



Stewart McDonald MP
Member of Parliament for Glasgow South
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
stewart.mcdonald.mp@parliament.uk

Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister of the UK

28th January 2021

Prime Minister,

I am writing to you regarding your visit to my constituency today.

Let me begin by acknowledging that your desire to thank the members of our armed services for their diligence, hard work, and expertise in setting up facilities to support the mass vaccination centres being established throughout the country, including Castlemilk in my constituency.

Such a sentiment is shared by the overwhelming majority of parliamentarians, across all parties, and one I wish to place on record as the SNP Shadow Defence Spokesperson.

However, at a time when your own Government's advice is to adhere to essential travel only, it flies in the face of logic and common sense for you to travel from London to Glasgow for what can only be described as a photo opportunity.

The First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon MSP, has made very clear that your trip is not deemed to be essential, and as such should not be happening.

How can we, as elected politicians, expect the general public to adhere to every necessary restriction in place for public health reasons, if the Prime Minister fails to heed his own advice for essential travel only.

There are many ways to show your appreciation for the work of our armed forces, more appropriate to the situation we find ourselves in during a global health pandemic. Today's visit is not one of them.

The best way to pay tribute to the those in the armed forces is to pay them a proper wage, improve their working conditions and better support armed forces families. The SNP defence team have offered policy options on this to your ministers on how this might be done on many occasions.

As the NHS across the UK faces increasing pressure from the effects of new variant Covid-19 alongside the annual winter period demands, it is incumbent upon all of us in elected office to set an example of best practice in following the published guidance issued by your Government, and when in Scotland that of the devolved Scottish Parliament.

Your visit today fails to do so, and once again reinforces the public perception that there is one set of rules for them and another for those in power.

I urge you to reflect seriously upon this and to respect the guidance.

Yours,