for medal, administration and distribution of approximately £17.00 per medal.

Taking into account the Australian experience in respect of their defence medal, it is unlikely the 'take up' rate for the NDM will exceed 75% (three million) of those eligible. Therefore, a more realistic estimate of financial outlay might be around £3.50 for each medal, multiplied by three million applicants, equals £10.5M. It is thought unlikely that more than 500,000 medals would be manufactured or applied for in any one year. Spreading the costs over six years would therefore mean an annual outlay of approximately £1.75M for just the production of medals.

## **8.2 Funding of the NDM**

Official medals are the gift of The Queen, who is the fount of all Honour in the UK. Such medals are therefore awarded free of charge to the individuals who meet or

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<sup>75</sup> Hansard official report 8 February 2011 Column 50WH-58WH

exceed the published qualifying criteria laid down for each one. It is the considered opinion of the MoD<sup>76</sup> that if a charge were placed upon such a medal it would devalue the status of the award and the UK Honours and Awards system more generally. Initially it had been thought Her Majesty or Her advisors might not be content for any part of the medal process to be privately funded; communication was therefore made with the Palace. The Palace confirmed that Her Majesty would not personally intervene and would accept the advice of Her Ministers on the matter<sup>77</sup>. This provides the opportunity to be creative when considering the funding of the NDM, despite the MoD's opinion on devaluation and taking into account that cost alone is not an issue on instigating a new medal. The Funding of the NDM therefore presents a dilemma, how to reduce costs to the MoD budget but at the same time ensuring that any private funding arrangements do not devalue the medal. Clearly there are two funding streams to be considered, the cost of the medal itself, 'the production costs', and those associated with the processing, packaging and distribution, 'the administrative costs':

- **Production Costs.** The overall production cost of three million medals at £3.50 each, is estimated to be in the region of £10.5M, spread over six years. The way the actual medal is to be funded is the most sensitive. Any attempt to place a charge on the medal might be seen as undermining the principle that medals officially awarded are the gift of the Sovereign and private funding would contravene that concept and devalue the medal. Bulk purchasing is likely to reduce the production costs below the £1.75M per annum. However, should that cost still be an unacceptable price to the government in its symbolic bid to rebuild the broken Military Covenant, a medal fund could be established. This would ensure recipients are not purchasing their own official medal, which is awarded by Her Majesty.
- **Administrative Costs.** The costs associated with the administration of the medal are less of an issue. They can be totally separated from the production costs as they are incurred for checking eligibility of recipients, annotating official documents, packaging and distribution of the medal. A detailed estimate of the overall administrative costs is £15M, assessed as

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<sup>76</sup> Westminster Hall debate on 8 February 2011 in respect of the National Defence Medal published in Hansard Column 50WH-58WH

<sup>77</sup> Buckingham Palace letter dated 10 November 2011

£5.00 for each medal; much less than the MoD figures of £50.00 per medal (£150M). The key to this funding rely on the pledges of time and money made through the 'can do' culture of the wider Armed Forces family and the Coalition Government's 'Big Society' initiative. A number of pledges have already been received and huge interest generated in becoming involved.

### **8.3 Design of the NDM**

In the interests of reducing production costs of the NDM still further it would be sensible to use the existing stock obverse die with Her Majesty's head on, only the reverse would need to be designed. It would also be appropriate for the award to have a fixed suspender rather than a swivel type and should the suspender be integral like the 1914–15 Star the cost again would be reduced. Like the previous UK defence medal it is not anticipated that the recipients name or service details would be impressed on the medal; such details are not impressed on WW2 medals.

## **9 Conclusions**

### **9.1 Failure to Address the Problems of Medallic Recognition**

The professionalism, courage and contribution made by all those who serve and have served in the Armed Forces is held in the highest esteem by the Nation. However, evidence shows that successive governments have failed to address the substantial problems that have surrounded medallic recognition in so many areas for a considerable time. This has impacted adversely on hundreds of thousands of veterans and their families who consider their contribution to keeping the Nation and its interests safe and secure have been ignored. It was this systemic failure of appropriate recognition that led to the campaign for a National Defence Medal.

### **9.2 The NDM Campaign**

The NDM campaign has been about achieving medallic recognition of Service for those who serve and have served in the Armed Forces. Many have been involved in hazardous situations; others have provided the crucial support without which there would have been no successful outcomes to various military campaigns and operations. All have been prepared to make sacrifices in keeping the Nation safe and secure over many decades. It has therefore been surprising and disappointing that during the campaign for the NDM, veterans have experienced considerable

efforts by the MoD to dismiss their service has not being worthy of official recognition by Her Majesty.

Revelations made during the NDM campaign were astonishing. The campaign unearthed a misrepresentation of facts surrounding the rules and principles governing medals of service recognition; the official status of the veteran's lapel badge; the financial estimate of instituting a National Defence Medal; and the discredited 2010 medal review. However, the reconstituted review now provides independent scrutiny of the case for medallic recognition of service, which various medal campaigns have been about for the past decades, and which resulted in the evolution of the NDM campaign in 2007.

### **9.3 Medal Rules and Principles**

The MoD and the HD Committee, when making decisions on medallic recognition, use the Five Year and Double Medalling rules together with the Principle of Risk and Rigour. Although some times misinterpreted, some times disregarded and certainly in need of updating, they do aim at providing some form of commonality of 'guidance' for the award of campaign medals between the three Services and between Regular and Reserve personnel. Unfortunately, in respect of medals in recognition of service such as the group for Long Service and the Coronation and Jubilee medals there is a lack of commonality of criteria. This failure has and is continuing to be responsible for significant inconsistency and injustice of medallic recognition of those who have served and serve in the Armed Forces and should be addressed.

In the case of the NDM, there has been an attempt to misinterpret the campaign medal principles of 'risk and rigour' to deny its institution. However, the reality is, none of the rules and principles used by the MoD and HD Committee, now designated 'guiding principles', apply to the recognition of service. Consequently, there appears to be no legitimate reason within the rules and principles why the institution of the NDM and subsequent award cannot take place.

### **9.4 Commitment by the Coalition Government**

The research study initiated by the Prime Minister in 2008, when Leader of the Opposition together with the NDM campaign, led to the Coalition Government's

commitment to review the existing medal rules, and then to address the issues surrounding the outstanding medal claims. Veterans and their families see the acceptance by Government that there has been considerable inconsistency and injustice in respect of medallic recognition, over so many years, as a symbolic step in rebuilding the broken Military Covenant. The 'fresh review' provides the opportunity to update the whole medal process; to appropriately address the lack of medallic recognition of the service given by so many who have taken the oath or affirmation of allegiance to the Sovereign; the drawing of 'the line in the sand'.

## **9.5 The UK National Defence Medal**

The UK National Defence Medal is a medal in recognition of service and the case for its institution and recommendation for its award by Her Majesty is substantial. It recognises the day to day risk and rigour that perpetually pervades life as a member of the Armed Forces having taken the oath or affirmation of allegiance to the Sovereign and commitment of service to the crown; it recognises liability for operational service and involvement in combat or special operations for which no campaign medal is awarded; and it recognises the conditions and constraints of being subject to military discipline, on freedom and life style, and the uniqueness of military service. The case for the defence medal stands alone regardless of whether or not decisions are made by the 'fresh review' to recognise through the award of a medal, any of the events such as the Cold War and National Service that initially contributed to the founding of the campaign for the NDM.

## **9.6 Eligibility**

It is crucially important that in determining the eligibility of the NDM that the criteria does not compound the inconsistency and injustice already suffered in respect of medallic recognition. Equally, it is important that the criteria arrived at provides credibility and pride in the medal. For example, it would be appropriate to exclude those dishonourably discharged or who failed to complete basic training. MoD and the NDM campaigners estimate eligibility for the defence medal is in the region of four million with a likely take up rate of around three million.

## **9.7 Financial Implications**

During this current financial climate the funding of the NDM is problematic. However, the MoD estimate of £300M as the total cost of the NDM and associated administrative costs is excessive. A more realistic estimate is in the region of

£10.5M for the actual medals spread over six years, approximate cost to the taxpayer of £3.50 for each medal. It is also possible to reduce this amount further through bulk buying, the design of the medal and the introduction of a medal fund. Administrative costs are estimated at no more than £5.00 per medal, £15M over six years. As there are no restrictions in respect of how this cost may be met, maximum use would be made of pledges in both time and money, through the Services 'can do' culture and the government's 'Big Society' initiative. The overall cost of each NDM awarded to a former member of the Armed Forces for keeping the Nation safe and secure, for almost 67 years, is around £8.50.

### **9.8 Working Group**

A working group would need to be established with membership from the interested stakeholders. The group would be best placed for determining the eligibility of medal recipients. As the take up rate is expected to be 'huge' it would need to determine the process for confirming eligibility, processing, packaging and distribution and where possible linking into the existing systems within the MoD. The whole process of the working group would need to be transparent and open. Ensuring that its actions do not add to the inconsistency and injustice that has gone before in respect of medallic recognition. Establishment of a database of the pledges of both time and money would be important, as would the mustering of the volunteer workforce. The task is daunting but there are already volunteers who possess the necessary skills ready to become involved. It is expected that the MoD would wish to deal with the award of the NDM to eligible serving Regular and Reserve personnel.

### **9.9 Summary of Conclusions**

In summary, there has been a failure of successive governments to tackle the issues surrounding medallic recognition of those who have served in the Armed Forces. The Coalition Government committed itself to address the issues, which have been responsible for causing so much of the inconsistency and injustice during the past decades. Although MoD have been hesitant to support a defence medal there are no rules or guiding principles, which would block the introduction of the NDM, and precedent exists for the award of medals in recognition of service.

There also exists significant and widespread support for the NDM and the case for its institution is substantial and evidence based. In addition, its introduction would resolve many of the outstanding claims for medallic recognition. It is likely the take up rate of the medal will be around three million, nevertheless the costs are considered reasonable, affordable and manageable through the involvement of the 'can do' culture of the wider Armed Forces family and the government's 'Big Society' initiative. Finally, Her Majesty already awards a defence medal to veterans of Australia and New Zealand consequently there appears to be no reason, why a recommendation by the Coalition Government to Her Majesty for the award of a UK National Defence Medal, would not be approved.

## 10 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made in respect of the institution of the UK National Defence Medal:

- The Independent Reviewer of the Medal Review should support the case for the UK NDM and recommend its institution to the Coalition Government.
- A working group should be established that includes as its members representatives from the various stakeholders.
- The working group should be tasked with:
  - a. Determining the criteria for eligibility of the defence medal
  - b. Identifying time lines for production
  - c. Producing and implementing a plan for processing the submission of applications for the award of the UK NDM, possibly prioritised by age.
  - d. Producing and implementing a plan for utilising the wider family of the Armed Forces 'Can Do' Culture and the government's 'Big Society' in respect of checking, processing, packaging and distribution of the NDM.
  - e. The policy for the establishment, operation and maintenance of a database in respect of time and monetary pledges.
- The Coalition Government should request approval from Her Majesty The Queen for the award of the UK NDM, within specified criteria, to serving and former serving members of the Armed Forces and next of kin in respect of those now deceased.

- Subject to the approval of Her Majesty, the NDM is manufactured, applications processed and the medal awarded in time for wear by the November 2012 Remembrance Day parades.



Tony Morland  
Co-Chairman  
UK National Defence Medal Campaign



Colonel (Retd) Terry Scriven  
Co-Chairman  
UK National Defence Medal Campaign

## **Appendix One – Medals Awarded in Recognition of Service**

There is an assumption made in some circles that the institution of the UK National Defence Medal would break with tradition by awarding a medal in recognition of Service. This is not the case. JSP761 identifies a number of medals, which have been instituted within the Armed Forces in recognition of service during the past 60 years:

### **Coronation and Jubilee Medals.**

Her Majesty The Queen's Coronation Medal

Her Majesty The Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal

## Her Majesty The Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal

### **Long Service and Efficiency Awards**

Meritorious Service Medal

Regular Forces Long Service and Good Conduct Medals:

Medal for Long Service and Good Conduct (Military)

Naval Long Service and Good Conduct Medal

Royal Air Force Long Service and Good Conduct Medal

Long Service and Good Conduct (Ulster Defence Regiment)

Volunteer Reserves Long and Efficient Service Awards:

Army Emergency Reserve Decoration (ERD)

Efficiency Decoration (Territorial) (TD)

Efficiency Medal (Territorial)

Royal Naval Reserve Officers' Decoration (RD)

Royal Naval Reserve Long Service and Good Conduct

Royal Fleet Reserve Long Service and Good Conduct

Royal Naval Auxiliary Service Medal

Air Efficiency Award (AE)

Volunteer Reserves Service Medal

Ulster Defence Regiment Medal (UD)

Northern Ireland Home Service Medal

Queen's Medals for Champion Shots

Cadet Forces Medal

Rhodesia Medal

### **Loan/Seconded Service**

The Accession Medal (Oman) when Sultan superseded his father

This is the official submission for the institution of the United Kingdom National Defence Medal  
It supersedes all other submissions which should be destroyed

The Peace Medal (Oman)

Muscat Victory Medal (AS SUMOOD)

Sultan of Oman's 30<sup>th</sup> Renaissance Medal National Day

This is the official submission for the institution of the United Kingdom National Defence Medal  
It supersedes all other submissions which should be destroyed