

Veterans Rally – Supporting Soldiers A-Z



To the BBC in Portland Place for the London site of the Million Veterans Rally in support of those British Soldiers being persecuted through the courts for political reasons following their doing their duty in Northern Ireland over 40 years ago. Other rallies were being held simultaneously outside the studios of either the BBC or Independent TV in Glasgow, Cardiff, Salford (Manchester) Birmingham and

Bristol. In particular Soldier F, a veteran of the Parachute Regiment, background [the IRA bombed](#) the Parachute Brigade HQ in Aldershot, a garrison town then accepted as the home of the British Army. They killed a gardener, a Roman Catholic priest and five dinner ladies, some of them mothers, who worked in the canteen.

The IRA have an amnesty, so called 'comfort letters' assuring

them that they will no longer be pursued for any murder or atrocity they committed during the troubles. The veterans ask "Where is my Letter of Comfort ?" See below.

The police and BBC security were holding the crowd of veterans back from the concourse outside the Portland place building. But then a group of Paras (the famous maroon berets) outflanked the control and got a Regimental flag right up by the front door.





At which we all surged forward.



The rather bemused young ethnic minority security guards stood no chance – well they were up against the best. A well-mannered polite and friendly best, but not men I argue with.



Shame on you, shame on you to the BBC. She was safe enough –
so why so worried looking?



And it was pointed out to the police that they are on the wrong side.







And then the wonderful sound of powerful motorbikes as some of Rolling Thunder arrived, and the crowd parted to allow several machines right up to the police cordon outside the BBC foyer. The sound . . . the smell. . .

As you can see from the different flags, berets and caps, t-shirts and blazer badges there were many regiments, some historic and some modern represented, also veterans of the RAF and the Royal Navy and women of the Women's Royal Army Corps (left), as it was when they served.

T-shirts saying "Soldier F – you are supported by The Sappers/The RAF/ the WRAC/ etc.

The closing formation was 8 ex-paras formed up to spell the word BETRAYED.

They marched up to the BBC door, turned round, the National Anthem was sung, and they marched back.



SALFORD

Rolling Thunder were in Manchester in greater numbers and had already arrived and were parked when my daughter arrived.



Placards showed why the veterans were angry with the BBC and

their bias, or complete lack of coverage of certain issues.



There were also speeches in Salford and a crowd of various regiments.







Security in the north was a man on a segway, who had to endure some good natured ribbing from the Rolling Thunder guys – “So what’s that thing’s top speed? “



CARDIFF

A friend in Cardiff reckoned the turn out was several thousand, which made it larger than London or Salford.



And again a good presence from Rolling Thunder



The Media have sat up and taken notice and there are news reports on line so I will be able to find out how the rallies in Bristol, Birmingham and Glasgow went.

Photographs E Weatherwax, her family and friend J Marsh. London, Manchester, Cardiff. May 2019