



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Mr Alistair Sands
Secretary
Finance and Public Administration
References Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Mr Sands

Further to my letter of 2 December 2005 I am writing to provide you with further information in response to questions taken on notice at the 17 June 2005 hearing on the inquiry into matters relating to the Gallipoli Peninsula.

- Q6 The Department has a copy of Dr Cameron's grant proposal on file that seeks five years of funding for surveys and excavations of the Anzac Gallipoli Battlefields. The Department holds two emails from Dr Cameron sent to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet dated 22 March 2005 (attached).
- Q8 We could locate no records to indicate that the then Secretary consulted with the Department of the Environment and Heritage.
- Q9 The Commonwealth War Graves Commission have produced a document titled: *'Discovery of remains in the Gallipoli Battlefield - Guidance notes for visitors'*. (Attached). This document is on the Department's Internet Site.

Provision of information requested in Q2-5 is dependent on input and agreement by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. We have written to them and I will write to you again when they have advised their position on the matter.

Yours sincerely

Kerry Blackburn
General Manager
Commemorations and War Graves Division

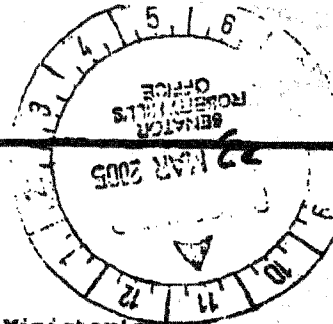
14 February 2006

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REFERRED TO MINISTER
ASSISTING THE MINISTER
FOR DEFENCE



From: 169014

Sent: Tuesday, 22 March 2005 18:29

To: Minister for Defence

Subject: Correspondence referred from PM&C

The below was received by PM&C and has been referred for your Minister's consideration. Thank you. [TITLE] Dr (FIRSTNAME) David [LASTNAME] Cameron [ADDRESS] 13 Ffolingsby Street [SUBURB] Weston [STATE] ACT [POSTCODE] 2611 [COUNTRY] Australia [EMAIL] dwc@anatomy.usyd.edu.au [DATEOFEMAIL] 20/03/2005 [MESSAGE] Dr David W. Cameron 13 Ffolingsby Street WESTON ACT 2611 19th March 2005

RE: Preliminary archaeological survey at Gallipoli 2003 ? Human Remains Anzac Cove
Dear Hon. Prime Minister, I wish to bring to your attention information regarding the preliminary archaeological survey that I conducted at 'Anzac' in 2003 and issues about this survey that have been recorded in Hansard (17/03/05). In 2002, in response to the ever increasing tourist numbers visiting Gallipoli, I and a number of other colleagues from various disciplines decided that we would submit a grant proposal to conduct a detailed archaeological survey of the Anzac Gallipoli battlefields of 1915, with the view to ascertaining the best way to preserve the area while accommodating the needs of visitors to the area. In preparation for this grant proposal, a colleague and I went to Canakkale in early 2003 in order to open discussion with Turkish authorities and academics. We also did a preliminary survey (tour) of the region with a Turkish colleague of the Anzac battlefields over a three-day period in order to ascertain the viability of our original project aims. Overall it was a very successful trip and we were given encouragement and support not only from colleagues at the 18th March University, but also Turkish Government officials, especially from the late Professor Bademli of the Gallipoli Penin sula Peace Park Office (Ankara). Prior to, during, and after this survey taking place we had discussions with the Office of Australian War Graves, Commonwealth War Graves (UK), the RSL (Canberra Head Office), the Australian War Memorial, Australian Ambassador to Turkey, Environment Australia (prior to survey only), as well as a number of Turkish officials in Turkey. The bulk of these discussions concerned our planned detailed archaeological survey of the Anzac Battlefields of 1915 (Australian Research Grants submitted in 2003 and 2004 ? unfortunately unsuccessful on both occasions). We asked for advice from these organizations in the development of our grant aims. We were/are greatly appreciative of the advice and supported offered by these institutions. On the first day of our 2003 visit, we found a human femur at Anzac Cove in the area that appears to be the very spot now being bulldozed. At the time, we tried to contact the Commonwealth War Graves Office at Canakkale, but during our stay the office was never opened. We did however, provide a photograph of the human remains informed them of where it was and we slipped this information under their office door. We also provided our contact address ? email but never got a response. On returning to Australia, I notified that Commonwealth War Graves office in the UK (via email). We later had a meeting with the Office of Australian War Graves (early April 2003) with Air Vice Marshal Gary Beck and a senior representative from the Commonwealth War Graves (UK) who was visiting the ACT at the time. Indeed, prior to this meeting in 2003, AVM Beck personally requested a copy of an ARC grant application (which he stated he needed to read in detail as a number of important issues needed to be considered by the government), which specifically mentions the presence of human remains at the location now being bulldozed (copy available on request). At this meeting we spent some time discussing our grant application and its revised aims. We also presented a power point presentation and discussion of our preliminary survey in which we discussed the femur found at Anzac Cove. Indeed, I distinctly remember passing my fieldwork note book around which contained a photograph as well as discussion stating that the bone had obviously just washed out and that it must have originated from the heights above (i.e., First Ridge ? the ridge currently being bulldozed). At the time we did not spend a great deal of time discussing the femur as I had no idea that the 'surviving' remains of the serviceman buried somewhere along First Ridge was in danger of being disturbed. I certainly had no idea that any construction work was planned for the area. If so, the focus of our discussions to say the least, would have been predominately the disturbance of human remains at this site. On hearing earlier this month that this very area was being destroyed by bulldozers, and that human remains had been reported as having been found (which given our findings of 2003 should have been of no surprise to AVM Beck ? certainly no surprise to me) I offered assistance. I emailed AVM Beck on 13/03/05 advising of our availability to conduct an immediate archaeological survey as to me the presence of further human remains was an issue that needed to be addressed immediately before further remains were disrupted. It was shortly after making this offer that I read in media reports that an archeological

y had already been conducted. I then emailed AVM Beck requesting a copy of this
st. At this point AVM Beck replied with a rather condescending email stating that
historians are happy that there are no human remains to be found in the area.
169014 raised my concerns to AVM Beck he emailed back saying that he has said
that he is going to say on the matter. MORE TO FOLLOW - PLEASE SEE ADDITIONAL
MAIL

REFERRED TO MINISTER
ASSISTING THE MINISTER
FOR DEFENCE

From: 169014

Sent:

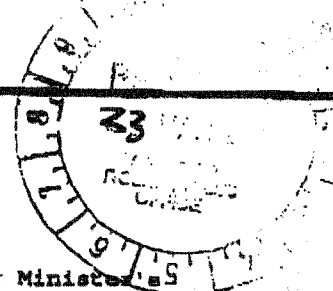
Tuesday, 22 March 2005 16:30

To:

Minister for Defence

Subject:

Correspondence referred from PM&C



The below was received by PM&C and has been referred for your Minister's consideration. Thank you. [TITLE] Dr [FIRSTNAME] David [LASTNAME] Cameron [ADDRESS] 13 Follingby Street [SUBURB] Weston [STATE] ACT [POSTCODE] 2611 [COUNTRY] Australia [EMAIL] dwc@anatomy.usyd.edu.au [DATEOFEMAIL] 20/03/2005 [MESSAGE] CONTINUED ON FROM DR DW CAMERON'S PREVIOUS EMAIL ?? To date, despite requesting a copy of the much discussed archaeological report from both AVM Beck and from the Turkish desk representative in the Department of Foreign Affairs, Mr Henry Bray, I have not been able to obtain a copy and in fact am beginning to question its existence (see below). AVM Beck did provide an address to write to in Turkey that might help me in my request, but as he and I both know it would take months to get a reply (and if a reply was forthcoming previous experience strongly suggests that it would most likely be something like - you have contacted the wrong office ? please write to?). I suggested to AVM Beck that given that the Office of War Graves or DVA apparently requested this road extension, it was surprising that he does not have a copy of the archaeological report or that he was not aware of anyone in Australia that has one. Given the urgency of the issue at hand, waiting months for a response from Turkish officials was not a viable option. Also quite alarmingly, the responses from DFAT indicate a complete ignorance of the issues at hand. When I raised the issue of human remains that we found in 2003 at Anzac cove with Mr Bray he advised me to contact Environment Australia, or the National Trust. As I informed Mr Bray, neither of these bodies have jurisdiction of the area as Gallipoli is not heritage listed. I also stated that I did not want to bring even more people into the current debate but wanted to restrict my concerns to the Office of War Graves and DFAT. I also suggested that Mr Bray should perhaps take this issue a little more seriously. He then informed that we was organizing a meeting with AVM Beck that afternoon and that he would get back to me ? that was almost a week ago - I'm still waiting for his promised telephone call. Of additional concern was AVM Beck's email response to my original request for a copy of the archaeological report, which included this statement: "the thoroughness of the records and war graves burial teams in 1919 was such that any field graves would have been relocated. All of this information would have coloured any decision on the thoroughness of an archaeological examination of the area" Does this in fact mean that any archeological survey would have been half-hearted, or perhaps was considered to be unwarranted? I would go so far as to suggest that AVM Beck's and DFAT's replies suggest a closed mind on the issue when there is definitive proof demonstrating that at least one service man (very likely to be Australian) is buried in an unknown grave where the current works are being conducted. Air Vice Marshall Beck

has sought to rely on the advice of historians re the probable series of events, even when actual physical evidence (presented to him in 2003) has refuted the beliefs of these historians. Also at no time was our advice sought in regards to this issue, which is rather surprising. I believe that AVM Beck's apparent decision to allow bulldozers to proceed with the construction of a road extension through this highly sensitive area represents a willful disregard of the high possibility that additional unknown graves are present at the site currently being bulldozed. It is also of concern that current reporting states that the works were actually intended to be undertaken in the Chunuk Bair and Lone Pine areas. It is well established that the remains of hundreds of Australians who perished in these very areas have no known grave. As such, their remains are yet to be recovered and before any work is even contemplated in these areas an exhaustive archaeological survey is required. I bring this to your attention in the hope that AVM Beck might be induced to reconsider his position on the works and request a more thorough study of the area so as to safe guard the remains of any Australian Servicemen that might be located there. I should let you know that I was personally approached by New Zealand television ("Close-Up") to appear on a three-person panel with the New Zealand Prime Minister along with a Turkish/Australian representative to discuss the road works at Anzac Cove within the last two weeks. I declined this offer because I wanted to give the Australian Government an opportunity to address this issue without suffering international embarrassment. Nor did I want this to become a 'political issue'. Unfortunately however, it would appear that key officials in the Government have no interest in giving this matter the serious consideration that I, and millions of other Australians, believe it deserves. I hope Mr Prime Minister that this correspondence will enable you to appreciate that the conduct of this issue to date by the Office of Australian War Graves leaves much to be

ed. I know that your father and grandfather both rendered distinguished military
vice and I'm sure that you are as sensitive as any Australian is to the
possibility that the Australian Government might be seen to have unwittingly allowed
these construction works to proceed. As far as I can ascertain, these works have
already resulted in the violation of Australia's war dead at Anzac Cove (First Ridge).
I also hope that the comments by the Hon Alexander Downer to the effect that further
works are contemplated at Anzac do not imply that further work would proceed with the
same apparent disregard for Australia's war dead. This must also apply to any area of
the Anzac Battlefields, especially around Second Ridge, including Chumuk Bair and Lone
Pine. If the Australian Government is requesting this work to be done, then at the
very least the Australian Government must also ensure that appropriate
research/fieldwork is done to ensure minimal disturbance not only of human remains,
but associated archaeological material. Australia DOES have a say in what happens at
Anzac (Treaty of Lausanne, 1924), it is not just a Turkish responsibility. Our
discussions with Turkish authorities made it clear that they were keen for Turkish AND
Australian archaeologists to work together at Anzac in order to conserve and protect
this internationally significant historical, cultural and archaeological site. There
is certainly no Turkish issue of 'sovereignty' in this regard. I hope that you will
feel that your personal intervention is warranted to prevent any further works
proceeding until we can be sure that we can safe guard any remains that are yet to be
given a proper burial. Yours Respectfully, Dr DW Cameron Visiting Fellow University of
Sydney dwc@anatomy.uyed.edu.au

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PS: I am sorry for the length of this combined email but needed to put the record
straight which unfortunately requires a lengthy correspondence.

Discovery of remains in the Gallipoli battlefield - Guidance notes for visitors

This guidance note is written with a view to providing prospective visitors to the Gallipoli Battlefield area with advice regarding the discovery of remains.

The discovery of remains on any battlefield has been and always will be, an emotive subject and no more so than on the Gallipoli Peninsula where the vast majority of casualties did not receive a formal burial in one of the present 31 constructed war cemeteries. These guidance notes are intended to help the visitor to know what action to take in the event of them finding bone fragments during their visit.

However, it is first worth looking at some of the historical background information in order to gain an understanding as to why so many soldiers rest in the battlefield area, rather than in the cemeteries.

Burial ground information.

1. Commonwealth burials

A great number of graves were constructed during the campaign but when the last Commonwealth troops withdrew from the Peninsula in December 1915 / January 1916, many unburied casualties had to be left on the battlefield. After November 1918, the Allies were able to return to occupy the Dardanelles. New cemeteries were constructed and the overall number of burial grounds were reduced. A modern cemetery is quite often an amalgamation of four or five original burial plots. When reburial occurred, it was not always possible to find all the remains that had been recorded buried during the time of the battles. Also, the ravages due to prolonged exposure to the open air, made identification of unburied bodies impossible. It is not hard, therefore, to understand why the current statistics for overall losses in Turkey reveal the following :-

British casualties : 6% unidentified burials and 70% no known graves.

Australian casualties : 1% unidentified burials and 61% no known graves.

New Zealand casualties : 5% unidentified burials and 78% no known graves.

India/Pakistan casualties : 2% unidentified burials and 88% no known graves.

2. Turkish burials

Unlike the Commonwealth countries, the Turkish nation did not construct formal cemeteries for their fallen after the war. The whole battlefield area, therefore, is a sacred repository for the Turkish fallen. This adds an estimated figure, in the region of 70,000, to the numbers of soldiers with no known graves.

The battlefield area therefore represents one vast burial ground and should be respected as such.

Advice for the visitor

1. The battlefield lies within the confines of the Turkish Peace Park known as Milli Park. The visitor should note that it is absolutely forbidden by the Turkish authorities to go digging for artefacts and remains.

2. Milli Park contains many small farms that abut the battlefield areas. It should be noted that these farms are not encroaching on the battlefield area. Prior to the war, the surrounds to features such as Hill 60 were typically "a mixture of scrub, oat fields and wheat fields" and "today, wheat fields surround the hill, as they did in 1915". (Taylor and Cupper's A. Battlefield Guide P. 174). Visitors should not trespass on these agricultural fields.

**Discovery of remains in the Gallipoli battlefield -
Guidance notes for visitors**

Discovery of remains

1. Discovery of bone fragments.

Bone fragments do work up to the surface from time to time. In view of the fact that there are so many casualties on both sides with no known grave, the policy is to put these fragments back into the soil of the battlefield.

Should a visitor find a bone fragment, then this is what he / she is advised to do.

2. Discovery of significant remains.

It is unlikely that a visitor will be involved in a major find of a full skeleton with identifiable items of uniform or equipment. In such an event, the matter should be reported to the Commonwealth War Graves Office in Canakkale. The latter would then liaise with their Head Office, the Milli Park Turkish Authorities, and the relevant Embassy. Should clear identification be possible, then the Commission would accept the remains to be interred in the most appropriate War Graves Cemetery and a grave marker, in the form of a pedestal, would be placed.

Source: Commonwealth War Graves Commission