

Minister
of National Defence



Ministre
de la Défense nationale

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0K2

MAY 10 2011

Mr. Neil McKinnon
Dominion President
The Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada
Dominion Headquarters
2 - 6 Beechwood Avenue
Ottawa ON K1L 8B4

Dear Mr. McKinnon:

Thank you for your correspondence of January 5, 2011, concerning resolutions passed at the 50th Biennial Dominion Convention held in Stratford last October. I appreciate the opportunity to address the two resolutions you enclosed with your letter, and please accept my apology for this delay in responding.

Over the last decade proposals for a Volunteer Service Medal have been discussed a number of times by the military and government interdepartmental honours committees. These proposals have consistently been rejected since eligible members receive the Canadian Forces Decoration, a national honour created in 1949, for 12 years of qualifying service and a record of good conduct in the Regular Force and Primary Reserve. The Department of National Defence would not support the creation of a new medal to highlight the volunteer aspect of military service.

I very much appreciate the resolution regarding a one-year complimentary ANAVETS membership for honourably released members of the Canadian Forces. I understand that a conversation between you and Director Military Careers Policy and Grievances staff confirmed that the offer would be made available to all retiring Canadian Forces members and returning combat veterans. ANAVETS provides a unique opportunity, and I expect that many retiring members will take advantage of this generous offer. The Director of Military Careers and Administration has appointed Major Kelly Ann Parent to contact you to discuss the possibility of including this information in Canadian Forces personnel Depart with Dignity packages. Major Parent can be reached at kelly.parent@forces.gc.ca.

Thank you again for writing and for your continued support of our men and women in uniform.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Peter MacKay".

Peter MacKay

Canada