



Patron Her Majesty The Queen

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24 March 2017

Dear Chairmen

I am aware that some members have made enquiries about the Legion's official position in respect of the investigation of some UK veterans in relation to their possible involvement in events during the Troubles in Northern Ireland. I am writing today to outline the Legion's position on this matter, as well as clarify the Legion's position on parades held in protest at these investigations.

The Legion is fully aware of recent press coverage and public concern surrounding legal proceedings against some UK veterans who served in Northern Ireland. As this is a legal matter, which is the subject of ongoing criminal investigations, the Legion is unable to comment on the merits or otherwise of individual cases, and the Legion should not interfere in what is a criminal legal process.

The Legion welcomes the fact that UK veterans affected by the legacy investigation process will receive free MOD legal representation. We also note that, on 22 February, the Prime Minister stated that, as part of the Stormont House Agreement, the Government would look at the issue of a statute of limitations on incidents prior to the Belfast Agreement. The UK Government has also consistently made clear that they expect the Police Service of Northern Ireland's (PSNI) Legacy Investigation Branch (LIB) to consider legacy cases in chronological order.

Of course, the Legion must and will support all our veterans. We do not offer legal representation in criminal prosecutions, as to do so would be inconsistent with our charitable objectives; however, we do provide a broad range of welfare support and services to all members of the Armed Forces community. Any individuals or family members who find themselves affected by the legacy investigations are therefore encouraged to contact us if they feel the Legion can be of any assistance outside of legal advice.

The Legion is aware of plans for marches to take place in Northern Ireland, and a few other locations, in protest at the investigation of some UK veterans' alleged involvement in events during the Troubles. Legion members can, of course, attend the proposed marches in a personal capacity, and I recognise that many will want to do so. However, I would like to remind our members that attendance in an official Legion capacity is not appropriate. Similarly, I would like to request that parades such as these do not start at Legion properties and must not incorporate Legion imagery or associated symbols of any kind in the march itself nor any press or promotional material. This is in order to maintain our non-partisan position in the context of the highly politicised atmosphere surrounding this debate.

I hope the above clarifies the Legion's position in this matter, and that members will kindly observe my requests concerning related parades.

Yours sincerely,


Terry Whittles
National Chairman

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