

Debate on Vote 23 and 26: Defence and Military Veterans

Speech by Mike Bond MP

DA Member on the Portfolio Committee of Defence and Military Veterans

Good afternoon Plenary Chairperson,

The Honourable Chairperson of the Defence Committee,

The Honourable Members of the Defence Committee,

The Minister of Defence,

The Deputy Minister of Defence,

Honourable Members of the Esteem Plenary,

All Senior Members of Staff of the Department of Defence.

In addition to the issues raised prior, by the Honourable Marais and the Honourable Shelembe, who I totally agree with.

After my being Elected to this Parliament, which is a huge rude awakening, and now I've learned and understand that the Department of Defence is in an absolute mess:

This Department is Riddled with corruption and bad Administration.

The disposition of the State Entities, Armscor and Denel which leaves truly little to be desired.

Logistic support of Military hampered by the non-supply of essential necessities that ensure quality for a well-equipped and up to date Military.

Equipment which is out of date and continues to be unmaintained.

A properly secured supply system will ensure the Effective operation of our Military in protecting is Country.

The non-compliance of age limitations for posts of our Military Members is affecting the ability to be Effective, this is most critical.

Military needs to be upgraded and relevant to properly protect and serve Soldiers.

This Country's Military is not "Combat Ready" to Protect Borders of South Africa.

What concerns me about the Lady R, who arrived here like the lady of the night and disappeared as quickly as she had arrived, what has not been raised are the incidents of the docking of ships involved in the BRIC's Naval Exercises, what was loaded on those ships we do not know.

Having served in the Military for many years we have to adopt the "Code of Conduct for all uniformed Members of the South African National Defence Force" as well as the "Rules of War", notwithstanding these principles of engagement, the one thing that stands out is paragraphs two and three of the "Rules of War",

"I will fight only enemy combatants and attack only military objectives".

"I will employ methods of attack to achieve the military objectives with the least amount of harm to civilian life and property".

As far as the Military Veterans Department is concerned, this Department is in a worse state than the Department of Defence:

Not the filling of critical Posts,

Little or no service delivery,

Riddled with corruption,

No value for money,

The money that is budgeted by Military Veterans' Department for the number of Veterans Registered as served cannot be justified.

Military Veterans should be respected for their Service by the Department and Country that we served, I have served this Nation for over forty years in our Military.

In conclusion, this Department needs a total overhaul.