

**16 June 2009**

**Tolson leads the Gurkha debate**

Jim Tolson MSP for Dunfermline West will be leading the Members' Debate in the Scottish Parliament on Thursday on 'Rights of Former Gurkha Soldiers'.

Jim Tolson commented "It took a Commons defeat and much public support for the Gurkhas to achieve a 'U-turn' from the UK Government. The Government had failed to recognise the long history of dedicated service by generations of Gurkha soldiers and the overwhelming strength of public feeling throughout the whole country.

Many West Fife veterans have served alongside the Gurkhas over the years and have been very supportive of the Gurkhas in their campaign for right of residence in Britain."

Willie Rennie MP for Dunfermline and West Fife commented "I am very supportive of the Gurkhas in their campaign for residency. The Gurkhas have made a valuable contribution to our armed forces over the years and have the right to stay in the UK if they so wish."

**Ends**

**Notes to Editor**

**[S3M-04032# Jim Tolson \(Dunfermline West\) \(Scottish Liberal Democrats\): Rights of Former Gurkha Soldiers](#)**— That the Parliament welcomes the victory for the rights of Gurkha soldiers achieved in the Commons defeat on 29 April 2009 when MPs voted by 267 to 246 for a Liberal Democrat motion offering all Gurkhas equal right of residence in Britain; believes that this is a historic victory for the Gurkhas who have served the United Kingdom so bravely; notes the widespread opposition to the UK Government's proposed guidelines, which are considered to permit only a small minority of Gurkhas and their families to settle while preventing the vast majority to do so; believes that the UK Government's decision fails to recognise the long history of dedicated service by Gurkha soldiers; welcomes the support for justice for the Gurkha soldiers by former Gurkha officer, Major Bill MacKay of Dunfermline; commends the 70 years of continuous service given by Sergeant Sunar Gurung, who served with Major MacKay, and Sergeant Gurung's six sons who all served with the Gurkha regiment, and believes that such service should be recognised.

Supported by: Margaret Smith, Mike Pringle, Nanette Milne, Mike Rumbles, Ross Finnie, Bill Kidd, Robert Brown, Liam McArthur, Robin Harper, Hugh O'Donnell, Alison McInnes

Lodged on Thursday, April 30, 2009; Current