

May 2, 2012

Mayor Bob Bratina
Hamilton City Hall
Hamilton, Ontario

Dear Mayor Bratina and Council Members,

We at Voice of Women (Hamilton) have long been aware of the 26 percent of our Federal budget which Canada currently spends on the military.

While we do not dispute that some financial resources must be allocated, we feel that many Canadians are unaware of the vast amount which our budget sets aside for this today resulting, obviously, in major cuts to municipal services which both Council and citizens would earnestly like to see improved.

When one examines the low percentages for all other day-to-day services which enable us to live healthy lives, it is clear that Canadians are being done a disservice with so much weight being placed on the military--especially in view of Canada neither being at war or having any known enemy.

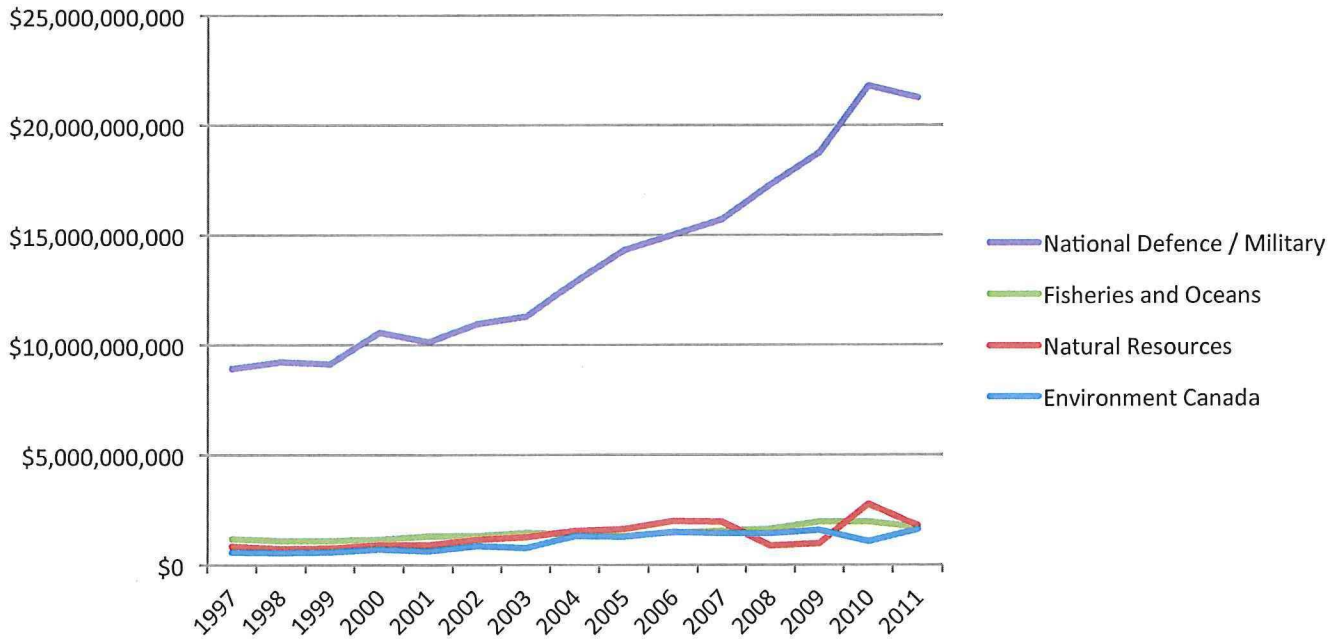
We wanted, respectfully, to draw the attention of yourself and your Council to this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Louise Rogers (Mrs)
(signed for Voice of
Women).

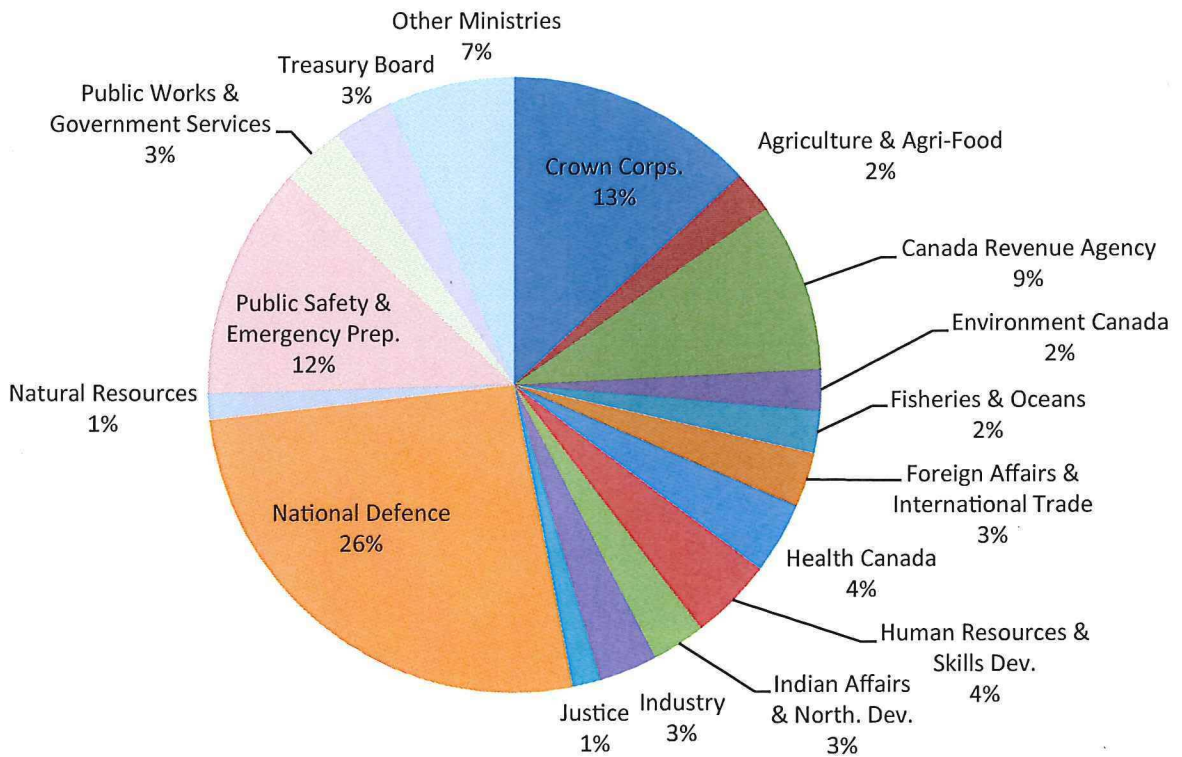
National Defence Spending v. Federal Environmental Funding from 1997-2011

From the Public Accounts of Canada, Receiver General for Canada. Source:<http://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/recgen>



Federal Departmental / Program Expenses 2010-2011

% of Federal Expenditure. Not including Transfer Payments. From the Public Accounts of Canada



Canadian military spending 2010–11: Largest budget since Second World War (statistics quoted from *Bill Robinson* defence analyst and senior adviser of the Rideau Institute)

Canada is the 13th largest military spender in the world. Twelve years of budget increases have left Canadian military spending higher now than it was during the Cold War or indeed at any time since the end of the Second World War.

Canada will spend at least \$22.3 billion (and probably closer to \$23 billion) on its military forces in fiscal year 2010-11. The 28 members of NATO collectively account for about 57% of world military spending. Canada is the 6th largest military spender among those 28 countries, trailing only the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Italy, all of which have much larger populations and economies. This is true despite the fact that Canada is located in a very benign region of the world, facing essentially no military threat to its own territory.

Canada's mission in Afghanistan has absorbed a significant part of the recent increases in Canadian military spending. This has come at the cost of Canada's ability to contribute to UN peacekeeping operations and its ability to fund non-military contributions to global security and humanitarian action. Canada contributes just 56 military personnel to peace keeping operations, or 0.07% of the total, making Canada 60th on the list of 102 military contributors. Our personnel contribution ranks between that of El Salvador (64 soldiers) and that of Greece (52). Even Yemen provides more military peacekeepers (73) than we do. Rwanda contributes 63 times as many military personnel (3,512) as Canada does.

Canada could make a much greater contribution to global and domestic security and humanitarian action by shifting resources to nonmilitary security efforts, peacekeeping operations and the health and wellbeing of its own citizens.

For more information contact Hamilton Voice of Women for Peace jw4peace@cogeco.ca