

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing with regards to the upcoming Remembrance Ceremony at the Cenotaph on Sunday 9th November 2014. I would like to express my support for the joint campaign of the British Humanist Association (BHA) and the Defence Humanists.

This campaign seeks to place a non-religious representative at the Cenotaph alongside the multiple members of faith communities to lay a wreath on behalf of all servicemen regardless of their faith or philosophical persuasion. Despite there now being over 26,000 serving personnel of no religion now in the Armed Forces – and over 400 active members in Defence Humanists – representation is denied at what is still a heavily Christianised service for a supposedly secular national event. By comparison, there are less than 100 members of the Jewish faith and less than 150 Sikhs currently serving in same Armed Forces – and yet both groups are routinely represented at the Cenotaph with little fuss or bother.

In denying their 2011 application for representation, Minister for Tourism and Heritage Mr John Penrose MP said that since ‘all people of no belief aren’t necessarily humanists’ and that ‘humanists don’t come together in socially or geographically recognisable groups’ he would be unable to grant fair representation at the Cenotaph. The first comment is fair but beside the point, seeing as the argument is to represent the over 400 Defence Humanist members as well as symbolise a truly secular contribution to the Ceremony. Considering the default position is that the Anglican faith represents members of all faiths and none this statement is little more than hypocrisy.

I would like to reiterate my support for this campaign and encourage other readers to do the same by writing to their MP and let them know of the public support for this campaign.

Yours,