

Malaya Borneo And Far East

Veterans Association

Birmingham District Branch

Secretary Mr G.R.Parkes (Tel) (0121 552 1177)

Branch Quarterly Newsletter: June 2010

Dear Member,

Many thanks to those who have decided to support the branch after the resume` I gave for the reason to justify us becoming an independent branch. The response has been overwhelming with 145 members out of 165 agreeing with our policy. The Chairman and I attended the Branch Delegates Meeting in Nottingham on April 17th where we had tabled 7 questions which required answers from the executive committee regarding the national accounts and other subsidiary items connected to these questions.

We both expected answers but the National Secretary informed me that he had prepared a statement regarding the questions tabled, only after consultation with the Association solicitor as to whether he should respond to my previous correspondence. He was informed that he should not provide any information as this would make the subject ongoing. I asked him why it was necessary to take this course of action as we were entitled to know how Association expenditure was accounted for.

I then withdrew all of my tabled questions as I could see no point in listening to excuses when direct answers on transparency were expected by our members. Our branch Chairman did extract direct answers as to the amount of expenditure claimed for by the executive when they held meetings, where minutes were taken but not presented to branches; the answer was **£1,000** which we thought was rather extravagant for 8 committee members considering this was for only **One Night**. This amount of expenditure is totally unacceptable and I believe we will never find out the true value of expenses when a prepared

statement is thought to be sufficient to placate our members. The Chairman of the executive also became extremely abusive and said that I was blackmailing him by threatening to leave the association if the questions tabled were not answered and threw his chain of office onto the table and resigned.

We both decided to stay and listen to the remainder of the agenda, but unfortunately we were ejected from the meeting because we were classed as no longer members of the association and I must add that the conduct of the Chairman left a great deal to be desired as he was screaming at the top of his voice when ordering us out of the room, which was rather unbecoming of any person holding an executive post such as him. I must stress that throughout the whole of the meeting I never at any time raised my voice or became derogatory, slandered or libelled any member of the executive committee. I have now drawn a line under this sorry situation and will move forward for the benefit of our branch members.

Other news of your branches` activities: our standard bearers have again been to Wootton Bassett to honour our fallen comrades who were repatriated to their homeland for burial. Services were held at Coventry Cathedral, Bedworth and Kidderminster, our standard bearers attended by invitation of the families.

On St Georges` day we were privileged to have a representative from `Help for Heroes`, `Troop Aid` and the `British Legion` who attended our buffet at the United Services Club. We were informed that because of the eruption of the volcano in Iceland all the casualties evacuated from Afghanistan were being flown to the United States for treatment

because of the flying restrictions. The federation of which you are all part of presented £1,500 to `Help for Heroes` and £1,000 to `Troop Aid` who are primary care for our forces evacuated to Selly Oak, there is also a room there full of supplies readily available for anyone both men and women who need clothing etc because they are flown out of Afghanistan without clothing. Troop Aid also meet evacuated casualties at Birmingham International Airport and provide warm clothing because when they arrive here they are in lightweight blankets and are very cold. You may have guessed by now that we are still sending `shoe boxes` out to the troops in Helmand province which contain a variety of goodies which benefit them while on patrol. Now that is what we call **Comradeship**.

Our standard bearers also attended the `Anzac Day` parade on May 25th at Cannock where 89 standards were paraded on behalf of the many Federation Associations. As you may realise they are always busy and attend most functions, paying their own expenses, even though we will reimburse them they refuse to accept any money and say it is a privilege and an honour to be associated with this type of duty.

Once again I must remind the few remaining members who have not yet forwarded their yearly subscription that if they wish to remain within the branch they have the choice of paying, if not it may be that individual members do not agree with us leaving the National Association but that is for them to decide and I would never criticise a person for choosing one way or the other, it is a free and democratic decision they make if they so wish.

May I suggest that if anyone has a constructive comment to make please contact me and I will be very happy to make your views known in the quarterly news letters.

The committee and I send our kindest regards to you and your family and wish you all well for the future.

GEOFF

Branch Secretary

Malaya Borneo and Far East Veterans
Birmingham Branch.