

Following the resignations of John Healey and Al Carns, Hamish de Bretton-Gordon [writes in the Telegraph](#) that Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Knighton, who as Chief of the Defence Staff is the professional head of the armed forces, should now "show that he represents British servicemen and women by falling on his sword as well", because –

Given the colossal insult that has just been offered to all the armed services – nobody in defence was apparently allowed to see the funding figures until this week – I believe that the Chief of the Defence Staff, the head of the Armed Forces, should also do the honourable thing.

Colonel de Bretton-Gordon is an all-round good guy who is always worth reading and listening to. His call for CDS to resign is, after all, only a newspaper column about which we could go on for ever agreeing or disagreeing.

The last very senior officer to resign on a point of principle is thought to be General Sir Richard O'Connor, who resigned as Adjutant-General in 1947 over the cancelled return home and demobilisation of troops in the Far East. (Monty had a different version of events, but the cancelled demob was a reasonable point to resign over.)

As far as I know, Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Knighton is not a member of British Armed Forces Federation (BAFF). BAFF is all-ranks, tri-service but I believe we have yet to recruit any RAF officer above the rank of Air Marshal (retired) – [the late peer, Lord Tim Garden KCB](#).

Hamish de Bretton-Gordon's call for Sir Richards's resignation could, arguably, strengthen his hand, he having reportedly already expressed his concerns to the Prime Minister over the manifest inadequacies of the Defence Investment Plan.

But should Sir Richard actually resign? That is obviously up to him. Speaking personally, if I was considering resignation from such an appointment on a point of principle, I would want to do so conspicuously of my own volition and off my own bat.

Calls in a newspaper (however influential) for my resignation would have the opposite effect on me, and my instinctive reply would be "Sod off".

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