

UKNDA NEWSLETTER – February 2009

BUT FIRST - AN APPEAL FROM OUR PRESIDENT

At the end of this newsletter is an appeal from our President – Winston Churchill. Please be sure to read that far (!) and then TAKE ACTION on what you have read.

While January was rather dank and dark, your Executives have been busy, as reported below. As I type these words February is promising to be very cold and I am looking out at an Olde English Christmas card scene. Pretty – but I am housebound because I live on a hill and, although my car happily slides DOWN it – it won't come back up it... until it thaws. Anyway, enough of that – what follows is just some of what has been happening this past month – quite a lot, as you will see.

MONTHLY SITREP

New “CEO’s Column” – for 2009. I have put on our web-site a new (2009) “CEO’s Column”, so rather than repeat myself here, may I invite you to go to our web-site: www.uknda.org to read my ‘thoughts and hopes’ for the UKNDA for 2009.

Another new Project: A Quarterly Magazine – “Defence Matters!”

Paul Berwick (our Marketing Manager) is leading on a project to create a self-funding - i.e. it won't cost the UKNDA any money - quarterly magazine which may be called “Defence Matters!”. The aim of this project being to promote the UKNDA's case as far and wide as possible. We aim to interest and involve as many as possible of the hundreds of Service Associations and Charities – with their tens of thousands of members (and the Royal British Legion that has almost 400,000 members!). Andy Smith (our PRO) will be the overall Editor and we will provide you with more details when the first trial/sample edition is produced - hopefully sometime in April.

And, again... Photos please. In the meantime I will repeat a request that was made in last December's Newsletter. For possible use in this proposed quarterly magazine, and for use in the promotional brochure we are planning we need good, dramatic and/or emotive photographs (for which you own the copyright – that is important) featuring our service PEOPLE (not just ships, tanks or aircraft). Please send digital copies to Andy Smith, our PRO at: pro@uknda.org - or hard copies, by mail, to UKNDA Ltd. (for PRO), PO Box 819, Portsmouth, Hants PO1 9FF.

OUR WEB-SITE – A revamp. We are redesigning the layout and appearance of our web-site – although the content will remain largely the same as now. This is being done partly as a result of the membership survey we held in December (as previously reported in January's newsletter) and partly because statistics show that while we are getting on average 150 to 200 ‘hits’ on our web site each day, less than 1% are then signing up to join the UKNDA. Accordingly our web site is now being made more “people oriented” and while ships, tanks and aircraft will always have their place, our emphasis will be on SUPPORTING OUR ARMED FORCES and the hardworking and long suffering men and women serving in them both near and far. Watch this

space (and visit our web-site regularly for the news/press updates) and hopefully next month we will be launching the redesigned site.

APPEAL FOR NEW MEMBERS - & FUNDS

Time is running out for our Armed Forces. The decisions that must be made by our next Government and Prime Minister will be decisive for the future effectiveness (or lack of it) of our Armed Forces. The UKNDA must put forth its best efforts this coming year, especially by making a major impact during the forthcoming Autumn Party Political season. We (the UKNDA) need to 'up our game' tenfold and to do that we (like the Armed Forces) need more money, although compared to them we only need to raise the proverbial 'widow's mite' but a 'mite' that could make a tremendous difference. **We can be fully financially self-sufficient if we can just quadruple our existing subscribing membership. If every one of our members (and our Registered Supporters) could recruit JUST TWO NEW MEMBERS EACH (*more would be even better*) then we would be completely self sufficient and fully equipped to make maximum impact this coming and crucial year for Defence & our Armed Forces.** An appeal by our President, Winston Churchill, is attached at the end of this newsletter. **Please read it, act on it, and also send copies out to all of your family, friends and colleagues.**

NETWORKING – A Sitrep

Meeting with Dr Liam Fox. 22 Jan 09. On 22 Jan Allen Sykes and I met with Dr Liam Fox – the Conservative Shadow Secretary of State for Defence. Dr Fox is a stalwart supporter of NATO as opposed to EU Defence plans. He has innovative ideas for improving the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of the Defence Procurement process. A fascinating meeting where, for our part, we stressed the need for the next Government to raise Defence and the funding of our Armed Forces significantly higher in the nation's list of priorities. Vague promises and 'undertakings' are not enough – positive action is needed.

Meeting with the Chief of the Air Staff - Air Chief Marshal Sir Glen Torpy, Wednesday 28th ended a busy month of meetings when Group Captain Patrick Tootal RAF and I called on the Chief of the Air Staff. We 'presented our UKNDA credentials' and stressed that our aim was to help our Armed Forces (and the MOD) not to hinder or try to second-guess them.

A message from Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS)– General Sir Richard Dannatt GCB CBE MC ADC Gen

Major General Patrick Cordingley (a UKNDA Vice President) and I will be meeting with CDS in March, his diary being absolutely full until then – which should tell us something about the pressures all of the three Service Chiefs are under. In advance of that meeting however I have just received a personal letter from General Dannatt which included the following statement:

"I know that I speak on behalf of the rest of the Army when I say that I am deeply grateful for the work that you are doing to promote the welfare and concerns of the Armed Forces, and I look forward to debating with you how this may best be taken forward. It only remains for me to wish you and the rest of your team a Happy New Year.

DELEGATION – Who to approach first?

Since the UKNDA was launched I (and our team) have received more than 18,000 e-mails. This load is increasing daily and to avoid our e-mail IN trays getting overloaded it will help us (and you) if you know who best to address your e-mails to – hence the following advice.

For all messages about the **UKNDA's MESSAGE**, Public Relations, our Web-site and related matters – please contact our PRO: **Andy Smith** at: pro@uknda.org

For matters relating to developing **new MEMBERS and new LOCAL UKNDA Branches** – contact **Cdr. Graham Edmonds** our National Development Manager at: ndm@uknda.org

For matters relating to **MARKETING the UKNDA** – contact our Marketing Manager **Paul Berwick** at: mfm@uknda.org

For matters relating to the Management & Administration of the UKNDA contact, as appropriate, either our Membership & Company Secretary **David Robinson** at secretary@uknda.org, or our Treasurer **Mike Morrison** treasurer@uknda.org

DEVELOPING A NATIONAL NETWORK OF UKNDA COUNTY & REGIONAL BRANCHES.

(a summary of progress by our National Development Manager – Graham Edmonds)

We are now setting up a network of branches throughout the UK based upon regions with county and local branches. **The AIM of developing this network is to increase membership of the UKNDA so that we can achieve our purpose more quickly and effectively – i.e. campaigning for sufficient, appropriate and fully funded Armed Forces.**

“Regions” (loosely based on the GB NUTS1 (Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics), will vary in size to take into account membership numbers and county size.

England has nine regions: SW, SE, Greater London, West Midlands, East Midlands, East of England, Yorkshire and the Humber, NW and NE). Branches will be based upon the counties and where there is a large membership, more localised branches will be encouraged. The metropolitan districts of Birmingham, Greater Manchester and Merseyside, Tyneside and Leeds, Sheffield, Bradford etc, will be included, initially, within their traditional counties.

Scotland will be considered to have three regions, based upon the Highlands, the Rift Valley and the Southern Highlands and Borders.

Wales may be divided into two regions, North and South, depending upon how recruitment develops.

Northern Ireland (Ulster) will be one region with (potentially) 6 county branches.

The structure for UKNDA officials operating this development is as follows:

Each region or group of counties (eg Devon & Cornwall, or S Wales and N Wales) to have a President. Each region/group of counties will also have a co-ordinator; 15

are required – 2 are already in place (SW – *Graham Edmonds*, and East of England – *Dave Tisdale*)

Each individual County or local Branch to have a Chairman and Secretary. Thus we will have one National President (Winston Churchill), Regional Presidents (including country groups), and Single County or Local Branch Chairmen and Secretaries.

So far fledgling branches have been (or are being) set up and staffed as follows:

- Cornwall – Regional President (covers Devon also) and a branch secretary
- Devon – Regional President (shared with Cornwall) and a possible branch secretary
- Lincolnshire – County chairman, helpers
- Northumberland – Branch secretary
- Nottinghamshire – Branch secretary and helpers
- Greater London – possible branch chairman and secretary
- Worcestershire – volunteer helpers
- Ulster – Branch chairman/region co-ordinator
- Hampshire – two possible local branches with secretaries and helpers
- Cambridgeshire – branch secretary and helpers
- Rift Valley, Perthshire and Kinross – helpers

Any UKNDA member wishing to take on a more formal and positive role in the Association please contact Graham Edmonds ndm@uknda.org (07974 351023) as soon as possible. Come on in – there’s lot of scope for you to help us. This is an ACTION Association.

ACTION THIS DAY!

Please read and take action on the appeal from our President, Winston Churchill, that is attached below. Please distribute copies wide and far – search your address books and send copies to your local papers and magazines, whether city, town or village.

Thank you in anticipation – and keep warm and safe, Spring is just around the corner!

John Muxworthy

Cdr. RN CEO UKNDA

NOW PLEASE SEE OUR PRESIDENT’S APPEAL

SUPPORT OUR ARMED FORCES

“ACTION THIS DAY!” -- Winston Churchill, 1940

This is an APPEAL FOR FUNDS that are needed urgently to enable the UKNDA to make a real difference with our campaign to SUPPORT OUR ARMED FORCES.

The need is urgent because the challenge of funding for our Armed Forces is getting worse by the day. There is a current £2 billion ‘black hole’ in the Defence Budget that will (if not resolved) result in further severe cuts in defence equipment projects and further reductions in our already overstretched forces – resulting in fewer ships, aircraft and tanks, and fewer serving personnel. The overall ‘black hole’ that has accumulated over the past ten years of underfunding is now assessed as being some £15 billion. Our ships, aircraft, fighting vehicles and other equipment are ageing and rapidly being worn out by constant operations. Too often lives have been, and are still, being lost because of insufficient or inadequate equipment.

The need is both urgent and critical because sometime within the next eighteen months we shall have another Government and, no matter which party is in power, funding decisions regarding Defence must and will be made that will determine the future peace and security of our Country, its people, and their vital interests wherever they may be.

We are fast approaching a ‘tipping point’ where commitments made and decisions taken in the next year will have a decisive and long-term effect on our future Defences and Security. The UKNDA and its SUPPORT OUR ARMED FORCES campaign needs your financial help NOW if we are to make an effective contribution to highlighting, in the coming Election campaign, the challenges facing our country and the urgent need to support the men and women of our Armed Forces, who daily risk their lives to defend us all.

Just why the UKNDA is needed, and why we urgently need funds to publicise our campaign, may be found on our web site: www.uknda.org

To SUPPORT OUR ARMED FORCES and join the UKNDA, go to our web-site and click on the picture of a soldier who asks you to JOIN US NOW. To make a donation please send your cheque, made out to “UKNDA Ltd”, to: UKNDA Ltd (Appeal), PO Box 819, Portsmouth, Hants PO1 9FF

Thank you!

Winston Churchill

President UKNDA