

*Government Orders*

Let us give our soldiers, these brave Canadians going to enforce the peace in Bosnia, the equipment they need. Let us give it to them now. The money exists in the national defence budget. The minister can find the money hidden in wasteful and questionable spending of taxpayers' funds by himself and his senior management team. The cost savings and efficiencies alone would provide that money.

Why does the Minister of National Defence not give each of our soldiers one of his quill tipped, gold letter engraved pens so we can be sure that each one of them can write home? The Minister of National Defence is concerned about special pens for his special friends to sign special multilateral agreements, such as those in NATO, NORAD and the United Nations. At least that is what he told Lowell Green, Ottawa's radio talk show host.

He is not concerned about saving money and getting the best bang for the buck. The Minister of National Defence could get rid of management levels at NDHQ and send that money to the armoury floor or to the training establishment so that our soldiers get the training and the help they need to do their jobs. That is what our Canadian troops deserve.

The bloated bureaucracy at NDHQ is eating up the money before it reaches the armoury floor or the training establishment. There are efficiencies to be found in the Department of National Defence, particularly at NDHQ. The minister knows it. I know it. All Canada knows it.

The Minister of National Defence so mismanages his cabinet portfolio that he will be unable to defend and justify the national defence budget in front of the finance minister. The Minister of National Defence cannot speak up for our soldiers, sailors and air crew. He does not speak their language. He does not know the problems they face. He just does not get it.

Besides, the Liberal finance minister will not listen to him. The finance minister, when he is confronted with a problem, simply cuts federal funding. That is what he will do with the defence department again. Then he will vote in favour of sending Canadian troops to remote parts of the world. That is the Liberal way.

They will forget that the Liberal Prime Minister from Quebec sent Canadian soldiers to Bosnia. They will forget that news reports say it is one of the coldest winters in Bosnia. I wonder if the defence minister has checked to see if our troops have enough sweaters and boots.

I have so much information here that the defence minister could put a stop to the wasteful spending in areas such as information technology, military command and control information systems, program management, project management, operations management, defence information services, infrastructure reductions, infrastructure management and many other areas.

The report of the special commission on the restructuring of the reserves has been published. Using the numbers cited in the report, which are inflated due to the regular force capital and operational costs being allocated to the reserves, there is ample money to employ and train more reserves, not fewer.

The defence white paper had flawed numbers. It declared that \$1.028 billion was what the reserve force cost. After the white paper DND said that the reserves cost only about \$875 million. The reserves are the most cost effective part of our Canadian Armed Forces. The militia, for instances, consumes only 4 per cent of the defence budget. However it is interesting to note that 20 per cent of the troops sent to the former Yugoslavia were reservists. That is cost effective. The reserves are cost effective. However the Liberals are planning on cutting the reserves.

• (1855)

When the Liberal Minister of National Defence submitted his white paper on defence it was seriously flawed. The numbers were wrong. He was off by hundreds of millions of dollars. The defence minister was advocating cuts based on a document that was seriously inflating the cost of our reserves. Maybe the minister should buy calculators instead of gold plated pens.

The Canadian Armed Forces is a complex organization which would be very difficult to recreate. We have heard Liberal members in the House today say that the present strength of our forces does not need to be maintained. They claim that in our post cold war era, which seems to them to lack a threat, we do not need to maintain our modest military capability.

Are the Liberals quite sure? I would say it would be a pity to be wrong.

**Mr. Barry Campbell (St. Paul's, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise on this occasion to participate in the debate on the interim report of the finance committee following the conclusion of its prebudget consultations.

We will have a final report for the House to address in mid-January. However I wanted to take the opportunity to say a few words about the process of prebudget consultation.

In the past budgets were made for the most part behind closed doors, with a finance minister consulting in private with select groups of individuals and interest groups. Today, the government for the third year in a row has taken the budget making process out from behind closed doors and to Canadians across the country.

Through consultations held in Ottawa and in various centres across the country, Canadians have had a chance to provide their input this year, as they have in years past since we formed the government, about the upcoming federal budget. I want Canadians to know the prebudget consultations are now a permanent feature of the budget making process in the country.