



BARRY FLEMING TEP

Sir Robin Janvrin, KCB KCVO
Private Secretary to The Sovereign
Buckingham Palace
London, SW1A 1AA

6th October 2006

Dear Sir Robin,

PINGAT JASA MALAYSIA (PJM)

Thank you for your letter of the 29th September in which you mention that the Ceremonial Secretariat will investigate my Rebuttal Statement and respond on behalf of the Government.

You will be aware that I question much of the basis on which the HD Committee was asked to prepare a recommendation, and I also highlight the discriminatory effects of the emerging compromise recommendation - hence the Rebuttal and its Update sent to the Heads of Government Departments, Ministers, and MPs involved in the PJM matter.

- These documents and various other submissions are designed to support our request, *through our elected representatives*, for a review and modification of the recommendation to enable us to be given permission to wear the PJM.

I also question the subsequent advice given out by the MoD, Foreign Office and Cabinet Office which in my view is both misleading and confusing in so far as some advice suggests that veterans can wear the PJM at their discretion but other advice goes on to say that no such clearance exists and to wear the medal would cause a grave discourtesy to The Queen (which is something that veterans will not wish to do). My understanding is that The Queen approved acceptance of the PJM on condition that the medal was not worn - hence my involvement with the Petition to Her Majesty.

- This document was designed to address our request, *in the context of The Queen's role as the Fountain of all Honours*, for Her Majesty's approval to wear the PJM.

Both the Rebuttal and Petition were sent by The Queen to the Foreign Secretary 'for consideration'. In the context that I have endeavoured to seek a review of the recommendation through elected representatives and Her Majesty The Queen, I am very concerned to read that the Head of the lead Department seemingly has been side-stepped and will not be involved in the consideration process at all, despite the request from The Queen. And that the very people who produced the flawed basis in the first place will be the ones to investigate and report on our case that questions much of what they have said and done.

I do not doubt that Mr Dennis Brennan will give fair consideration to the various points that have been raised in this matter but I am not as confident about the even-handedness of some of those working in the Departments who are feeding information to the Cabinet Office. My worries are based upon my knowledge of the manner of their involvement in certain other medal requests - behaviour that gives me cause for serious concern when they consider the PJM issue. And I am not reassured by their continual word-for-word repetition of the same misleading statements despite so much information reaching their desks indicating that our case is at least worthy of consideration.

Indeed, in conversations we have been told that the Civil Service runs things not the Government, and that nothing we say or do regarding the PJM will change anything. The former claim is well documented and has become the basis for many a TV farce, but it is the second issue that is also of much concern to me. I see such blind obduracy as a very worrying issue. One of the basic principles of the British unwritten constitution is that no rule or law can be made that cannot be changed in the future. That assumes, of course, that a legitimate rule actually exists.

I had hoped that our Queen and our elected representatives would be given the opportunity to fulfil their role in our form of Democracy - it seems that that hope has been dashed. Having said that, I do not wish to make political points in this matter in which The Queen is so deeply involved. I only seek permission to wear the PJM along with my Commonwealth ex-comrades-in-arms.

Thank you for your sound advice regarding communications on this PJM matter. Accordingly, I have sent a copy of this letter to both Mr Brennan and Mrs Beckett. No doubt the office of the latter will pass the papers to a departmental civil servant despite my reference to The Queen's correspondence with Mrs Beckett and to my misgivings regarding anyone policing themselves.

With kind regards.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barry Fleming', written in a cursive style.

Barry Fleming

Cc: Mr Dennis Brennan, Rt Hon Margaret Beckett MP