

## Ottawa Journal by David Tilson MP ? Liberal government?s unilateral decision to purchase 18 Super Hornets

The current Liberal Government announced Nov. 22 it will be buying 18 Super Hornet jet fighters, without knowing how much they will cost, explaining it as an ?interim measure? to supplement Canada's CF-18s.

This announcement raises serious concerns about the current government's intentions, judgment and transparency to Canadians. The recent announcement to purchase 18 Super Hornet jet fighters represents yet another poor decision made by this government and the Prime Minister, who aren't looking out for the best interests of Canada's men and women of the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF). It is clear to Canadians this is simply a political decision made by an especially naïve Prime Minister who is delaying any decision on a new fighter jet for five years. What's more concerning is that the current government spent little to no time consulting experts or members of the RCAF to determine if this purchase is in the best interests of Canada. The current government instead chose to place life-long gag orders on more than 200 employees working on the Future Fighter Capabilities Project. Furthermore, experts agree that operating an interim aircraft is expensive and unnecessary.

It is most unfortunate the current Liberal government is misleading Canadians about a ?capability gap,? as Canada's current fleet of CF-18s is fully operational. Their claim has no basis and is fabricated when what they really have is a ?credibility gap.? The decision to purchase the Super Hornet jet fighters demonstrates the current government's defence policy review is nothing more than window dressing designed to prop up conclusions that have already been made in the Prime Minister's Office.

Canadians are also rightfully concerned about the current Liberal government's announcement to purchase 18 Super Hornet jet fighters when it has no idea how much it will cost Canadian tax payers. This is the exact opposite of the openness and transparency this government claimed it would deliver to Canadians. The outstanding men and women of the RCAF always deserve the best equipment to help them stand on guard for Canada. The current government is also failing to stand up for the thousands of aerospace workers across the country whose jobs could be at risk by this sole sourced deal. The best value for Canadian tax payers can only be accomplished through an open and transparent competition.

The Conservative Official Opposition will hold the current Liberal government accountable for its unilateral decision-making on the purchase of Super Hornet jet fighters. The government isn't putting the best interests of the women and men of the RCAF first or considering the advice of experts. This unilateral decision isn't reflective of a progressive defence policy either. It's entirely designed to meet a poorly developed and completely unattainable campaign promise made by the Prime Minister. The recent actions by this current Liberal government are anything but open and transparent. Canadians deserve better from the leadership of their country.

