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16 November, 2022

Signed On : <https://defence-honours-tribunal.gov.au>

Submission to Inquiry - Gunner Les Nathan

Part 1 – Name of Inquiry

Name of Inquiry *

Medallic Recognition For Service with Rifle Company Butterworth

Part 2 – About the Submitter

Title or Rank *

Gunner

Given Names *

Les

Surname *

Nathan

Post-nominals (if applicable)

Street Number and Name *

[REDACTED]

Suburb *

[REDACTED]

Postcode *

[REDACTED]

State *

[REDACTED]

Email Address: *

[REDACTED]

Primary Contact Number *

[REDACTED]

Secondary Contact Number

Is the Submission on behalf of an organisation? If yes, please provide details:

N/A

Part 3 – Desired outcome

Provide a summary of your submission:

Whilst Malaysian Medallic recognition should granted, it should not be limited to Rifle Company Butterworth but inclusive of all Australian Military personal who served with the 28 Commonwealth Brigade (ANZUK) deterrent force Terandak Garrison and/or Butterworth between 1960 - 1989 (1989 being the year that the Malaysian Government formally declared the conclusion of the Communist Insurgency War sometimes called the second Malayan Emergency) or at least dates in line with the New Zealand Government i.e. 1959 to 1974. Australian

Military personnel who served within Malaysia 1960 onwards are truly the soldiers that Australia forgot being overshadowed at that time by the Vietnam War. An entertainer who performed in Vietnam for approximately 24 hours is entitled to be awarded the Vietnam Logistic & Support Medal, a Malaysian Veterans Australian Service Medal doesn't even refer to Malaysia, just SE Asia. This is truly a disgrace on the part of past Australian Governments and an insult to those servicemen etc. It is time this insult was corrected with at least the striking of a separate Malaysian Service medal 1960-1989 even if the existing Australian Service Medal is not upgraded to being the Australian Active Service Medal. This matter of medallic recognition for past Australian Malaysian service personnel has previously been raised through Julie Bishop's office when she was the Foreign Minister and more recently via Andrew Hastie, current Shadow Minister for defence. Whilst I am unable to forward previous correspondence between Ms Bishop and myself I have forwarded herewith copies of email exchanges re, Andrew Hastie's office and myself.

Part 4 - Your submission and Supporting Documentation

File Attached: Email-from-Andrew-Hastie-16-Nov-2022.pdf

Email-to-Andrew-Hastie-13-Oct-2022.pdf

Email-to-Andrew-Hastie-15-Nov-2022.pdf

Email-to-Andrew-Hastie-19-June-2022.pdf

Part 5 – Consent and declaration

I consent to the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal making my submission publicly available.

I also consent to the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal:

- using information contained in my submission to conduct research;
- providing a copy of my submission to a person or organisation considered by the Tribunal to be appropriate; and
- providing a copy of my submission to a person or organisation the subject of adverse comment in the submission;
- using content in my submission in its report to Government.

The Tribunal will decide which person or organisation is appropriate, and this may include:

1. persons or organisations required to assist with the inquiry; and
2. persons or organisations with an interest in the inquiry.

I declare that the information I have provided is correct.

Name

Les Nathan

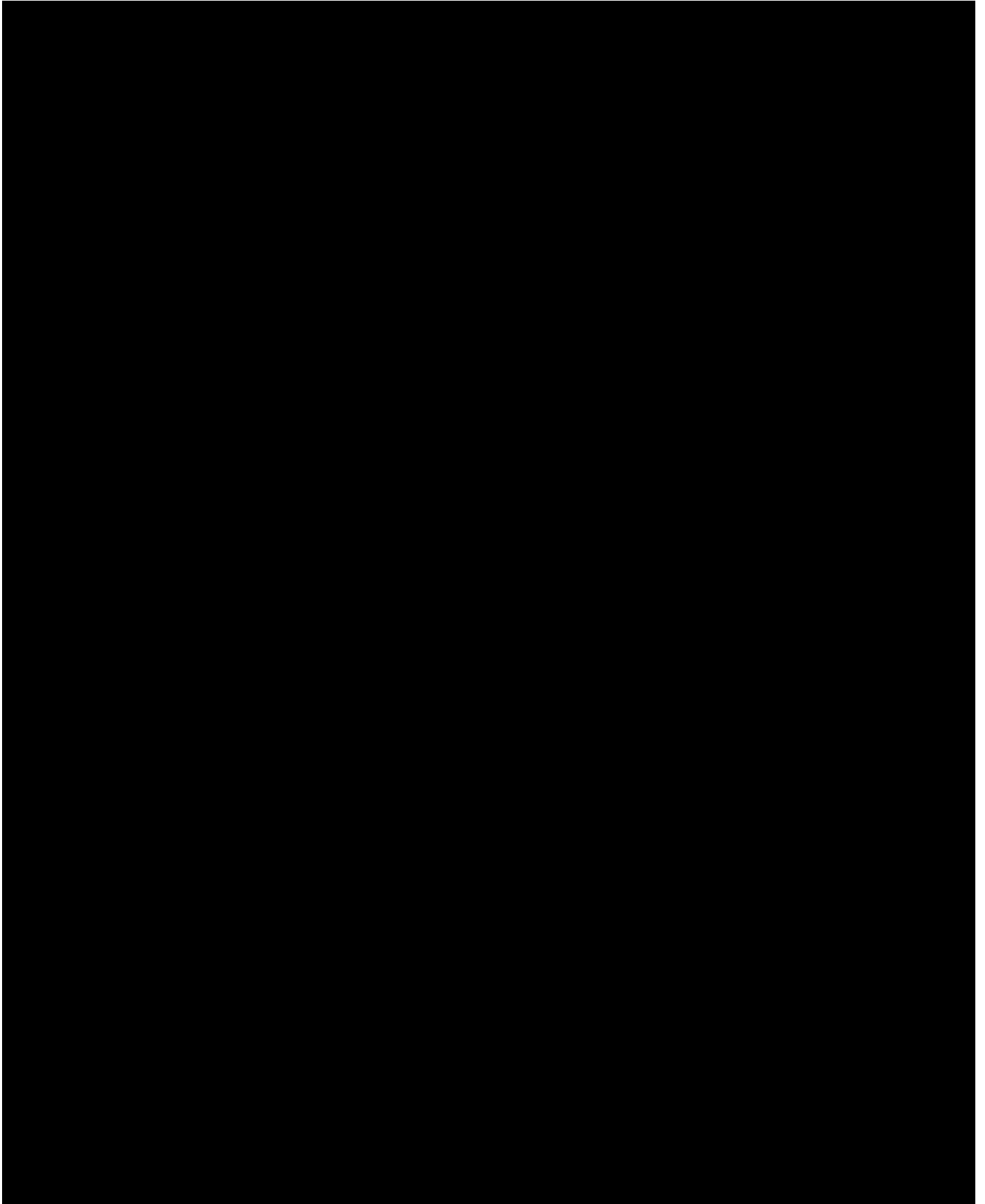
Date

16/11/2022

Les Nathan

Signed by Gunner Les Nathan

Signed on: 16 November, 2022



From: Les Nathan [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 19 June 2022 5:49 PM
To: 'Andrew Hastie' [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: A Fair Go for Vietnam War era National Servicemen

Andrew,

My name is Les Nathan, one of your constituents plus also a 1968/70 National Service conscript who served in the 28th Commonwealth Brigade ("28th Brigade") based in Terendak Garrison, Malacca, Malaysia ("Terendak") as part of the 28th Brigades deterrent force aligned against both Malaysian domestic communists plus also other potential foreign infiltrations threatening at the time. To this end I was a member of Australia's 107 Field Battery RAA ("107 FDB") which was embedded within the British Army's 14th Light Regiment, Royal Artillery as part of the 28th Brigade. My specific tour was from August 1960 to 19 October 1969 at which time 107 FDB returned to Townsville Qld.

During 107 FDB's period of deployment the Communist Insurgency War commenced in Malaysia (also referred to as the Second Malayan Emergency 1968 to 1989) wherein in May 1969 a state of Malaysian emergency was declared by the Malaysian Government wherein the 28th Brigade/107 FDB maintained its role as an immediate deterrent force.

To this end and in light of the apparent thrust of this latest petition (as referred to in the below email chain - <https://chng.it/hqMrhnYT8R>) which I will leave to take its natural course, I now wish to raise another issue that has vexed me for some time and that I previously raised back in 2015 with my then local Liberal representative, Julie Bishop wherein the matter appeared to have then been referred on to a Canberra public bureaucrat (given her extensive Foreign Ministers duties I believe) wherein their response appeared to have been pulled from their standard "Get Lost" play book.

To this end I wish to emphasise that I am not looking for any change to the existing definitions of "qualifying service" for benefits purposes etc. or in respect to the issue of the "Australia Active Service Medal versus the Australian Service Medal pertaining to Malaysian service albeit just that medallic recognition of that Malaysian service be granted.

Whilst I currently hold the Australian Service Medal 1945 -1975 with clasp "SE Asia", the Australian Defence Medal and the National Service Medal 1951-1972, none of these specifically identifies my/our service in Malaysia, the closest we come is the clasp "SE Asia" This is an insult to all who served in Malaysia. If I/we had served in Vietnam I/we would have received the following **Australian recognition**, the Australian Active Service Medal 1945 -1975 with clasp "Vietnam", the Australian Defence Medal and the National Service Medal 1951-1972 plus also in addition the Vietnam Medal. If I had been just a Qantas crew member or a Singer/Drummer/Performer who was in Vietnam for just 24 hours, I would have received the Vietnam Logistic & Support Medal. So why didn't/doesn't an Australian soldier who has served their country in Malaysia as part of the 28th Commonwealth Brigade deterrent force have a specific medal struck to recognised their specific service, **say for discussion purposes** a "Malaysian Service Medal 1960 -1989". Aren't those soldiers entitled to proudly wear their service for all to see

I am now requesting on behalf of all Australian soldiers who served in Malaysia up to 1989, that you undertake all endeavours, using your latest political position, to correct the significant wrong that

has to date been perpetrated against them by endeavouring to correct in a very expeditious manner, given the aging demographics of this group, by facilitating the striking and awarding to them a specific Malaysian Service Medal, hopefully before they all die of old age.

Your earnest endeavours in respect to the foregoing is humbly requested.

Regards,
Les Nathan

██████████ ██████████

From: Les Nathan [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 13 October 2022 2:55 PM
To: 'Andrew Hastie' [REDACTED]
Subject: 28th Commonwealth Brigade, Malaysia - ANZUK Force Medallie Recognition

Andrew,

Further to my below email of 19th June 2022, plus my telephone call to your office of Wednesday 12 Oct 2022 in respect to Medallie Recognition for Australian Servicemen who served in Malaysia 1960 to 1989 I would now refer you to the below link to a media release from the Australian Government Department of Defence dated 7th April 2022 wherein reconsideration is now being given to the award of the Active Service Medal for troops who forming part of the "Australian Butterworth Rifle Company" stationed at the Malaysian Airforce Base at Butterworth, Malaysia between 1970 and 1989.

It is also noted within the press release that New Zealand has broadened its eligibility for their Operational Service Medal for their servicemen who served within Malaysia and/or Singapore between 1959 and 1974.

To this end I would ask why consideration is apparently only being given to servicemen of the Australian Butterworth Rifle Company 1970 to 1989 as opposed to all Australian forced who served within the Commonwealth ANZUK deterrent force stationed in Malaysia 1960 - 1989 wherein 1989 was the year in which the Malaysian Government declared the conclusion of the Communist Insurgency War sometime referred to the Second Malayan Emergency 1968 to 1989.

It has also been noted within the attached media release that any submissions in respect to the "reconsideration" process should be before the Minister by 1st July 2022 i.e. being after the date of my original email to you (i.e. 19th June 2022).

Can you now please urgently consider and intervene within this process as the Shadow Minister for Defence so that **ALL** Australian Servicemen who served in Malaysia within the prescribed period are finally treated respectfully and equally for their service to Australia and in conformity with New Zealand's troops who, as it happens, were physically co-located and operational with Australia's servicemen at Terandak .

This may not have a high priority to you and/or other Ministers but it is very important to the Malaysian Servicemen's cohort which is aging quite rapidly with limited time left to feel that their service has been fully recognised.

<https://www.minister.defence.gov.au/media-releases/2022-04-07/independent-tribunal-reconsider-medallie-recognition-rifle-company-butterworth>

I look forward to hearing from you directly in that I believe that as a veteran yourself you will understand what a lack of appreciation for your military service can mean.

Regards,
Les Nathan

[REDACTED]

From: Les Nathan [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 15 November 2022 6:19 PM
To: 'Andrew Hastie' [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Canning News: Fighting For You - Andrew, what about you Fighting for ALL of our ANZUK troops previously deployed to Malaysia between 1960 to 1989

Andrew,

I have now written to you on a number of occasions (19/6/22 plus 13/10/22) having also spoken and/or been to your office on several occasions about the troops, both Regulars and National Servicemen, who served in Malaysia as part of the 28th Commonwealth Brigade (ANZUK) Deterrent Force up to and including 1989 (1989 being the year in which the Malaysian Government formally declared the conclusion of the Communist Insurgency War i.e. the second Malayan Emergency), yet to date respective Australian Governments have not formally and/or metallically recognised its troops who served in Malaysia during this period. Truly these are the soldiers Australia has forgotten notwithstanding the current use of this phrase in respect to all National Servicemen who did not serve in Vietnam. May I say that this is indeed an indictment upon past and current Australian Governments wherein the New Zealand Government has now in fact formally recognised its troops who served within Malaysia. Once again Australia is being shown up by our smaller cousin.

To be quite honest Andrew I'm starting to become quite annoyed by your personal silence on this matter particularly with you being a former soldier and myself as one of your Liberal voting supporter/constituent.

I actually expected a better and a more proactive personal response from you on this matter.

How can you expect people to support your causes and your ambitions when you appear to have little regard for theirs, not even any response from you after approx. 5 months? Given your former position within the previous Federal Government plus your current Shadow portfolio it is hard to accept that you would not have been aware of the matter before the Department of Defence in respect to the Australian Butterworth Rifle Company ("ABRC") which is directly relevant to the matters that I am now referring to and endeavouring to address. I would comment however that your apparent lack of an earlier response/action in respect my 19/6/2022 email may have now missed the window of opportunity pertaining to the Minister of Defence's calling for responses to his ABRC announcement by 1/7/2022.

Here's hoping that you are now prepared to get on board and at least discuss the issues directly with me as opposed to continuing a stony silence wherein maybe we will be able to catch up and attach to the Ministers current ABRC considerations albeit possibly modified as appropriate because I do in fact have some comment in respect to the current ABRC submission.

Regards,
Les Nathan

[REDACTED]

From: Adrigan-Hondros, Katie (A. Hastie, MP) [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 16 November 2022 4:06 PM
To: Les Nathan [redacted]
Subject: RE: Canning News: Fighting For You - Andrew, what about you Fighting for ALL of our ANZUK troops previously deployed to Malaysia between 1960 to1989

Dear Mr Nathan

Further to our recent (robust! 😊) phone discussion, I wanted to flick through to you the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal website [link](#).

You absolutely have my word that I will continue to follow up this matter with the Shadow Minister for Defence Personnel, Hon Luke Howarth MP, and the Shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Hon Barnaby Joyce MP – and I will be back in touch with you as soon as I have further information.

Best regards

Katie

Katie Adrigan-Hondros | *Electorate Officer*
Office of the Hon Andrew Hastie MP
Federal Member for Canning

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