

Canadian Naval Air Group

Founded on January 23, at Edmonton, Alberta, Canada 1970
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November 01, 2011

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

RE: Proposed Budget Cuts to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Dear Prime Minister Harper;

I write today on behalf of the members of Canadian Naval Air Group, and all Veterans', to express our sincere concern over the recent rumblings that suggest your government's preparing to make exorbitant cuts in the Veterans' Affairs annual budget. We contend that these extreme reductions of up to "Two Hundred and Twenty Five Million dollars", combined with the further potential to look for additional savings of five-to-ten percent on the backs of Veterans' is totally unacceptable.

We fully understand that these are troubled financial times, and that everyone must do their part to ensure that Canada's fiscal deficit does not get out of control. However, it is felt that to do so at the expense of our Veterans' welfare, Veterans' whom have served their country so courageously while promoting the Canadian ideology of freedom that we all cherish so deeply, would be a major setback to their already inadequate support (new unfunded veterans charter), and more specifically, an unjustifiable insult to their dignity. To arbitrarily condemn these brave volunteers to an unknown future is deplorable in-its-self, but to enact their fate in the name of economic austerity without due consideration is even more contemptible.

It is common knowledge that the United States and several of our other Allies' have been consistently increasing their financial support to their Veterans' community. These significant milestones mark the beginnings of our Allies' positive efforts to ensure that no soldier falls by the wayside, and consequently,

important acknowledgements and/or conspicuous decisions that by their very nature Canada cannot afford to disregard. We feel that it is imperative that we offer this same reassurance to our service personnel returning from Afghanistan and other recent Canadian Military/RCMP endeavours. This fact will no doubt become even more prevalent once those who have served so diligently start requiring assistance from the very coffers identified in the budget cuts you are currently contemplating.

Your government has consistently demonstrated the wisdom to correct potential errors in judgment in the past Mr. Prime Minister, and therefore, we strongly urge you to rethink your government's position on this compelling issue that truly frightens all Veterans'.

Respectfully Yours in Naval Air,

Paul Baiden MMM, OStJ, SC, CD
National Chairman
Canadian Naval Air Group

CC: Minister of National Defense
Minister of Veterans' Affairs
Minister of Finance