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There are many ways to invest 25 billion dollars, and many of them could help our economy in numerous aspects. Our government chose instead, to invest that money in the construction of Navy warships in the Halifax Irving shipyard. This does give job opportunities and bring a lot of industry into Halifax, but in my opinion, this is not the optimal route to follow. The question is how could the tax payers' money be better invested to help the economy and our society as whole, and in a greener, more equitable way? There are so many things that can be done with those 25 billion dollars that could not only answer this question, but go far beyond it. Since the money was put into the Halifax shipyard, the majority of new investments I have researched will focus on Nova Scotia and the Maritime provinces.

First, let us take 40% of the 25 billion dollar budget and set it aside, as what I have researched would only cost an estimated 15 billion to do properly.

Canadian taxpayers pay taxes in hope that they'll see their investments at work. They should get a return in one way or another, whether it is direct or indirect. What better way to show the Canadian public that the government is truly thinking about them then by giving them a newer, greener, and more modernized form of energy?

Before I get to it though, some hard facts. One 1.5MW wind turbine can supply enough energy to power 332 Canadian households. The wind farm near Amherst already pumps out 324MW. My thoughts aren't on wind energy, but on solar instead. A 200MW solar farm can be installed for the price of around 700 million dollars.

If our government took that money and constructed solar farms they could provide Nova Scotians with a fresh, cleaner source of electricity. A solar farm of this size could be built in the rural area near Amherst and the border to New Brunswick, where a wind farm is already functioning. A solar farm of that magnitude would produce

4200MW of energy. That alone could provide power for over nine-hundred thousand households. It would be a great way to beautify Nova Scotia, as tourists driving in through New Brunswick would see exactly where our energy comes from. Building something of this scale would also create a massive amount of temporary jobs, and numerous permanent ones after the farms have been constructed. It's surprising that the government hasn't heavily invested in this type of power already, seeing how effective it would be on making a more stable environment economy-wise.

Instead of putting money towards our Navy and the construction of warships, the government should put more funding into Peacekeeping. As of today, Canada is ranked fifth on the top contributors to the UN Peacekeeping budget list. By investing in that region, even just 500 million dollars a year, we would be donating over 10 percent of that budget, and rise to 3rd on the list. For a country so focused on peacekeeping, this should be a higher priority than building warships. This would show that Canada is more for peace than war, which is something that would drastically improve our National image.

If our taxpayers' dollars didn't go towards building warships in the navy, where could that money be invested instead? Education in Nova Scotia is in dire need of a remodeling. Our undergraduate tuition fees are abysmally high (highest in the country), compared to the other provinces. If the government invested the taxpayers' money into cheaper education, this would bring that price down and help students get their diplomas and begin to contribute to our society with a reduced stress brought on by student fees. If education was cheaper, our society would be better taught, and equitability would be a direct result of this.

One month ago a Navy frigate leaked oil into the Halifax harbor. This, although not directly affiliated with the Irving shipyards, raises the idea of actually cleaning up the harbor. There has always been a long standing stigma attached to our inlet of water, and so far any serious efforts to make things better haven't done their job completely. With just a fraction of the 25 billion dollar budget we could not only clean the Harbor, but insure that it would stay clean for years to come.

A large-scale waste treatment plant was built in Victoria for 700 million dollars. Since we already have sewage treatment plants built from the last grand-scale effort, that cost would be drastically reduced. After that, the waste flowing into the harbor would be reduced as well. This plant would give hundreds of workers part time and full time jobs, as servicing these facilities properly would be in constant need of servicing.

Just a fraction of that 25 billion dollar budget could help control bacteria and waste flow into the Halifax Harbor and make its public beaches popular once again.

25 billion dollars can go a very long way. It's a shame to see what the government decided to spend that on, but it is an interesting thing to look at what could have been financed. Clean energy for Nova Scotia and the Maritimes, a revitalized image of Canada's Peacekeeping efforts, a more equitable post-graduate education system, and a clean, safe Halifax harbor. All of these ideas wouldn't even take the entire budget to be brought to light. With investments like these, the Canadian government would be on a great track to improving our Country's image. Canada should be on top when it comes to positive change. These ideas, if carried through, would be a very positive first step in making our Nation more peaceful, more equitable, and overall, a greener Country to live in.