

PROGRESS REPORT

SECRETARY GENERAL 1ST OCTOBER 2010-10-05

Now is the time to arrange a meeting with your local Member of Parliament and insist Government, and Government Ministers, are required to abide by the law just as everybody else has to ! The article which follows this progress report details our Statutory and Parliamentary claims to Occupational Pensions and Gratuities, including back pay for service in Her Majesty's Armed Forces prior to 1975. It will be included in the November edition of the Government Gazette and House Magazine. Download it and take it with you to pass on to your MP. Tell them we utterly reject the previous Government Minister's misinformation, spin and false pretences in their attempt to benefit cheat and defraud us of our pension rights. I have a letter from Rt. Hon. Nick Clegg MP describing it as an 'Unacceptable Injustice' which I have also passed on to my own local Member of Parliament, Caroline Dinenage. I have another progress meeting with her on October 15th.

I have also had letters from MPs requesting our Members to get in touch with them in order to take our claims forward. They will only do so on behalf of their own constituents so getting in contact with them is vitally important. If you are now living abroad you can still download the article and send it to the MP of the constituency you used to belong to. You could also arrange to speak with them over the telephone or perhaps arrange a video linkup with them. Most important of all ask your MP what they intend doing about it and whether they will put a question to the Prime Minister at question time on Wednesdays in the House of Commons?

I am still awaiting the outcome of my requests for a review of my application to the Pensions Ombudsman's Service made earlier this year. This is creating further delay since it may become necessary to seek a Judicial Review instead. I am naturally hoping this will not be necessary so that with a positive outcome from the POS we can immediately put our claims to the Defence Select Committee for implementation.

For those of our Members who are becoming impatient and frustrated by the time our efforts are taking, they might be interested in the following. Sir Peter Viggers wasted the best part of six months of my time by refusing to forward questions to the Defence Ministers on my behalf after several requests to do so ! Now that he has gone back permanently to his day job of Property Development and pre-occupation with 'Duck Houses' I now feel confident Caroline Dinenage MP will prove to be much more supportive !

Frank Rixon BEM, our Membership Secretary, in the meantime has sent letters and a copy of the following article to every new MP since the recent General Election. This will also draw attention to our cause and lack of disposable income as a consequence of having served in the Armed Forces.

In terms of 'disposable income', I am now 74 years of age and find I can no longer cope or carry out many of my ordinary daytime tasks I used to undertake especially with regard to domestic and property maintenance. Some of you over the age of 65 and going on to your seventies, may be finding the same difficulties? I have therefore found it necessary to inform my local Council I can no longer have the disposable

income to pay my Council Tax and wish to 'suspend payments' for the immediate future until the Central Government pays me what I am owed. I have also referred the matter and the Council to Caroline Dinenage MP for any future reference purposes.

For those of you who became Civil Servants on leaving the Armed Forces and paid into the Principal Civil Servants Widows Pension Scheme, I am also requesting Caroline Dinenage MP to seek a refund of my contributions. This was due to a 'Breach of Contract' by the Government in 1978. After 1978 previous contributions to the Scheme were disregarded and now Widows will receive a considerably reduced pension according to contributions made after 1978. For example any widow I might leave will now only receive C £450 instead of C £1650 per annum. If you remember the previous Labour Government used the National Insurance Fund (The Pensions Fund) to pay for now schools and hospitals instead of using it to increase 'Old Age Pensions !' No wonder the Americans don't want any truck with socialism !

Finally I cannot emphasise enough how important it is to get our message across to MPs on a personal basis. I will also be contacting the television and Newspaper Medias in the run up to Christmas and even Easter if necessary. Much of this can be very expensive especially the Government Gazette and House Magazine (House of Commons Magazine) which will circulate around Parliament, including the House of Lords. It is only thanks to your financial support we are able to do so. We are on our way, we are here to stay, and we will pursue our claims for as long as it takes !

Kind Regards and Best Wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Robson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial 'D' and a trailing flourish.

David Robson
Secretary General
The Combined Armed Forces Federation UK