

Government Orders

Minister, for over a week before this announcement was made on Friday, attempting to create the impression that the government would be bringing in cuts to government programs and cuts to government spending in order to finance the efforts of our men and women in the gulf.

Instead we find out on Friday that the bulk of the overspending by government is not due to the efforts of those people who are serving us in the gulf. It is due to the high interest rate policy of this government. We have \$2.5 billion of overspending to cover the increase in public debt charges due to the high interest rate policy of this government. It is the same high interest rate policy through which Canadians are losing their homes and their jobs. It has also increased the number of bankruptcies. People are losing their ability to keep their heads above water in difficult economic times. It is not our forces in the gulf that are causing this cut to government programs. It is \$2.5 billion of overspending by this government, based on its own interest rate policy.

Then we have over \$300 million additional spending on the goods and services tax, a tax that nobody wants. Where is most of this money going? It prepares to grab and gouge that tax from Canadians. Then the insult of insults: it prepares propaganda to convince them they like it. Even worse is to send out cheques, bribing them into thinking that next year they really want to pay more tax. For the Prime Minister to talk for over a week about the needs of our forces in the gulf and then to table this kind of financial information, where less than 10 per cent of the overspending is due to the forces in the gulf is an insult to Canadians and an abuse of those men and women who are serving us away from home.

• (1600)

I want to talk about a few other cuts that were announced on Friday. They are great examples of the financial mismanagement of this government. We are not going to refurbish or rebuild our Archives. We are going to go through another winter with freezing pipes and irreplaceable antique records and documents lost as they were last year.

A recently released spills report says that the government is incapable of responding to an even minor oil spill, much less a one. The coast guard is 25 per cent

underfunded for what it needs to do in the area of protecting our oceans and our waterways.

The report of the Auditor General says there is no monitoring of ocean dumping whatsoever under Environment Canada. Again the Auditor General's report tells us that the enforcement of CEPA is tremendously lacking, that there were in total three convictions for violations of Canada's Environmental Protection Act out of well over 3,000 investigations.

The report that was tabled on Friday tells us cuts that the government has made in the past to the transport department now have to be reinstated because the aviation safety of Canadians can no longer be assured. The government was told that when it cut personnel from aviation safety, but it persisted with that cut anyway. Now here it is, having received a devastatingly, critical report on aviation safety in Canada which pointed out that we have twice the accident rate as exists in the United States. Now the government is reinstating jobs and operating money that it should never have cut in the first place.

Health and welfare, especially the health protection branch, is being cut when the costs of health care are increasing dramatically.

Employment and immigration is being cut while the Auditor General is criticizing the government for its mishandling of immigration and refugees, security clearances and its virtual lack of verifying the performance of entrepreneur immigrants.

We have cuts to unemployment and immigration when right now the Canada Employment Centres can do no more than hand out cheques. They cannot help people at a time of high unemployment to find jobs because they cannot help employers to find people who can fill their jobs.

We have the whole area of the environment in many departments which is suffering from cuts announced on Friday, despite the words of this government. We still have no clear explanation of why these cuts are being made. We have no clear explanation of why our armed forces at full strength, being paid for and equipped in Canada, suddenly are costing us hundreds of millions of dollars more because they happen to be in a different location.

The report of the Auditor General says there has been a steady drift to larger and larger numbers of officers and NCOs with fewer and fewer lineal units to lead. The senior ranks now appear disproportionately larger in