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File No.: 65-6

The Honourable Harjit Sajjan, Minister of National Defence
The The Honourable Kent Hehr, Minister of Veterans
Affairs House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Ministers,

Recent media reports confirm that The Returned Services League (RSL) of Australia are in support of the soldiers who are battling a range of mental illnesses caused by the anti-malaria medication Mefloquine.

The Royal Canadian Legion is concerned with the lack of medical research on this medication that our Veterans were prescribed prior to operational deployment in Somalia and elsewhere. In 1999, an Auditor General's report found that DND improperly prescribed mefloquine during the Somalia deployment and failed to track the side effects as required by the clinical trial. Other allied countries have ceased prescribing mefloquine to their military personnel.

The Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs (ACVA) recently heard testimony from a Veteran, Claude Lalancette and testimony of three medical professionals, Dr. Ritchie, Dr. Nevin and Dr. Passey on the effects of taking Mefloquine. Their testimony can lead to the conclusion that the effects of mefloquine are similar to or mask the same effects of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and other Operational Stress Injuries. This has the potential to mask a real prognosis of veteran's health issues which would unnecessarily complicate the individual's recovery period.

The Royal Canadian Legion urges you to consider undertaking research into the use of Mefloquine and its side effects. Our sailors, soldiers and airmen and women deserve to know the side effects and to receive the proper diagnosis so that they can receive the proper care as well as assisting them to link their condition for

disability benefit entitlements. We owe our service personnel that much. There is no better way to demonstrate your commitment to support those who served their country than to conduct this research.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "David P. Flannigan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "D".

David P. Flannigan
Dominion President