



ANIMAL CONCERN

PO Box 5178, Dumbarton G82 5YJ.

Telephone: 01389-841639. Fax: 0870-7060327. Mobile: 07721-605521

E-mail: animals@jfrobins.force9.co.uk Website: www.animalconcern.org



7th November 2006

The Rt Hon. Des Browne MP,
Secretary of State for Defence,
Ministry of Defence,
London SW1A 2HB

Dear Minister,

I understand that next Monday, November 13th, representatives from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals are meeting officials from the MOD clothing procurement department to discuss the possibility of producing busbys from a synthetic alternative to bear skins.

On behalf of the members and supporters of Animal Concern I urge you to take action now to stop the use of real bearskin in the manufacture of these ornamental hats worn by guards on duty at various public places in London.

Apart from the fact that bears are killed to make these hats you should also consider the total impracticality of such headgear.

Busby's weigh several pounds and are extremely warm. It is not unusual for guards wearing them to pass out or faint when on duty.

In these days of heightened terrorist activity a heavy, badly balanced hat which is designed to stop tourists and not bullets is not a sensible uniform for people charged with guarding the Royal family and major public buildings.

Bearskin busbys cost several hundred pounds each – why not use that money to buy essential equipment needed to save the lives of troops on active duty?

We hear a great deal of talk about Britain having a modern, well equipped army. Strengthen that image by dumping a cruel throwback to the days of the musket.

Yours sincerely,

John F. Robins,
For Animal Concern