



AUSTRALIAN PEACEKEEPER & PEACEMAKER
VETERANS' ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

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*Affiliated with the Soldiers of Peace
International Association – SPIA
<http://www.fname.info/aisp/eng/>*

Also assisting Veterans of Iraq, Afghanistan and Peacetime Service

*Commemorating 20 Years of The Australian Contingent
to the United Nations Transitional Administration Group,
Namibia, South West Africa*

14th May 2009

Subject: Canadian National Peacekeeper's Day, 9th August 2009.

To Colonel Donald Stewart Ethell, Ron Griffis, David Rohrer, and members of the Canadian Association of Veterans of United Nations Peacekeeping (CAVUNP) and the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum,

On behalf of the National Committee of Management and members of the Australian Peacekeeper & Peacemaker Veterans' Association (APPVA), I wish to convey to you our Association's best wishes and Good Will for the Canadian National Peacekeepers' Day, on 9th August 2009.

I understand that a great deal of lobbying was made by CAVUNP to the Canadian Parliament for a prolonged period and the success of this lobbying was decided by the Canadian Parliament to provide Royal Assent for "Throughout Canada, in each and every year, the ninth day of August shall be known as 'National Peacekeepers' Day.'"

It is a credit to the Executive and members of CAVUNP to enshrine this day in order to recognise the largest loss of life of Canadian Peacekeepers in the one incident, when on the 9th August 1974, a Canadian Forces aircraft on UN duty was shot down in Syria, killing nine Canadian Peacekeepers.

We share with you the tragic loss of these Canadian Peacekeepers, who were performing their duty to world peace and security at the time of their unfortunate deaths.

It is pleasing to note that this event will be commemorated with a parade, dinner and ceremony on the 8th and 9th of August this year. This is a significant milestone in lobbying by CAVUNP, as we here in Australia attempt to have a similar National recognition of our Peacekeeper dead, by lobbying for "Australian Peacekeepers' Day." We are aiming to have this accepted by the Australian Government and officially recognised on the 14th of September. The 14th of September 1947, saw the

"Looking After Our Own"

world's first peacekeepers, that being four Australian Military Observers, deploy in the field at Batavia in the Dutch East Indies, now known as Indonesia, under the auspices of Chapter VII of the UN Charter, by the mission called the United Nations Good Offices Commission (UNGOC). This later developed in 1949 to the UN Commission to Indonesia (UNCI), after ceasefire was brokered by UN Military Observers between the Dutch Colonialists and the Indonesian Nationalists.

We in Australia are very proud of our Peacekeeping history, and like our brothers and sisters-in-arms in Canada have served on many peacekeeping operations since 1947 to the current day in Cyprus (UNFICYP), Sudan (UNMIS), Darfur (UNMID), the Middle East (UNTSO), Iraq and Afghanistan. We all have the common link that we have served the world in order to provide for a better quality of life for those who have needed a helping hand from the International Community via the United Nations Peacekeepers.

In many of these operations, we have served side-by-side with Canadians and have made great friendships. We embrace these friendships as they hold a special meaning to many.

The Canadian Forces are noted to be one of the most significant contributing nations in the world toward UN Peacekeeping Operations and we salute you for your courage, sacrifice and valour, in which many have not returned home and the consequences of these operations have effects on us for the rest of our lives.

We wish you all best wishes on this special occasion and once again congratulate CAVUNP on the dogged determination to have the unfortunate incident to Buffalo 461 and the nine Canadian Peacekeepers killed on duty, to be nationally recognised by the Canadian Government.

Yours, in the Service of Peace.



Paul Copeland, OAM, JP,
National President.