Statement from the family of the late Major Sidney Excell

The Remembrance Sunday Cenotaph ceremony is something that we hold in the highest respect, making time to either watch it on the television or attend a local service of remembrance each year. It is wonderful to see such a diverse range of soldiers represented, from Church of England to Sikh. However there is a glaring exception to this inclusion: those of no faith whatsoever.

Major Sidney Excell, my grandfather, served this country twice: both in the Palestine Mandatory police and in the Armed Forces Intelligence Corps during WW2. He is remembered in history as the man who arrested the head of the Gestapo, Heinrich Himmler.

It is devastating to know that a man who played not a small role in history not be remembered by the country he so loved. It is disgusting that the Dept. of Media, Culture and Sports has consistently denied requests for a humanist representative to be placed with religious representatives. We call for an end to this blatant discrimination - and that is what it is. It is denying *all*secular service men and women, past and present, a representative when if they had been religious they would have been allowed one. All who serve should be remembered: secular, undecided, unaffiliated or religious. This is not a request for anything more than we be included.