



DAILY EXPRESS

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Healey resigned as PM has let the nation down

JOHN HEALEY is a man of honour who has resigned rather than accept a funding settlement for the Armed Forces which puts the nation at risk. This is a disaster for Sir Keir Starmer, whose weakness has entered the terrain of the pathetic.

In his resignation statement, the former Defence Secretary told Prime Minister Sir Keir he has "been unable, and the Treasury has been unwilling, to commit the resources that the nation needs to defend the country at this time of rising threats".

The defence of the realm is the primary duty of any government and the PM and the Chancellor are letting the country down.

Successive administrations have presided over the decline of our Armed Forces and now we are confronted with a host of threats.

It is regrettable that the plan for upgrading our forces is months overdue, and it is outrageous, as Mr Healey implies, that the PM and Chancellor are not willing to make vital investment in our security.

Mr Healey told Sir Keir he was "being forced to make decisions that would reduce the readiness of our forces and increase the risk to personnel on operations, and could make the country less safe".

This government is plumbing a new depth of shambles when a Prime Minister cannot now stand up to a discredited Chancellor such as Rachel Reeves.

Labour's internal crisis risks becoming a defence crisis.

Sir Keir should stop worrying about his foes within Labour and instead take the emergency measures required to deter Vladimir Putin.

Believe in the UK and give us a proper Brexit

THE DAILY Express led the campaign for the UK to leave the European Union and Britons can take pride in voting a decade ago to wrench back sovereignty from Brussels.

The political establishment's stubborn refusal to grasp Brexit opportunities is one of the great disappointments of the past 10 years.

New research shows that the majority of us want total border control and a more limited relationship with the bloc.

We will continue to demand decision-makers Give Us A Proper Brexit.

Politicians who believe in Britain should back our campaign and embrace a better, more prosperous future for us all.

War heroes revealed

IT IS right that every effort is made to identify the remains of the soldiers missing on the battlefields of the First World War.

A postcard belonging to a fallen war hero played a crucial role in identifying a soldier and his comrades.

Private Thomas Whitaker, who carried a postcard from his hometown of Bradford, has been buried with full honours. We must give our heroes, who were so deeply mourned by their loved ones, this dignity.

The painstaking detective work to locate those who never made it home must continue.

A celebration of the greatest human quality of bravery.

THIS evening, the National Army Museum in Central London will host an evening entitled Stories of Valour: Victoria Cross and George Cross.

It is a sign of the times that the Victoria Cross and George Cross Association, which is helping to stage the event, has decided to link up with the NAM rather than the Imperial War Museum (IWM), just four miles away.

Until recently, such an event championing gallantry might have been an obvious one for the IWM to host but that was before it became the "Imperial Woke Museum", committed to highlighting the causes of the LGBT+ community and other diversity issues, rather than our war heroes.

Thank goodness for NAM, which is now the best place in London to visit for anyone who believes, like me, that bravery is one of the greatest human qualities that any man or woman can display. As our wartime Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill put it: "Without courage, all other virtues lose their meaning."

This evening is NAM's first event to mark the museum as the new home of my collection of Victoria Crosses (VCs) and George Crosses (GCs), the largest of its kind in the world.

The event will be hosted by museum director Brigadier (Retired) Justin Maciejewski DSO MBE, who has commanded soldiers on military operations, witnessed courage in action and has recommended soldiers for public recognition.

AND the guest speakers are Warrant Officer Class 1 Johnson Beharry VC COG, Chris Finney GC and Dom Troulan GC QGM, who will explore what it means to be a VC and GC recipient, explaining the stories behind their decorations. I am



A Challenger 2 tank on display outside the National Army Museum in London



Lord Ashcroft

Guest Columnist

delighted that NAM has started exhibiting part of my collection of VCs and GCs for the first time. Over the next two years, my entire collection – 245 VCs and a smaller number of GCs – will go on display at the museum. This follows their display in the Lord Ashcroft Gallery at the IWM for 15 years until September last year.

My passion for courage dates back to when I was a small boy and my late father, Eric Ashcroft, told me about his experiences as a young officer during the D-Day landings of June 6, 1944.

I have been learning more about courage ever since, never more so than over the past four years of the all-out Ukraine-Russian war. I have visited Ukraine 15 times, including several visits to the frontline.

It was there, near the frontline city of Slovyansk, that I met Brigadier-General Denys Prokopenko, the commander of

the First Corps Azov. As the hero of the siege of Mariupol early in the war, he helped me understand how important it is to have the moral high ground as a soldier in a wartime situation.

The courageous officer, often known by his call sign of Redis, told me: "Everyone [in Ukraine] has their own source of inspiration. For most, it is preserving the territorial integrity and sovereignty of our country."

As an island, Britain has developed its own laws, traditions and customs but it is also a huge champion of the value of courage. From 1939 to 1945, our military, like Ukraine's today, had the moral high ground as they fought the evils of Nazi Germany.

It was Queen Victoria who instituted the VC in 1856 and today it remains the premier decoration for Britain and the Commonwealth for gallantry in

the presence of the enemy. And George VI instituted the George Cross in 1940, early in the Second World War, and it remains the most prestigious decoration for Britain and the Commonwealth for gallantry not in the presence of the enemy.

NOW, I like to call the recipients of the VC and the GC "the bravest of the brave" and I am delighted that all holders of the two decorations are so well represented by the Victoria Cross and George Cross Association.

I wish everyone well for this evening even though, sadly, other commitments abroad prevent me from being there.

I am sure this will be the start of a long and happy association between myself and NAM for many years to come.

● Lord Ashcroft KCMG PC is an international businessman, philanthropist, author and pollster. For more information on his work, visit lordashcroft.com. Follow him on X/ Facebook @LordAshcroft. For more information on Lord Ashcroft's medal collections, visit lordashcroftmedalcollection.com

'Britain is a huge champion of the value of courage'