

Ottawa Journal by David Tilson MP ? Liberal government letting veterans down

Canada's veterans deserve nothing but our utmost respect and that of the government.

The outstanding men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) have stood on guard for our country and have steadfastly defended our fundamental freedoms and values. They've made tremendous sacrifices to protect the peace we enjoy as Canadians. We can never say thank you enough; however, we can and must demonstrate our gratitude for their loyal service to Canada by supporting them when they need us. Sadly, the current Liberal government's record to date on supporting veterans is extremely disappointing with broken promises and more recently, insensitive comments.

We, the Conservative Opposition, believe that our military veterans deserve the utmost respect for their service to Canada and the sacrifices that many have made in that endeavour. It is imperative that our elected officials lead by example in demonstrating this respect. Unfortunately, current Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his Liberal government have shown little respect to Canada's veterans. He thinks that our veterans cost the government too much money. During a town hall meeting in Edmonton a few weeks ago, the Prime Minister told a former soldier who lost a leg in Afghanistan that veterans are asking for more than his government is prepared to give right now. However, this is the same Prime Minister and Liberal government who found \$10 million to pay off a convicted terrorist whose sole aim was to murder our men and women in uniform. This is not acceptable.

In addition to the Prime Minister's insensitive comment, the Liberal government has repeatedly shown it cannot be trusted to address the issues affecting veterans, nor does it intend to honour the promises that were made during the 2015 election campaign. Many of us recall the current Prime Minister's campaign promise of, 'no veteran will be forced to fight their own government for the support and compensation they have earned.' Fast forward more than two years to unfulfilled promises. He promised Canadians that if they voted for him he would re-establish lifelong pensions for injured veterans. He broke that promise. He promised to make it easier for veterans to access services. He also broke this promise.

Since the Prime Minister and the Liberal Party formed government in 2015, the number of veterans waiting for disability benefits has ballooned to more than 29,000 and disabled veterans are losing their case managers due to Liberal policy changes. These examples demonstrate that Prime Minister Trudeau and his Liberal government cannot be trusted to put the needs of veterans first. It's time for the Prime Minister to finally accept responsibility for letting Canada's veterans down by apologizing for the disrespectful comments he made, as well as start fulfilling the promises he and the Liberals made during the 2015 election campaign. Our veterans deserve nothing less than our full support and complete respect. Canada's Conservatives will continue to fight for them every day because they fought for us.

