

John R. Ireland

15 Avon Close
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July 8, 2006

The Right Hon. Mrs. Margaret Beckett MP
Secretary of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Dear Mrs. Beckett:

The Pingat Jasa Malaysia Medal

You will no doubt by now have heard of the campaign by ex service personnel to have the injustice on the issue and wear of the above medal reversed by the Government and may I say that as you are new to the office of Foreign Secretary, I apologise for the very obvious consternation that this must be causing you.

This award was given to veterans of the Malaysia campaign by the Agong (King) and Government of Malaysia to recognize the service to their country of the members of the Commonwealth Armed Forces who served in that theatre during this emergency. The Honours and Decorations Committee in liaison with the MOD and other Government Departments recommended to HM The Queen that the award be accepted but permission to wear be withheld on the basis of a. the five year rule and b. double medaling, both of these criteria have since been shown to be false and therefore on this basis the award should be issued unrestricted as is the case with all other Commonwealth countries. For it not to be so is discriminatory in the extreme.

Your esteemed colleague, The Right Hon Mr. Don Touhig MP, was about to order a revisit of this award recommending that the issue be unrestricted when he was unfortunately replaced at the MOD so he was then unable to do so but he spoke in it's favour most eloquently last Thursday in the Defence debate which is recorded in Hansard. May I therefore ask you to approach this issue with an open mind when it does come before you and to have regard to the facts that have been placed before Mr. Touhig and others which has resulted in most changing their view towards favouring the unrestricted issue of this extremely prestigious award to the veterans of this campaign.

Sincerely,

John R. Ireland