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# Politicians pitch 'successful side' of mission

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**DATE:** 2007.10.07

**SECTION:** International

**PAGE:** A8

**SOURCE:** The Canadian Press

**BYLINE:** Les Perreux

**DATELINE:** Kabul, Afghanistan

**ILLUSTRATION:** Afghanistan Foreign Affairs Minister Dadfar Spanta (right) and his Canadian counterpart Maxime Bernier hold a news conference Saturday in Kabul. – Photo by The Canadian Press

**WORD COUNT:** 375

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Two newly shuffled Canadian cabinet ministers arrived in the Afghan capital just 30 minutes after another deadly suicide bomb attack Saturday, but that didn't daunt their persistent pitch that life is getting better for ordinary Afghans.

International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda and Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier landed in Kabul a short time after a suicide bomber struck on the main airport road, killing a U.S. soldier and four civilians. That attack came on the eve of the sixth anniversary of the U.S.-led invasion that ousted the Taliban from power.

Oda tried to reassure skeptical Afghan journalists that the shift by the insurgents to roadside and suicide bombings actually illustrated the success of the western security mission in Afghanistan.

Although such tactics have long racked southern Afghanistan, the fact that suicide bombings were now occurring in the capital showed that the Taliban were desperate because of their inability to win on the battlefield, Oda said.

Oda said she recently met senior Afghan officials and together they "identified that the difference in the challenge in Kandahar today can be seen as, to a certain extent, success."

Insurgents "are having to resort to other more desperate ways of trying to make their statements," she told a couple dozen Afghan reporters and a handful of Canadians.

Oda's reassurances come amid recent reports that the intensity of the insurgency is growing.

The United Nations' Department of Security and Safety has reported that the "security situation in Afghanistan is assessed by most analysts as having deteriorated at a constant rate through 2007."

The UN confirmed rebels were moving away from battlefield confrontations, but "the numbers of incidents are higher than comparable periods in 2006."

Instead of localized battles, bombings have been spreading across the country, the UN said.

Police have become favourite targets and civilians face mounting intimidation, the report added.

A count by The Associated Press showed about 5,100 people have died so far this year in insurgency related violence, about 1,000 more than all of 2006.

Most of the casualties have been insurgents reportedly killed in battle, according to numbers supplied by the Afghan government and western forces. The Taliban accuses the West of greatly exaggerating rebel losses.

Once relatively tranquil, Kabul has faced three major bomb attacks in a week. The bombings have claimed 37 lives, mostly civilians and police.

While Oda pointed to signs of progress like the 1,200 Canadian-sponsored wells being dug in the Kandahar region, Bernier added that "we can see the situation in Kandahar has improved."

# Police escort; Canadians mentor Afghan security force to take on extremely hazardous duty

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**PUBLICATION:** The Sunday Herald

**DATE:** 2007.10.07

**SECTION:** NovaScotian

**PAGE:** S3

**SOURCE:** The Canadian Press

**BYLINE:** Dene Moore

**ILLUSTRATION:** Mohammad Haq has a scar from a Taliban bullet on his temple. He is one of the Afghan National Police officers being mentored by Canadian soldiers at the police substation at Pulshakan. (Dene Moore / CP); Canadian Army Cpl. Eric Dagenais on watch at the police substation in Pashmul, Afghanistan.

**WORD COUNT:** 958

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MOHAMMAD Haq pulls up the sleeve of his black shalwar kameez to show the scar from a Taliban bullet. He has another on his right temple, one on his abdomen and another on his back.

Haq, 26, is an Afghan National policeman and he's one of the lucky ones.

He's alive.

He also appears to be stoned on a hot afternoon at the Pulchakan police substation.

Drug use is a known problem among the Afghan police, a ragtag bunch with many other shortcomings. Yet they are a cornerstone of Canada's exit strategy from this war-torn land.

In military talk, the Afghan National Police have a problem with "survivability." It means they're dying in great numbers.

The Pulchakan police substation is in the Zhari district of Kandahar, heartland of the Taliban and a place where 33 Afghan police were killed by insurgents this summer.

In July alone, 71 Afghan police were killed by insurgents in NATO's Regional Command South, which covers the provinces of Kandahar, Helmand, Zabul, Uruzgan and Nimruz of Afghanistan.

According to the International Crisis Group, about 630 Afghan policemen were killed in the year ending March 2007. The Afghan Interior Ministry says 500 have died since then.

"That's one of the reasons we've been put together," says Maj. Louis Lapointe, commander of the Police Operational Mentoring Liaison Team, a new program involving 50 Canadian military police and infantry who have just started training the Afghan police.

"The enemy they're facing is not a normal burglar or a normal thief," Lapointe says.

"They're facing insurgents who are well-equipped and they've got some kind of military training, which the police don't have."

The Afghan police also lack other important things.

Some of them have boots; others don't. Many seem to share a single uniform, while others don't even try to work in uniform, leaving them indistinguishable from farmers in a field or Taliban fighters. They are notoriously corrupt, ill-equipped and poorly-trained – if they're trained at all. A glaring example came earlier this month when Afghan police opened fire on Canadians as they approached a substation en route to a mission.

The youngest of the police are 12 to 14 years old, and few of them can read or write.

Yet an effective, functioning local police force is what's required before Canada and other foreign governments can scale back their presence without giving up the progress they've made.

Canadian military and political officials have ruled out negotiation with the Taliban to end the war.

In theory, Afghan security forces should be ready to take on the burden of fighting the bloody insurgency themselves when international forces leave this sunbaked country.

But even now, NATO's International Security Assistance Force simply doesn't have the numbers to guard the ground they've gained from the Taliban.

Referring to the nine Afghan police officers he and his colleagues have been training, Sgt. Jean-Pierre Dion said: "This is the future."

"This is how we're going to eventually leave Afghanistan," Dion said as he prepared for the night watch at the recently retaken Pashmul police substation in Zhari district.

Pashmul is one of four substations where Canadians are on site mentoring police.

The Pashmul station – the term "checkpoint" has been abandoned due in part to the negative connotation of "taxes" collected unofficially by Afghan police – was abandoned to the Taliban by police during the changeover of Canadian troops this summer.

Canadian troops recently took back control.

When the mentoring teams arrived, the police here were not working in shifts. The six to 10 national police who manned Pashmul woke when they woke, and kept an eye on the surrounding hills and fields when they kept an eye on the surrounding hills and fields.

As Canadians kept watch in tandem with Afghan police one night, a soldier confides that "if we weren't here, I don't think they'd be out here."

At the nearby Pulchakan substation, police slept in the fields outside the compound so that if the Taliban attacked, they wouldn't be killed.

They earn an average of about \$77 a month. Afghan officials have promised to raise that to about \$150 a month but it has yet to happen.

Ultimately, there are plans for upward of 80,000 Afghan policemen. But with such a staggering death rate, recruitment has fallen short – far short.

Haji Murtaza runs a bakery in Kandahar city and he's seen first-hand the handiwork of corrupt police officers.

"Once a policeman came to my bakery and did some shopping, but in the end he was not going to pay me,"



says Murtaza, 55.

"He pulled his gun out on me, so I let him go."

Although he likes the idea of an independent Afghan force, Murtaza says they're not there yet.

"At the moment, Afghan forces can't defend themselves from the enemy, so it makes no sense that they will be able to save civilians," he says.

Before he was ousted as chief of the provincial police in Kandahar, Sayed Aka Sakeeb acknowledged the problems, including poor education among recruits.

Sakeeb said his force was understaffed, the equipment was old and there was not enough of it.

"Sometimes, our guns don't fire," he told an interpreter.

What he didn't mention is that police also sell their ammunition and equipment – and they're not selling it back to international forces. The uncertain status of Sakeeb himself, a warlord with his own militia, reflects the problems faced by the police. Rumours had circulated for a while that he was no longer police chief but he continued to act as one.

Recently, there were reports that Sakeeb had finally left his post, taking his militia and their weapons with him.

It has been a year since Canadians began a similar mentoring program with the Afghan army and results have been positive.

A police telephone line has been put in place in Kandahar – a sort of Afghan 911 – but so far only Taliban have called, to threaten police.

In the coming months, Afghan police will learn basic military skills from the Canadians, like weapons training and how to respond to an enemy ambush.

Two weeks into the program, the police mentoring team are all too aware of the obstacles ahead of them, yet they are determined.

"I've got a good group here," says Sgt. Marc Langelier, whose team has been at the substation in Lakokwel for 12 days.

"Most of them are older and they've been fighters for many, many years."

"They want to learn."

But in this crumbling country, corruption and survival are deeply entwined and difficult to discourage. "There is corruption," admits Lapointe.

"Our soldiers are professional soldiers so they will lead by example."

In the light of the moon at the substation in Pashmul, Afghan commander Mohammad Khan says he welcomes the Canadians.

"I like to work with them," he tells visitors. "If they can stay two weeks or three weeks, that's good."

Just 28, Khan is a veteran fighter and his eight policemen, all in uniform, are among the more promising in the new program.

Khan says they don't have body armour, enough ammunition or helmets. There aren't enough of them to conduct proper patrols, and they don't have a vehicle or enough weapons.

But he is determined they will hold off insurgents once Canadians leave.

"We can do it," he says through an interpreter.

Unlike most of the policemen in the district, Khan is from another province and has no tribal ties that affect his work.

"If you're good with the people, they're good with you," he tells his visitors.

The next day, however, Canadian soldiers said they discovered that Khan had accepted money from a passing vehicle.

# Al Oerter, Olympic champ; Won discus in four straight Olympiads

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**SECTION:** NovaScotia

**PAGE:** C8

**BYLINE:** Frank Litsky The New York Times

**ILLUSTRATION:** Olympic discus thrower Al Oerter is shown in 1960. (AP)

**WORD COUNT:** 809

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Al Oerter, a discus thrower who became the first modern track and field athlete to win four consecutive Olympic titles in one event, died on Oct. 1 in Fort Myers, Fla. Oerter, who had competed into his 60s, was 71 and lived in Fort Myers Beach.

His wife, Cathy Oerter, said doctors at a Fort Myers hospital told her that the cause was a heart attack or a blood clot. Oerter had had high blood pressure since he was young and a history of heart problems. When he was 61, by his account, three cardiologists told him he needed a heart transplant. He declined, took pills instead and stopped lifting weights. Ten months later, he was lifting again. Oerter (pronounced OAR-ter), a sandy-haired bear of a man who weighed as much as 297 pounds and stood 6 feet 4 inches, won Olympic gold medals in 1956, 1960, 1964 and 1968. Only Carl Lewis has duplicated the feat, winning the long jump from 1984 through 1996.

Oerter's sweep was all the more remarkable because in each case he broke the Olympic record, beat the world-record holder, overcame an injury and was not the favourite to win. His winning throws – the men use a 4.4-pound disc that resembles a flying saucer and soars like one – were 184 feet 11 inches in Melbourne in 1956; 194-2 in Rome in 1960; 200-1 in Tokyo in 1964; and 212-6 in Mexico City in 1968.

Harold Connolly, an American hammer thrower who also won an Olympic gold medal, once told the sports columnist Stan Isaacs: "In the opinion of many of us, he is the greatest field-event athlete of the century. There's a magic about him when he's competing. He's nervous before the meet. He doesn't eat well and his hands shake. But once the event is about to start, a calmness settles over him. The other athletes see it, and it intimidates them. They watch him, and they are afraid of what he might do."

Oerter typically made light of his triumphs. In 1991, he told the Olympian magazine, "The first one, I was really young; the second, not very capable; the third, very injured; the fourth, old."

The injury in his third Olympics, in 1964, came six days before competition was to begin, when he slipped on a wet concrete discus circle and tore rib cartilage on his right side – his throwing side – causing internal bleeding and severe pain. Team doctors told him to forget the Olympics and not throw for six weeks. He refused.

"These are the Olympics," he was quoted as saying at the time. "You die before you quit." He competed and won.

Alfred Oerter Jr. was born Sept. 19, 1936, in Astoria, Queens, and grew up on Long Island, in West Islip. At Sewanhaka High School, he was a sprinter and then a miler.

One day, he recalled, when a discus landed near his feet, he casually threw it back so far that the coach immediately made him a discus thrower. He set the national schoolboy record and went on to the University of Kansas, where a classmate was Wilt Chamberlain, the basketball star.

Oerter earned two NCAA titles at Kansas and a business degree in 1959. Later, competing for the New York Athletic Club, he won six national championships and broke the world record six times.

In an era before elite track athletes trained full time, he worked full time as a computer executive for the Grumman aircraft company on Long Island. After his fourth gold medal, he retired from track, only to return many times.

In 1980, at age 43, he threw 227–11, a career best and the second–longest throw in the world that year. In the 1980 Olympic trials, he finished fourth, one place and 4 feet short of making the team. (The U.S. team did not compete in that year's summer Olympics, held in Moscow, because of the boycott ordered by President Jimmy Carter to protest the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan.)

After Oerter's last throw, the crowd in Eugene, Ore., gave him a five–minute standing ovation. He bowed. "That never happened to me before," he said.

When he was asked what he had to prove at that age, he replied: "You don't understand. It's not whether you get there. It's the journey." He retired again, then re–emerged at 47 for the 1984 Olympic trials. He reached the finals, only to tear a calf muscle jogging before his last three throws.

In 1987, he quit elite competition for good, saying, "The drug culture had taken over." He turned to meets for athletes 40 and older, setting world records for older age groups with a lighter discus. ("It feels like a potato chip," he said.)

He recalled attending one such meet when he was 61. "I was showing some old duffers how to do it," he said. "They were so excited competing. One guy said: 'I just threw 120 feet. What did you do?' I told him I just threw 204 feet."

# Voice of the people

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Maureen Dowd's column in the Sept. 30 Nova Scotian indicates the shocking degree to which the obedient American media are whipping up anti-Iranian feeling to prepare the public for an attack on Iran. There have been television programs recently in which American media representatives chastised themselves for their mindless repetition of the Bush administration's false excuses for attacking Iraq, and yet here they go again, setting the stage for a large-scale war crime against Iran.

Maureen Dowd herself, a sharp critic of the Bush administration, betrays the arrogant attitude toward foreign cultures that typifies the American media. Let us hope that if the tragedy of an American attack on Iran unfolds, our political leaders will not emulate those who have said that Canada should have sent soldiers to partake in the attack on Iraq.

Henry M. Bradford, Wolfville

The Sept. 23 Nova Scotian ran an article from the Globe and Mail, "FOI key to freedom of press," which detailed how many of the major stories that receive media attention arise out of journalists researching issues through access to information legislation – sponsorship scandal, treatment of detainees in Afghanistan, water quality inspection in Alberta, and the Arar affair, to name but a few.

This legislation can be an effective tool for the media to gain access when governments at all levels are resistant to requests for information, failing to measure up to a commitment of transparency and accountability.

But the legislation is more than that. Access to information is a fundamental part of how a democracy functions and every child and adult in this province needs to be aware of their rights. It is not enough to have a right to request information – it must also include the right to know about that right!

Nova Scotia was the first province to enact this kind of legislation, which continues to be touted as one of the best, primarily because of its clear purposes; giving the public a right of access to records held by government bodies, the right to correct personal information held about themselves, preventing unauthorized collection of personal information and providing a mechanism for an independent review of decisions made by government.

The latter purpose is the one served by my office in my capacity as the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Review Officer. Premier Rodney MacDonald had proclaimed Oct. 1– 5, 2007 the Right to Know Week for Nova Scotia. It was recognized by events across Nova Scotia hosted by our libraries with presentations by my office.

Nova Scotia's recognition of this week is matched across Canada in other provinces/territories and around the world in over 35 countries.

The goal is to educate people by focusing their attention on their rights to access information held by government bodies and their rights to protect their personal information and privacy.

As part of the Right to Know celebrations, the Spring Garden Public Library recently hosted an evening of discussion, which featured presentations by Justice Minister Murray Scott, Suzanne Legault, Assistant Commissioner of Access to Information for Canada, and my office. Their participation demonstrates to me a commitment from all levels of government, that we are working towards protecting the interests of Nova Scotians and their right to know!

Dulcie McCallum, Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Review Officer

Re: "Watchdog troubled by N.S. coastal development" (Sept. 30)

I can't tell you how pleased I was to see our minister of environment, Mark Parent, utter these words: "Nova Scotia is a coastal province and we're known for our coastline. It's imperative that we have well-thought-out, proper policy on coastal protection." Mr. Parent went further, stating, "We need to do more to protect our coastline and we are working on it."

I certainly hope Mr. Parent lives by his words when it comes time to decide on the proposed mega-quarry for Digby Neck, located right on the Bay of Fundy. That file will be crossing his desk very shortly. Mr. Parent says there is now an interdepartmental committee, called the Provincial Ocean Network. He says it is reviewing all government policy regarding coastal development.

At the very least, he should not allow any decision to be made about the Digby Neck quarry until the committee reports, and its findings have undergone public review and approval.

Andy Moir, Freeport

Re: "Watchdog troubled by N.S. coastal construction," (Sept. 30). It is with great interest that I read this article, which bordered, in places, on utter fascination. This, because (as I understand things) title to the foreshore – land between mean high water and mean low water – vests in the Province of Nova Scotia.

I wouldn't loan anyone any money to build a house close to the shore unless and until I had a certificate from a knowledgeable authority, backed up by errors and omissions insurance, to the effect that the foundation was landward of the line of mean high water, and by how much. Even then, I might want a second opinion.

This, because (again, in my view) the line of mean high water in any particular location is not necessarily the line where the grass stops and the pebbles, stones, rocks, boulders or sand of the beach begin.

And don't forget: while tidal heights are fully predictable, the additional height of an accompanying storm surge cannot be known with certainty until it has come ashore.

So have fun, but remember what your mother told you: "Be extra careful when you're near the shore."

James Doig, Wolfville

Lately, North American pro-war advocates, like George Bush or Peter MacKay, in order to justify their continuance of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, are trying to instil in our minds the spectre of murderous chaos resulting from their troops' departure.

A respected British polling firm, Opinion Resource Business, reports that at least 1.2 million Iraqis have perished as a result of the American invasion, even more than the Rwandan genocide of 1994, which claimed an estimated 800,000 lives. George Bush exceeded that by over 400,000.

If one considers the four million refugees from that conflict, the countless numbers of homeless, crippled,

countless murders by the U.S. mercenaries at Blackwater and the destroyed Iraqi infrastructure, then what then does that lame-brained Texan think would happen that could make things worse? Even former United States Federal Reserve Board chairman Alan Greenspan, in his recently released book, asserts, "The war in Iraq is largely about oil."

J.G. Matheson, Glace Bay

Tony Matthews of Kingston is missing some information with regards to the "safe-sex" education that our children are being given in schools. Take, for instance, the introduction of Planned Parenthood's sex manual, which shows graphic depictions of sex, misleading information, exaggerated claims about "safe" sex, pornography, and other unmentionables.

Safe-sex programs place little or no emphasis on encouraging young people to abstain from early sexual activity. Instead, such programs strongly promote condom use and implicitly condone sexual activity among teens.

I find it hard to believe that these programs are working when stats show that sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including incurable viral infections, have reached epidemic proportions, and annually, three million teenagers contract STDs, which afflict roughly one in four teens who are sexually active.

There are over 100 HPV strains. Merck claims that Gardasil protects against two.

Scientific evaluations show that real abstinence programs can be highly effective in reducing early sexual activity. I think we owe it to our young girls to at least give abstinence a try.

Ellen Chesal, Campaign Life

Coalition N.S.

# Six years later, Americans up their commitment

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**SOURCE:** The Associated Press  
**BYLINE:** Jason Straziuso  
**ILLUSTRATION:** U.S. Col. Jonathan Ives inaugurates a library at a school in near Kabul, Afghanistan on Saturday. (Rahmat Gul / AP)  
**WORD COUNT:** 452

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BAGRAM, Afghanistan – Six years after the first U.S. bombs began falling on Afghanistan's Taliban government and its al-Qaida guests, America is planning for a long stay.

Originally envisioned as a temporary home for invading U.S. forces, the sprawling American base at Bagram, a former Soviet outpost in the shadow of the towering Hindu Kush mountains, is growing in size by nearly a third.

Today the U.S. has about 25,000 troops in the country, and other NATO countries contribute another 25,000, more than three times the number of international troops in the country four years ago, when the Taliban appeared defeated.

The Islamic militia has come roaring back since then, and 2007 has been the battle's bloodiest year yet.

Barnett Rubin, an expert on Afghanistan at New York University, said U.S. leaders in Washington "utterly failed" to understand what was needed to consolidate that original Taliban rout, which started with air strikes Oct. 7, 2001, less than a month after the Sept. 11 attacks in Washington and New York.

"The Bush administration did not see Afghanistan as a long-term commitment, and its leaders deceived themselves into thinking they had won an irreversible victory. They did not consider Afghanistan important and always intended to focus on Iraq," he said.

"Now the U.S. and international community have fallen way behind, and the Taliban are winning strategically, even if we defeat them in every tactical engagement," he added.

At Bagram, new barracks will help accommodate the record number of U.S. troops in the country.

"We've grown in our commitment to Afghanistan by putting another brigade (of troops) here, and with that we know that we're going to have an enduring presence," said Col. Jonathan Ives. "So this is going to become a long-term base for us, whether that means five years, 10 years – we don't know."

Wide areas of the south – in Helmand, Kandahar and Uruzgan provinces – are controlled by the Taliban, and the fighting is migrating north, into Ghazni province – where 23 South Koreans were kidnapped in July – and Wardak, right next door to Kabul, the capital.

Osama bin Laden, whose presence here was a trigger for the U.S.-led attack, is still at large, possibly hiding in the mountains along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.



And Afghan farmers this year grew a record amount of opium poppy, prompting officials to draw up plans to use the military in drug interdiction missions against traffickers.

Rubin said Washington ignored how difficult the fight would be and wanted to prevent U.S. forces from being tied down in nation-building exercises as in the Balkans.

"Since 2005, U.S. generals have told me (former defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld) was drumming his fingers on the table trying to find out when he could take the troops out," Rubin said. "Now the administration has completely reversed itself, but of course without ever admitting it was wrong and still without a strategy that has a serious chance of success."

# Pushing mission's success; Cabinet ministers tour capital to show life has improved for Afghans

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**SOURCE:** The Canadian Press

**BYLINE:** Les Perreux

Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier and International Co-operation Minister Bev

**ILLUSTRATION:** Oda visit the Murad Khane district of Kabul under tight security on Saturday. (Paul Chiasson / CP)

**WORD COUNT:** 548

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KABUL, Afghanistan – Two newly shuffled Canadian cabinet ministers arrived in the Afghan capital just 30 minutes after another deadly suicide bomb attack Saturday, but that didn't daunt their persistent pitch that life is getting better for ordinary Afghans.

International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda and Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier landed in Kabul a short time after a suicide bomber struck on the main airport road, killing a U.S. soldier and four civilians. That attack came on the eve of the sixth anniversary of the U.S.-led invasion that ousted the Taliban from power.

Oda tried to reassure skeptical Afghan journalists that the shift by the insurgents to roadside and suicide bombings actually illustrated the success of the western security mission in Afghanistan.

Although such tactics have long racked southern Afghanistan, the fact that suicide bombings were now occurring in the capital showed that the Taliban were desperate because of their inability to win on the battlefield, Oda said.

Oda said she recently met senior Afghan officials and together they "identified that the difference in the challenge in Kandahar today can be seen as, to a certain extent, success."

Insurgents "are having to resort to other more desperate ways of trying to make their statements," she told a couple dozen Afghan reporters and a handful of Canadians.

Oda's reassurances come amid recent reports that the intensity of the insurgency is growing.

The United Nations' Department of Security and Safety has reported that the "security situation in Afghanistan is assessed by most analysts as having deteriorated at a constant rate through 2007."

The UN confirmed rebels were moving away from battlefield confrontations, but "the numbers of incidents are higher than comparable periods in 2006." Instead of localized battles, bombings have been spreading across the country, the UN said.

Police have become favourite targets and civilians face mounting intimidation, the report added.

A count by The Associated Press showed about 5,100 people have died so far this year in insurgency related violence, about 1,000 more than all of 2006.

Most of the casualties have been insurgents reportedly killed in battle, according to numbers supplied by the Afghan government and western forces. The Taliban accuses the West of greatly exaggerating rebel losses.

Once relatively tranquil, Kabul has faced three major bomb attacks in a week. The bombings have claimed 37 lives, mostly civilians and police.

While Oda pointed to signs of progress like the 1,200 Canadian-sponsored wells being dug in the Kandahar region, Bernier added that "we can see the situation in Kandahar has improved."

When Oda turned the subject to record enrolment in Afghan schools, including enrolment among girls, one Afghan reporter asked about a recent Afghan human rights report that said children were beginning to stay home from school out of fear.

One more reason Afghanistan needs Canadian soldiers, Oda said, referring to the meeting she and Bernier held with Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

"He brought this up, and he explained why we have to stay in Afghanistan and we have to continue working in Afghanistan," Oda said.

Oda and Bernier also visited a restoration project in an ancient Kabul neighbourhood.

Oda announced Canada will contribute \$3 million over three years to a project to dig out the neighbourhood that became a dump in the 1970s and now is buried under several metres of garbage.

But even here, the Afghan journalists indicated they were more concerned about public safety than Canadian-sponsored good works.

Bernier said he discussed the potential of negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban with Karzai.

"People who believe in a peaceful process will come into the discussion," Bernier said.

Karzai has said he is willing to talk to Taliban and other insurgent leaders any time.

However, Bernier said Kabul "won't discuss with people who believe in violence."

Canada's position on negotiations has not changed, Bernier added, saying the Taliban must first renounce violence.

# Canada fibs about reason for Afghan mission

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**PUBLICATION:** The Sunday Herald

**DATE:** 2007.10.07

**SECTION:** Front

**PAGE:** A2

**BYLINE:** Peter Duffy

**WORD COUNT:** 612

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CANADA CHIDED the world this week, calling for more political will to help us stabilize and rebuild Afghanistan.

Appearing before the UN General Assembly, Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier lectured about our country's commitment to the values we hold dear, such as freedom, human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

These values, he said, must be protected and defended, especially when they come under attack.

This is all very noble, but does it reflect the real reason why we're in the Afghan quagmire?

Are we really over there to spread our wonderful values as globalists or to protect our own national interest?

Are we really so altruistic and "international" that we can preach to the rest of the world?

The fact is, Canada's motives have been suspect from the start, says Edna Keeble, a political science professor at Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax.

The academic notes it was only after 9–11 that we turned our attention to Afghanistan and the Taliban's repressive rule.

The reality is, we went there to deny terrorism a safe haven, fearing that if we didn't, it would find its way to our own doorstep.

How else to explain that before 9–11, we didn't hear the cries for help from grassroots organizations in Afghanistan, especially women's groups, whose rights were being violated?

If we're really so keen to spread the Canadian way, Keeble wonders, then why aren't we also in Darfur?

Could the reason be that there isn't a terrorist threat from that part of the world?

Canada should think twice before preaching about our moral obligation in Afghanistan.

The reality is, when public dismay over our mounting casualties finally outweighs our steadily declining fear of being attacked in our beds by terrorists, the politicians will have us out of there very quickly.

Keeble concurs. Says she: "I don't think any society is prepared to allow for the deaths of its young men and women abroad when it's not in the national interest."

And that's it, in a nutshell. This is all about national interest.

Doubtlessly, quite a few of the countries on the receiving end of our lecture this week already knew that.

It was 50 years ago this week that the Soviets launched Sputnik, the first man-made satellite, and began a revolution.

Sputnik begat spy satellites, begat communications satellites, begat anti-satellite satellites, begat navigational satellites and begat weather satellites.

We've certainly come a long way in half a century. Just one question: After all that heavenly scientific begetting, how come weather forecasters down here on earth still manage to get it wrong? Who knew? There was news this week that famous TV sexologist Sue Johanson is coming to Pictou for a conference.

While she's there, she'll meet with a panel of young people who, according to the report, describe themselves as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, two-spirited, intersexed, queer or questioning.

Huh? Two-spirited? Intersexed? Welcome to the wonderful world of human sexuality in the 21st century, when there seems to be almost as many conditions as there are people. I can't help wondering which came first, the sexperts or the legions of confused people who now seem to need their ministering.

This has been the first week of a British inquest into the deaths of Princess Diana and Dodi Fayed. It's getting increasingly hard to keep track of just how many official investigations and inquiries there have been to date, both in the U.K. and France.

How much more is there to be learned about that tragic night so long ago?

The man driving all this, of course, is Dodi's father, Mohamed al Fayed. He's convinced the whole thing was a murderous plot by the Royal Family and Britain's secret service, and won't rest until he hears his suspicion confirmed in court.

Thanks to him, those who cared about the princess have not known any real peace for the last 10 years. For the love of God, Mr. al Fayed, let this be the last one. Give us closure, please.

And finally, I see a naturist in New Brunswick has been upsetting people by striding around his local family beach in a state of undress.

Someone complained to police and the man, a 57-year-old retired gym teacher, has subsequently appeared in court on a charge of public nudity.

Frankly, I think I'd be bothered by such a sight, too, but not to the point of calling the cops on the guy. Wouldn't pointing at him and laughing aloud whenever he appeared have done the trick? As a middle-aged guy, I know I'd sure take the hint in a hurry!

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Peter Duffy appears Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

# Maxime Bernier, Bev Oda make unannounced trip to Afghanistan

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** INTERNATIONAL POLITICS DEFENCE  
**PUBLICATION:** cpw  
**WORD COUNT:** 198

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KABUL, Afghanistan \_ Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier says the Afghan government will decide on whether to negotiate with the Taliban.

Bernier emerged from a meeting with Afghan President Hamid Karzai in Kabul today where they discussed potential Taliban negotiations. He maintains Canada's position on negotiations has not changed, saying Taliban must renounce violence before any deal can be reached.

Bernier is on a whirlwind tour of Afghanistan with International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda. The two held a joint news conference with an Afghan cabinet minister where they were peppered with questions by Afghan reporters about the deteriorating security situation in the country.

Oda tried to reassure Afghans saying the security situation in the south where Canadian troops are based has improved over the past year. She also pointed to the millions of Afghan children who are now in school.

The two Canadian ministers will also be touring Canadian-supported development projects in the war-torn country.

This is the two ministers' first visit to Afghanistan since Prime Minister Stephen Harper shuffled them into their current cabinet posts in August. Canada has some 2,500 troops in Afghanistan, the majority in the violent southern province of Kandahar. Seventy-one have died since 2002.

# Kabul suicide car bomb kills U.S. soldier, 4 Afghans; 12 wounded

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL  
**PUBLICATION:** cpw  
**WORD COUNT:** 402

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KABUL, Afghanistan \_ Flames shot into the sky after a suicide car bomber attacked a U.S. military convoy on the road to Kabul's airport Saturday, killing an American soldier and four Afghan civilians, officials said.

The bombing \_ on the sixth anniversary of the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan \_ threw several vehicles onto their sides. Four Afghans were killed and 12 wounded, the Health Ministry said.

The attack targeted U.S. troops responsible for training the Afghan military and police. Lt. Col. David Johnson, a U.S. spokesman, said one American soldier died in the blast.

Dozens of shops were damaged.

``There was an enormous explosion. The windows of my shop shattered," said tailor Mohammad Isaq. ``When I came out I saw the foreigners' vehicles on fire. I saw two injured Afghans and I ran to help them."

The attack came on the same day Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier and International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda paid a visit to the Afghan capital.

Saturday was the sixth anniversary of the U.S.-led invasion to oust the Taliban for hosting al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden following the terrorist attacks on the United States of Sept. 11, 2001.

This year has been the most violent of the six-year effort. More than 5,100 people \_ mostly militants \_ have died in insurgency-related violence in 2007, according to an Associated Press count based on Afghan and western officials.

The suicide bombing was the third major attack in Kabul in a week. On Sept. 29, a bomber targeted an Afghan army bus, killing 30 people. A similar attack on a police bus Tuesday killed 13.

Abdul Manan Farahi, Kabul's counterterrorism chief, said Kabul police in the last six months prevented 156 terror attacks, including 18 suicide bombings. He said one man from Morocco, one from Saudi Arabia and several from Pakistan were among the 18 would-be suicide attackers arrested.

Police displayed a Pakistani man in custody whom Farahi said was arrested in Kandahar before he was able to carry out a suicide bombing.

Farahi called it ``unfortunate" that militants have been able to carry out three attacks in Kabul in the past week, and addressed rumours that Afghanistan's intelligence agency believes there are more suicide bombers in the city by saying that Kabul is always a target for such attacks.

Saturday's attack occurred on a tree-lined, four-lane road that leads from the U.S. Embassy to the airport \_ a route frequently travelled by foreign convoys.

U.S. military Humvees arrived at the scene shortly after the 8:15 a.m. bombing to secure the site and take away U.S. casualties. British troops arrived soon afterward.



# Bernier, Oda pitch seemingly successful side of Afghan mission

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** INTERNATIONAL POLITICS DEFENCE  
**PUBLICATION:** cpw  
**WORD COUNT:** 592

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Canada's position on negotiations has not changed, Bernier added, saying the Taliban must first renounce violence.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper shuffled Oda and Bernier into their current cabinet posts in August.

Canada has some 2,500 troops in Afghanistan, the majority in the violent southern province of Kandahar. Seventy-one Canadian soldiers and one diplomat have died since the Canadian mission in Afghanistan began in 2002.

# 2nd Writethru The Canadian Press World News Budget – Saturday, Oct. 6, 2007

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** ADVISORIES  
**PUBLICATION:** cpw  
**WORD COUNT:** 200

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Here are the budgeted stories as of 23:30 ET. The editor handling World news in Toronto can be reached at 416-507-2165

KABUL, Afghanistan \_ Two newly shuffled Canadian cabinet ministers arrived in the Afghan capital just 30 minutes after another deadly suicide bomb attack Saturday, but that didn't daunt their persistent pitch that life is getting better for ordinary Afghans. 800 words. By Les Perreux. See Photos.  
BC-Afghan-Cda-Bernier-Oda, 4th Writethru. Moved.

See also:

\_ BC-Afghan-Six-Years-Later. Moved Datafile only.

\_ BC-Afghan-Cda-Coderre, 1st Writethru. Moved General (G).

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan \_ Pakistan's U.S.-backed military leader ran up a huge majority in a presidential election largely snubbed by his opponents Saturday. However the Pakistani Supreme Court must still decide whether President Gen. Pervez Musharraf is eligible for the new five-year term, though analysts question whether it would dare deny him victory. 825 words. By Matthew Pennington. BC-Pakistan-Politics, 3rd Writethru. Moved.

LONDON \_ Thousands of demonstrators in cities across the world joined Saturday in protests against the military junta in Myanmar after the regime acknowledged detaining hundreds of Buddhist monks who led huge pro-democracy protests. 1,050 words. By Raphael Satter. BC-Myanmar, 3rd Writethru. Moved.

See also:

\_ BC-Myanmar-What-Next? Moved Datafile only.

# The World at 1:30 p.m.

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** INTERNATIONAL  
**PUBLICATION:** cpw  
**WORD COUNT:** 955

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## HEADLINES:

Musharraf sweeps Pakistan election; court could still disqualify him

AP Poll: Giuliani's lead offers no guarantees in GOP field

AP Poll: Clinton expanding lead nationally, but Iowa tighter

Myanmar's junta could suffer for treatment of monks who protested

Real estate boom turns to foreclosure boom in Phoenix suburb

Budget, policy blunders send R.I. teenage offenders to adult prison

## NEW & DEVELOPING:

\_ AUTO TALKS \_ Talks ongoing; will be led.

\_ ARMORED CAR SHOOTING \_ News conference at 3 p.m.

\_ TAMMY FAYE MESSNER \_ Memorial service scheduled for 6 p.m.

## MULTIMEDIA:

### Notable Photos:

PAKISTAN POLITICS: KAR106, Holding a poster of Pakistan's military ruler President Gen. Pervez Musharraf, supporters celebrate his majority votes in the presidential election in Karachi, Pakistan.

BRITAIN MYANMAR: LON803, Burmese monks clasp their hands as they leave No. 10 Downing Street after meeting the prime minister before a march in London against the violent crackdown on pro-democracy protests in Myanmar.

AFGHANISTAN: KAB108, A firehose sprays water on damaged vehicles after a suicide car bomber attacked an American military convoy in Kabul, Afghanistan.

SEARCH FOR ``APTOPIX" TO FIND TOP AP STAFF AND FREELANCE PHOTOS.

### Interactives:

\_ IRAQ: \_international/iraq\_troop\_increase folder.

\_ CAMPAIGN 2008: wdc/2008primaries folder; wdc/early2008 folder; wdc/08issues folder; wdc/2008money

folder.

\_ BRITNEY SPEARS CUSTODY: \_documents folder, slugged britney\_custody\_order.pdf.

\_ NFL SEASON OVERVIEW: sports/nfl07/regular\_season folder.

#### ALSO GETTING ATTENTION:

\_ ARMORED CAR SHOOTING \_ Convicted bank robber charged in killings of 2 armored car guards at ATM machine, Philadelphia police say.

\_ BUSH \_ President Bush signaled a willingness to spend more than what he had recommended for a popular children's health program, but provided no specifics.

\_ INDIA-JUDGING JUDGES \_ New Delhi's High Court justices, annoyed with lower court judges who issue problematic rulings, have decided to send one of them back to law school.

\_ SKINNY DIP SANDWICH \_ Maine eatery's 'Naked Lunch' promotion may be banned.

#### TOP STORIES:

##### PAKISTAN-POLITICS

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan \_ Pakistan's U.S.-backed military leader runs up a huge majority in a presidential election largely snubbed by his opponents. The Supreme Court must still decide whether Gen. Pervez Musharraf is eligible for another five-year term, although analysts question whether it would dare deny him victory. By Matthew Pennington.

AP Photos ISL116, 119, KAR106, PES103, RWP105. AP Video.

\_ PAKISTAN-ELECTION BLUES \_ One loser in the election was clear before the voting began: public faith in Pakistani politics.

\_ PAKISTAN-ELECTION TIMELINE.

##### REPUBLICANS-AP POLL

WASHINGTON \_ Don't be fooled by Rudy Giuliani's longtime ranking atop national Republican polls. A lot can shake up the GOP presidential field \_ and his opponents are counting on it. An AP News Analysis by Liz Sidoti.

AP Photos WX103-105. AP Graphic DEM REP AP POLL.

##### DEMOCRATS-AP POLL

NEW YORK \_ Hillary Rodham Clinton has strengthened her position as the front-runner for the Democratic presidential nomination. But her strong showing nationally belies a much closer race in Iowa, where she is in a tight contest with Barack Obama and John Edwards. An AP News Analysis by Beth Fouhy.

AP Photos staffing. AP Graphic DEM REP AP POLL.

##### MYANMAR-WHAT NEXT?

BANGKOK, Thailand \_ Myanmar's democracy protests have been crushed, but the brutality the entrenched junta inflicted on Buddhist monks may be the one thing that could splinter the fiercely loyal military. The monks are deeply revered in Myanmar, and imprisoning them upsets the faithful, no matter what their occupation. An AP News Analysis by Denis D. Gray.

AP Photos DLL101, 103, 106, XDLL101–103.

\_ MYANMAR \_ Thousands across Europe and Asia protest against the military junta, while activists in Myanmar hold covert prayer vigils. AP Photos SL104, MLA101, LON803, XGO112

\_ MYANMAR–CHRONOLGY.

## LEAVING HOMES

QUEEN CREEK, Ariz. \_ Cement mixers still operate during the day, but sundown reveals this seemingly ordinary subdivision's troubling secret: Behind many dark windows and unanswered doors, nobody is home. The real-estate boom led to extraordinary times at Queen Creek, but the empty homes raise doubts about what's next. By National Writer Adam Geller.

Shorter version moving as LEAVING HOMES–ABRIDGED. AP Photos NY305–311. AP Graphic ARIZONA FORECLOSURES.

BUSINESS:

## SCOTUS–ENRON

WASHINGTON \_ The hopes of Enron investors are riding on a Supreme Court case that may be the last chance at compensation for their losses when the scandal-ridden energy company collapsed. Much of corporate America is arguing that shareholders in companies that commit securities fraud should not be allowed to sue banks and other alleged participants. By Pete Yost.

AP Photos WX101–102.

Also:

\_ AUTO TALKS \_ Negotiators with the United Auto Workers and Chrysler LLC are talking about a new contract, weeks after the autoworkers reached a tentative agreement with General Motors.

NATIONAL:

## IMPRISONED TEENS

PROVIDENCE, R.I. \_ Lawmakers believed a bill that would incarcerate 17-year-olds in the adult prison system would save them money. It didn't \_ and now they are trying to figure out how to fix a law advocates say is harming teens. By Ray Henry.

\_ IMPRISONED TEENS–SUMMARY BOX.

## PHILLY CASINO FIGHT

PHILADELPHIA \_ Surging gun violence never got Kathy O'Neill to think about moving her family out of the city. Neither did an ever-struggling school system. Now that two casinos are moving in, however, it's a

different story. By Patrick Walters.

AP Photos of Oct. 5: PX201–206.

## INTERNATIONAL:

### AFGHAN–SIX YEARS LATER

BAGRAM, Afghanistan \_ Six years to the day after the U.S.–led invasion of Afghanistan, America is planning for a long stay. The main U.S. base \_ which the Pentagon once viewed as ``temporary" \_ is expanding. New barracks will accommodate a record number of U.S. troops fighting a resurgent Taliban militia in the battle's bloodiest year yet. By Jason Straziuso.

AP Photos planned.

### IRAQ–WOMEN IN PERIL

SULAIMANIYAH, Iraq \_ She is 18, unmarried, and eight months pregnant. Soon she will give up her baby, go home and hope never to fall victim to an ``honor killing" \_ whereby murder is supposed to erase the family's shame. The Kurdish enclave of Iraq stands out for its condemnation of the custom and threat of severe penalties. By Christopher Torchia.

AP Photos NY345–347.

\_ IRAQ \_ Two of Iraq's most powerful Shiite leaders agree to end their bitter rivalry that has spawned months of armed clashes in across the oil–rich south. AP Graphic THE WEEK IN IRAQ.

### SRI LANKA–PARALYZED BY FEAR

VALAICHCHENAI, Sri Lanka \_ Sri Lanka's government says it scored a huge victory this summer when it broke Tamil separatists control of the island's east. But in extensive interviews with The Associated Press, people living here say the Tamil Tigers' ruthless rule has been replaced by a violent free–for–all of rival militant groups. By Ravi Nessman.

AP Photos NY440–449. AP Graphic SRI LANKA CLASH. Audio slideshow in the \_international/tamil\_tigers folder.

\_ SRI LANKA–SUMMARY BOX.

## SPORTS:

\_ RUN--JONES--THANOU \_ Lawyer says Greek silver medalist deserves Jones' gold, in wake of steroid–related guilty plea.

# Liberal Defence critic heads to Afghanistan on 6th anniversary of invasion

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS  
**PUBLICATION:** cpw  
**WORD COUNT:** 486

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TORONTO \_ Liberal Defence critic Denis Coderre is in Pakistan, preparing to take a United Nations flight to Kandahar on Sunday \_ the sixth anniversary of the U.S.-led bombing of Afghanistan.

The Montreal MP said the Afghan mission is a major priority for Canadians and that he's doing his duty by going there, even though the trip doesn't have the approval of the Harper government. Both Defence Minister Peter MacKay and NDP Leader Jack Layton are labelling the trip a stunt.

Coderre told CTV NewsNet in an interview Saturday he's been asking for months to go, but repeated calls to the defence minister asking for permission were ignored or rejected.

So he said he decided unilaterally to go on the fact-finding trip and report back to Liberal Leader Stephane Dion in preparation for his own future trip to the war-torn country.

"I took my responsibility. I have a duty, I have a job to do. I am the critic for... the official Opposition," he said. It's important, I would say, to make sure that we fully participate and contribute to the debate. So I'm gonna let them play their petty politics and I'll do my job,"

The Liberal MP said it would have shown some class and been easier had he been allowed to accompany Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier and International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda, who are currently in Afghanistan.

"For the sake of democracy it's important that Parliamentarians should be there. And I've been asking for months to go," said Coderre.

He said he's going to show solidarity with Canadian troops on behalf of the official Opposition and meet some non-governmental organizations during his visit.

Canada has some 2,500 troops in Afghanistan, most in Kandahar. Seventy-one Canadian soldiers and one diplomat have died since the Canadian mission began in 2002.

Coderre denied suggestions he's putting soldiers' safety at risk with his visit, noting he's going to land at Kandahar Airfield, which is part of the security perimeter.

"I will land just at the base. So I'll be there to salute our brave men and women and I'm expecting to have full briefings," Coderre said.

In Toronto, federal NDP Leader Jack Layton had criticism for Coderre's solo trek.

"Involving individual MPs in a sort of 'stunt-like' visit does pose risks.... I'm not on the ground to assess that. But you have to respect the judgement of our military leadership," Layton told CTV NewsNet.

There are a lot of other ways to find out what's going on, on the ground in Afghanistan, he added.



“Being part of official visits is one, being in touch with the NGOs (Non Governmental Organizations) and working with them, which is what we've done. They're on the ground there now, listening to the UN reports,” said Layton.

In an email to The Canadian Press, MacKay's director of communications, Dan Dugas, said it was the Liberals, under then Defence Minister Bill Graham, who began a policy in 2004 of not allowing single-MP travel to Afghanistan.

He said Graham told Conservative MP Sheryl Gallant that all MP travel had to be done by committee because of security and other reasons.

An Associated Press report last week suggested that there is more violence by the Taliban now than there has been since 2001, with the number of insurgency-related deaths this year surpassing the 5,000 mark.

# See Photos

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** INTERNATIONAL POLITICS DEFENCE  
**PUBLICATION:** cpw  
**WORD COUNT:** 951

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BAGRAM, Afghanistan \_ Six years after the first U.S. bombs began falling on Afghanistan's Taliban government and its al-Qaida guests, America is planning for a long stay.

Originally envisioned as a temporary home for invading U.S. forces, the sprawling American base at Bagram, a former Soviet outpost in the shadow of the towering Hindu Kush mountains, is growing in size by nearly a third.

Today the U.S. has about 25,000 troops in the country, and other NATO countries contribute another 25,000, more than three times the number of international troops in the country four years ago, when the Taliban appeared defeated.

The Islamic militia has come roaring back since then, and 2007 has been the battle's bloodiest year yet.

Barnett Rubin, an expert on Afghanistan at New York University, said U.S. leaders in Washington ``utterly failed" to understand what was needed to consolidate that original Taliban rout, which started with air strikes Oct. 7, 2001, less than a month after the Sept. 11 attacks in Washington and New York.

``The Bush administration did not see Afghanistan as a long-term commitment, and its leaders deceived themselves into thinking they had won an irreversible victory. They did not consider Afghanistan important and always intended to focus on Iraq," he said.

``Now the U.S. and international community have fallen way behind, and the Taliban are winning strategically, even if we defeat them in every tactical engagement," he added.

At Bagram, new barracks will help accommodate the record number of U.S. troops in the country.

``We've grown in our commitment to Afghanistan by putting another brigade (of troops) here, and with that we know that we're going to have an enduring presence," said Col. Jonathan Ives. ``So this is going to become a long-term base for us, whether that means five years, 10 years \_ we don't know."

Insurgents have launched more than 100 suicide attacks this year, an unprecedented pace, including a bombing in Kabul on Saturday against a U.S. convoy that killed an American soldier and four Afghan civilians \_ the third suicide blast in Kabul in a week.

More than 5,100 people \_ mostly militants \_ have died in insurgency related violence so far this year, according to an Associated Press count based on figures from Afghan and western officials. That far outpaces last year's violence, when the AP count topped 4,000 for the entire year.

Some 87 U.S. troops have also died so far this year, also a record pace. About 90 U.S. servicemembers were killed in all of last year.

Wide areas of the south \_ in Helmand, Kandahar and Uruzgan provinces \_ are controlled by the Taliban, and the fighting is migrating north, into Ghazni province \_ where 23 South Koreans were kidnapped in July \_ and

Wardak, right next door to Kabul, the capital.

Osama bin Laden, whose presence here was a trigger for the U.S.-led attack, is still at large, possibly hiding in the mountains along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

And Afghan farmers this year grew a record amount of opium poppy, prompting officials to draw up plans to use the military in drug interdiction missions against traffickers.

Rubin said Washington ignored how difficult the fight would be and wanted to prevent U.S. forces from being tied down in nation-building exercises as in the Balkans.

“Since 2005, U.S. generals have told me (former defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld) was drumming his fingers on the table trying to find out when he could take the troops out,” Rubin said. “Now the administration has completely reversed itself, but of course without ever admitting it was wrong and still without a strategy that has a serious chance of success.”

Still, U.S. commanders point out that military operations have killed more than 50 mid- and high-level Taliban commanders this year, causing at least a temporary disruption in the militants' abilities. The Afghan army participated in its first jointly planned and executed operation, in Ghazni province, earlier this summer.

Originally, Pentagon planners thought Bagram would be a “temporary” camp, Ives said, but an increased U.S. commitment to Afghanistan means Bagram needs to grow.

“Where we designed a base around 3,000 (troops), it quickly moved to 7,000 and now we're housing about 13,000, so just in a very short period of time you've grown not necessarily exponentially but you've definitely doubled just about every two years,” Ives said.

A new runway accommodates heavier C-5 cargo planes and Boeing 747s. New soldiers' barracks \_ safer and more comfortable than the wooden structures that dot Bagram \_ are being built. And more workers are flowing in. Two years ago, some 1,500 Afghans worked in support roles at Bagram; today 5,000 walk through its front gates daily.

Six years after CIA agents and Special Forces soldiers helped the Northern Alliance swoop down from their northern stronghold toward Taliban-controlled Kabul, President Hamid Karzai is increasingly asking that Taliban militants join the government through peace talks. And the United Nations has said an increasing number of fighters want peace.

But the Taliban and factional warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, leader of the militant group Hezb-i-Islami, have rejected those offers, saying that international troops must first leave the country.

Although the Taliban seems to have an endless recruiting base in the ethnic Pashtun heartland in southern and eastern Afghanistan and the Pakistan border region, some fighters are laying down their arms and joining the government.

Officials in Ghazni province Saturday said some 50 militants from Andar district \_ a Taliban stronghold where some of the Korean hostages were held \_ will join the government's reconciliation process.

But the U.S. will mentor Afghanistan's military for years to come, Ives said. He said America's military and aid commitments to Afghanistan are “speaking volumes.”

“Our commitment to them is really saying we will be here until you have the security and stability that allows you to be a developing country on your own, and if that's 10 years then it's 10 years,” he said. “But I think the

thing is we're looking to help them as much as we can."

# INDEX:Defence, International, Politics

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 150

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TORONTO – Liberal Defence critic Denis Coderre is in Pakistan, preparing to take a United Nations flight to Kandahar on Sunday – the sixth anniversary of the U.S.-led bombing of Afghanistan.

The Montreal MP says the Afghan mission is a major priority for Canadians and he says he's doing his duty by going there, even though the trip didn't have the approval of the Harper government.

Coderre tells CTV NewsNet he's been asking for months to go, but repeated calls to the Defence minister asking for permission were ignored or rejected.

So he says he decided unilaterally to go on the fact-finding trip and report back to Liberal Leader Stephane Dion.

Coderre says it would have shown some class and been easier had he been allowed to accompany Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier and International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda, currently in Afghanistan. He accuses the government of playing petty politics.

He says he's going to show solidarity with Canadian troops on behalf of the official Opposition and meet some non-governmental organizations.

(The Canadian Press)

## --Third NewsWatch--

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** ADVISORIES  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 270

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Two federal cabinet ministers are on a hush-hush visit to Afghanistan.

For security concerns, the arrival of Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier and International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda wasn't announced until after they arrived in Kabul.

Bernier and Oda will meet with their Afghan counterparts as well as President Hamid Karzai.

They'll also tour development projects that Canada is funding. (3)

(Afghan Violence)

At least five people are dead and 12 are wounded after a suicide attacker set off a bomb this morning near the airport in the Afghan capital of Kabul.

The dead include one U-S soldier and four Afghan civilians.

The attack against an American military convoy came on the sixth anniversary of the U-S-led invasion of Afghanistan. (3)

(WEA-Warm Thanksgiving) (Audio: 14)

Summer doesn't want to leave many parts of central and eastern Canada.

For the next three days, the predicted daily high across southern and southwestern Ontario will be in the mid-20s.

Dave Phillips, senior climatologist with Environment Canada, calls it "probably one of the longest summers ever" for that part of the country.

Phillips is predicting "warmer than normal" temperatures for this month and into November. (3)

(BIZ-Dollar)

It's onward and upward for the dollar, which has gained 18 per cent on the American dollar so far this year.

The loonie soared almost 1.6 cents yesterday to end the week at 101.85 cents U-S.

Doug Porter -- deputy chief economist with B-M-O Capital Markets -- suggests the loonie may hit \$1.05 U-S by the end of the year. (3)

(Jones Doping)

Marion Jones of the United States has gone from being a three-time Olympic track champion to facing jail

time.

In a court outside New York City, Jones pleaded guilty to lying to investigators when she claimed she never used steroids.

Outside the court, Jones made a tearful apology, saying lying about using steroids was an ``incredibly stupid" thing to do.

Jones, who is said to be broke, will be sentenced in January.

In addition, she will likely lose the Olympic medals she won in 2000. (3)

(Bank Ring) (Audio: 8)

A plea bargain was struck in Winnipeg by the alleged boss of a sophisticated international crime ring.

Thirty-five-year-old Gerald Blanchard of Vancouver pleaded guilty to 15 charges, while the Crown dropped more than 30 charges.

Blanchard is alleged to have led a criminal organization that's accused of bank robberies, identity thefts, and fraud. (3)

(NewsWatch by Bill Marshall)

# Afghan-Cda-Coderre-Update (adds Layton, MacKay spox)

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06

**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

**PUBLICATION:** bnw

**WORD COUNT:** 125

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TORONTO -- Defence Minister Peter MacKay and N-D-P Leader Jack Layton are labelling Denis Coderre's trip to Afghanistan ``a stunt."

The Liberal defence critic is in Pakistan today, preparing to take a U-N flight to Kandahar tomorrow.

The Montreal M-P tells C-T-V News that he decided to go on his own after the Harper government ignored his repeated calls to allow him to go.

He accuses the government of playing petty politics by not letting him accompany Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier and International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda on their Afghanistan trip.

N-D-P Leader Jack Layton tells C-T-V that there other ways to find out what's going on in Afghanistan -- such as talking to Non-Governmental Organizations or reading U-N reports.

A MacKay spokesman says it was the Liberals who began a policy in 2004 of not allowing individual M-P's to travel to Afghanistan.

(The Canadian Press)

PTH



# --First NewsWatch--

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** ADVISORIES  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 261

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Two federal cabinet ministers are visiting Afghanistan.

Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier and International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda will meet with their Afghan counterparts as well as President Hamid Karzai.

Bernier and Oda will also tour Canadian-sponsored development projects in the war-torn country.

For security reasons, their visit wasn't made public until after they arrived this morning in the capital of Kabul. (1)

(BIZ-Dollar) (Audio: P4)

It has been 31 years since the dollar closed this high.

The loonie soared almost 1.6-cents to end the week at 101.85 cents U-S.

Money traders say the gain was sparked by word that Canada's jobless rate sank last month to 5.9 per cent -- its lowest point in 33 years.

It now takes 98 cents to buy one American dollar. (1)

(WEA-Warm Thanksgiving)

The calendar says it's fall.

But it's still summer for many people in central and eastern Canada, where temperatures are well above normal.

In Ontario, the predicted high from Windsor to Toronto will be 26 degrees for the next three days.

Dave Phillips, Environment Canada's senior climatologist, says "this is probably one of the longest summers ever" for some parts of central Canada.

Phillips notes this time a year ago, parts of the Niagara peninsula were "buried up to their hips in snow." (1)

(Jones Doping) (Audio: 191)

Former U-S Olympic track champion Marion Jones is looking at possible jail time.

Jones pleaded guilty in a suburban New York court to lying to investigators when she claimed she never used steroids.

Outside the court, Jones was in tears as she apologized, and said she betrayed the public's trust.

Sentencing is set for January.

In addition, Jones — who is said to be broke — will likely lose the three gold and two bronze medals she won at the 2000 Olympics. (1)

(Chretien Ill)

Doctors say Jean Chretien's recovery from a quadruple heart bypass continues to go as expected.

The 73-year-old former prime minister underwent the operation three days ago at the Montreal Heart Institute.

Chretien is expected to be released in a few days. (1)

(Bush Arab TV)

In a rare interview with an Arabic satellite news station, President George W. Bush admits some people in the Middle East think he's against Islam, and is a man of war.

But, he says both ``simply aren't true."

Bush also denies the U-S is preparing to attack Iran. (1)

(NewsWatch by Bill Marshall)

## --Fourth NewsWatch--

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** ADVISORIES  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 209

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Canada's minister of foreign affairs says it's up to the Afghan government to decide whether or not to negotiate with the Taliban.

Maxime Bernier is making an unannounced visit to the war-torn country.

He met with Afghan President Hamid Karzai in Kabul.

Bernier says the Taliban must renounce violence before any deal can be reached.

He's joined on the whirlwind Afghan tour by International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda. (6)

(Air Force Drones)

Canada is in the market for new, unarmed, pilotless aircraft to help protect troops in Afghanistan.

Air Force Lieutenant-General Angus Watt has ordered the program fast-tracked.

Watt wants special consideration given to companies able to quickly deliver the so-called uninhabited aerial vehicles -- or U-A-V's.

Industry insiders say the purchase could be worth up to 100 (m) million dollars.

A 500 (m) million proposal was rejected by the federal cabinet last spring. (4)

(Dollar Unemployment)

Strong September employment figures are pushing the dollar to new highs.

The jobless rate for the month hit a 33-year-low of 5.9 per cent.

Fifty-one-thousand new jobs were created.

The loonie closed out the week at a new 31-year high.

The currency gained more than half-a-cent to close at a-dollar-one-point-85.

One economist predicts it will hit a-dollar-five before year's end. (4)

(Vancouver Strike)

Five-thousand Vancouver civic workers are voting on a proposal to end an 11-week strike.

They'll be casting ballots over the weekend.

Reports suggest the mediator's proposal calls for a 17.5 per cent wage hike over five years.

It's the same package their suburban counterparts have already settled for.

The job action has halted garbage collection, closed community centres and stalled the city's booming construction industry. (4)

(Warm Thanksgiving)

Thanksgiving holiday travellers across Central and Eastern parts of the country are packing up T-shirts and shorts — instead of jackets and scarves.

The mercury in some regions could hit as high as 30 degrees.

Environment Canada calls it ``record-breaking." (4)

(Marion Jones Doping)

A stunning fall from grace for Marion Jones.

The three-time Olympic gold medallist has pleaded guilty to lying to U-S federal investigators when she denied using performance-enhancing drugs.

Jones won five medals at the 2000 Olympics in Sydney. (4)

(NewsWatch by Geri Smith)

# Air-Force-Drones

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 119

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OTTAWA \_ Canada's air force is shopping for new, unarmed pilotless aircraft to help protect troops in Afghanistan.

The head of the air force, Lieutenant-General Angus Watt, has ordered the program fast-tracked.

His staff plan to give special consideration to companies that can quickly deliver the so-called uninhabited aerial vehicles or U-A-V's.

The purchase, which industry insiders say could be worth up to 100 (m) million dollars, is seen as a stopgap until the air force becomes more comfortable with the technology.

The plan is a step back from a 500 (m) million proposal that was rejected last spring by the federal cabinet.

The original plan was to purchase 12 American-made Predator drones, which can be equipped with Hellfire missiles.

The air chief also says the technology hasn't evolved sufficiently.

Watt says technology that would deliver a 226-kilogram bomb, or fire a missile at a target, without humans nearby makes him nervous.

(The Canadian Press)

SAF

# INDEX:International, Politics, Defence

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** INTERNATIONAL POLITICS DEFENCE  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 173

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KABUL, Afghanistan — Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier says the Afghan government will decide on whether to negotiate with the Taliban.

Bernier emerged from a meeting with Afghan President Hamid Karzai in Kabul today where they discussed potential Taliban negotiations.

Bernier maintains Canada's position on negotiations has not changed, saying the Taliban must renounce violence before any deal can be reached.

Bernier is on a whirlwind tour of Afghanistan with International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda.

The two held a joint news conference with an Afghan cabinet minister where they were peppered with questions by Afghan reporters about the deteriorating security situation in the country.

Oda tried to reassure Afghans saying the security situation in the south where Canadian troops are based has improved over the past year. She also pointed to the millions of Afghan children who are now in school.

The two Canadian ministers will also be touring Canadian-supported development projects in the war-torn country.

This is the two ministers' first visit to Afghanistan since Prime Minister Stephen Harper shuffled them into their current cabinet posts in August.

Canada has some 2,500 troops in Afghanistan, the majority in the violent southern province of Kandahar. Seventy-one have died since 2002.

(The Canadian Press)

## --Seventh NewsWatch--

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** ADVISORIES  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 317

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Across Canada and around the world today, there are demonstrations condemning the military junta (HOON-ta) in Myanmar for its brutal suppression of a pro-democracy uprising.

Saying the world is watching, Amnesty International organized marches and vigils in dozens of cities.

The military raided monasteries and detained hundreds of Buddhist monks who spearheaded the latest demonstrations.

Some observers say today's protest rallies would likely have little impact on the military, which has largely ignored world opinion and pressure during its 45 years in power. (7)

(Afghan Bernier Oda) (Audio: 47)

After meeting with President Hamid Karzai during an unannounced visit to Afghanistan, Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier said only the Afghan government can decide whether to negotiate with the Taliban.

Bernier is there with International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda.

Their visit will also include visits to Canadian-supported development projects in the country. (7)

(Afghan Violence) (Audio: 41)

For the third time in just over a week, a suicide bomber has struck in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan.

At least five people, including a U-S soldier and four Afghan civilians, are dead and 12 wounded after the attack near the airport.

The bombing comes on the sixth anniversary this weekend of the U-S-led invasion of Afghanistan. (7)

(Pakistan-Politics) (Audio: 35)

Unofficial results from Pakistan's presidential election show General Pervez Musharraf as the runaway winner.

Opposition members abstained or boycotted today's vote to protest Musharraf's running for a new five-year-term while still in charge of the army.

He will not be able to take office until Pakistan's Supreme Court rules on complaints lodged by his opponents who claim his candidacy is unconstitutional. (7)

(Elxn Ontario)

This is the final weekend of the Ontario election campaign.

Voters cast their ballots on Wednesday.

Polls suggest Premier Dalton McGuinty and his Liberals are headed for victory over Conservative Leader John Tory and N-D-P Leader Howard Hampton.

Tory is brushing off the polls, and is still confident the premier's job is within his reach.

Hampton says a vote for the N-D-P would keep the Liberals from having free reign in the legislature for another four years. (7)

(Prosecutor-Sex-Sting)

A U-S federal prosecutor accused of flying from Florida to Detroit for a sexual encounter with a five-year-old girl has committed suicide in his prison cell.

Assistant U-S Attorney, 53-year-old John Atchison, was arrested at the Detroit airport last week after weeks of Internet conversations with authorities who posed as the girl's mother. (7)

(NewsWatch by Phil Godin)



## --Fifth NewsWatch--

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** ADVISORIES  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 210

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Canada's foreign affairs minister says only the government of Afghanistan can decide whether to negotiate with the Taliban.

Maxime Bernier is making an unannounced visit to Kabul.

He met this morning with Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

The two discussed potential Taliban talks.

Bernier is on a whirlwind tour of Afghanistan with International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda.

The two ministers will also be touring Canadian-supported development projects in the war-torn country. (5)

(Afghan Violence)

A suicide bomber targeting a U-S military convoy in Afghanistan has killed at least one American soldier and four Afghan civilians.

The attack comes on the sixth anniversary of the U-S-led invasion of Afghanistan. (5)

(Elxn Ontario)

It's the final weekend of the Ontario election campaign.

And the Liberals are finding themselves under attack from their political foes.

Conservative Leader John Tory is pledging to improve on what he calls the ``cruel" Liberal approach to autism.

New Democrat Leader Howard Hampton is hammering away at the Liberals over manufacturing job losses plaguing the province.

Liberal Leader Dalton McGuinty quaffed campaign ale during an appearance at the annual Oktoberfest in Kitchener-Waterloo.

Ontario voters go to the polls on Wednesday. (5)

(Marion Jones Doping)

The head of the World Anti-Doping Agency says he's not surprised American Marion Jones has admitted using steroids.

Montreal's Dick Pound says it was something people long suspected -- but couldn't prove.

Pound says he feels some vindication, but says her admission doesn't make him any happier.

The ex-Olympic track star now admits she was taking steroids from September 2000 to July 2001. (5)

(OJ Simpson Watch)

A fake Rolex watch is going back to O-J Simpson.

A California judge ruled it's exempt from a wrongful-death judgment awarded to the family of Ron Goldman.

It turns out the knockoff watch is only worth about 100 dollars. (5)

(Loose Moose)

The Calgary Zoo wants its moose back.

Alberto the moose has been on the loose for 11 days now.

It's believed the beast broke down a gate overnight and made his escape, attracted by a potential love interest in the area.

Male moose become quite persistent in seeking out breeding females in the autumn months. (5)

(NewsWatch by Geri Smith)

## --Sixth NewsWatch--

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** ADVISORIES  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 250

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Canada's new foreign affairs minister has met with Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

Maxime Bernier is making an unannounced visit to Kabul.

He and International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda arrived this morning.

Bernier says it's up to Karzai to decide whether the Afghan government should negotiate with the Taliban.

He says Canada wants to see the Taliban renounce violence before any deal is reached. (6)

(Air Force Drones)

The Air Force has fast-tracked the planned purchase of new, unarmed, pilotless aircraft.

Special consideration is going to companies able to deliver the so-called uninhabited aerial vehicles -- or U-A-V's -- quickly for deployment in Afghanistan.

The purchase could be worth as much as 100 (m) million dollars.

The original plan, worth half a (b) billion dollars, involved the purchase 12 American-made Predator drones, which can be equipped with missiles.

But cabinet rejected that proposal amid concerns it had not been put out to tender. (6)

(Myanmar Protests)

Cities around the world are holding a day of global protests against Myanmar's (MEE'-ahn-mahrz) ruling military junta (HOON'-tuh).

Demonstrators are hoping to send the country's generals a message that ``the world is still watching" in the wake of deadly crackdowns on anti-government protests.

Rallies are planned in a number of Canadian cities. (6)

(Dollar Unemployment)

The loonie's lofty days continue.

The dollar soared more than half-a-cent to close out the week at a-dollar-one-point-85 -- that's a 31-year high.

The currency has gained 18 per cent on its American counterpart this year.

Analysts say the dollar was buoyed by the latest unemployment figures that show the national rate last month had dropped to 5.9 per cent — a 33-year low.

It now takes 98 cents to buy one American dollar. (6)

(Elxn Ontario)

Ontario's premier is sounding confident in advance of Wednesday's provincial election.

One of Dalton McGuinty's promises — February 18th as a new statutory holiday.

The Liberal leader says families need to spend more time together.

Critics aren't keen on a new stat holiday.

They say it'll hurt Ontario's productivity, amounting to a two (b) billion-dollar blow to the province's economy. (6)

(Marion Jones Doping)

Disgraced track star Marion Jones is due back in court in January.

The three-time Olympic gold medallist will be sentenced on charges she lied to U-S federal authorities in a doping investigation.

She pleaded guilty yesterday, admitting she used steroids during the 2000 games.

Prosecutors say she could get a six-month jail term. (6)

(NewsWatch by Geri Smith)

## --Eleventh NewsWatch--

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** ADVISORIES  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 244

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Prime Minister Harper is calling the killing of a police officer in the Northwest Territories a senseless act of violence.

A Mountie has died of gunshot wounds today in the small community of Hay River.

Harper released his condolences tonight.

R-C-M-P spokesman, Sergeant Larry O'Brien, says Constable Christopher John Worden (WAR'-din) of Ottawa was responding to a call when he was shot and later died of his wounds.

Mounties from the Northwest Territories and Alberta are looking for a gunman.

It is not clear how the shooting took place. (11)

(Afghan-Cda-Bernier-Oda) (Audio: 69)

Two federal cabinet ministers have arrived in Afghanistan, pitching the success of the Canadian security mission there.

International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda and Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier landed in Kabul Saturday.

Bernier wanted to see Canadian efforts in Afghanistan first-hand.

In the morning Bernier met with Afghan President Hamid Karzai in Kabul. (11)

(Afghan-Cda-Coderre) (Audio: 70)

Liberal defence critic Denis Coderre is in Pakistan, preparing to go to Afghanistan on Sunday.

He has complained that the Harper government would not invite him to come along with the official ministers' visit.

He says the Afghan mission is a major priority for Canadians and he's doing his duty by going there.

Coderre accuses the government of playing petty politics by not letting him accompany the ministers. (11)

(Foundry Blast)

In Tacoma, Washington, the news reports say three men were injured in a propane tank explosion at the Atlas foundry.

The reports say all three have been taken to the hospital, one with serious burns and two with leg injuries. (11)

(Harlem Blast)

Officials in New York City say an apparent gas leak in a Harlem apartment building caused today's explosion which injured 17 people. Witnesses say the blast blew out some of the walls in the five-story building.

Four children and a firefighter were among those injured. (11)

(U-S Presidential Race)

New AP-Ipsos polls indicate Hillary Clinton is way out in front of Barack Obama in the race for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Rudy Guiliani has a much narrower lead over Fred Thompson in the Republican contest.

The polls were based on random telephone calls earlier this month. (11)

(NewsWatch by Roger Ward)

## --Second NewsWatch--

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** ADVISORIES  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 263

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With no prior warning due to security concerns, two federal cabinet ministers arrived in Kabul this morning to start a visit to war-torn Afghanistan.

Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier and International Co-operations Minister Bev Oda will meet with their Afghan counterparts.

Bernier and Oda will also meet with Afghan President Hamid Karzai, who wants Canadian soldiers to remain in his country after February, 2009.

That's when the Canadian mission there is due to expire. (2)

(Afghan Violence)

A suicide bomber in Afghanistan attacked a American military convoy near the Kabul airport, killing a U-S soldier and an Afghan civilian.

Reports say seven Afghans were wounded in this morning's attack.

It happened on the sixth anniversary of the U-S-led invasion of Afghanistan. (2)

(BIZ-Dollar)

The dollar is at its highest close in 31 years.

The loonie jumped almost 1.6-cents to end the week at 101.85 cents U-S.

It's the dollar's biggest one-day gain against the American dollar since 1970.

Traders say yesterday's gain was sparked by news that the Canadian unemployment rate sank last month to 5.9 per cent -- a 33-year low. (2)

(BC-Civic Strike) (Audio: 151)

The mediator in the 11-week strike by civic workers in Vancouver is recommending a raise of 17.5 per cent over five years plus a signing bonus of one-thousand dollars.

Three CUPE locals are spending the weekend voting on the proposal aimed at ending the walkout.

The city of Vancouver says it will vote on the proposal only if it's accepted by the five-thousand striking workers. (2)

(BC-Seniors Neglect)

A public administrator has been appointed to oversee a Victoria seniors' home under investigation for alleged abuse and neglect.

Beacon Hill Villa, an 80-bed facility, has been the target of several complaints over the past five years.

The public administrator, a registered nurse with more than 30 years experience, will try to ensure the facility's residents are treated with care and respect. (2)

(Beetle Burn Cancelled) (Audio: 181)

Cold, wet weather has prompted Alberta to delay plans for three controlled forest fires this fall along its boundary with British Columbia.

The fires were meant to slow the pine beetle's relentless march eastward.

Alberta will have to wait out the winter, and try to set the fires next spring. (2)

(NewsWatch by Bill Marshall)



# Maxime Bernier, Bev Oda make unannounced trip to Afghanistan

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06

**KEYWORDS:** INTERNATIONAL POLITICS DEFENCE

**PUBLICATION:** bnw

**WORD COUNT:** 79

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KABUL, Afghanistan – Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier and International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda are visiting Afghanistan.

They're to meet today with their Afghan counterparts as well as Afghan President Hamid Karzai in Kabul.

The two ministers will also be touring Canadian-supported development projects in the war-torn country.

This is the two ministers' first visit to Afghanistan since Prime Minister Stephen Harper shuffled them into their current cabinet posts in August.

Canada has some 2,500 troops in Afghanistan, the majority in the violent southern province of Kandahar. Seventy-one have died since 2002.

(The Canadian Press)

## --Ninth NewsWatch--

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** ADVISORIES  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 375

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The R-C-M-P confirm that a Mountie was shot and killed after answering a call in Hay River in the Northwest Territories.

He has been identified as 30-year-old Chris Worden of Ottawa.

Sergeant Larry O'Brien says the gunman got away and police are conducting a manhunt across the Northwest Territories and Alberta.

But they are concentrating their search around Hay River, which is about 400 kilometres south of Yellowknife.

As word of the Mountie's death spread through the region, people began dropping off flowers, candles and cards at the local R-C-M-P detachment. (9)

(Myanmar-Protests) (Audio: 61)

Emotional protest rallies are being held in several cities across Canada today in support of pro-democracy dissidents in Myanmar, also known as Burma.

The ruling military regime has acknowledged detaining hundreds of Buddhist monks who had led huge pro-democracy protests.

Demonstrations were planned for Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto and Vancouver, coinciding with similar events around the world.

Irene Khan of Amnesty International says people are marching today for those who can't. (9)

(Afghan-Cda-Coderre) (Audio: 79)

Defence Minister Peter MacKay and N-D-P Leader Jack Layton say Montreal Liberal M-P Denis Coderre's trip to Afghanistan is nothing more than a political ``stunt."

Coderre, who is expected to arrive in Kandahar tomorrow, says he decided to go on his own after the Harper government ignored his repeated requests to make the trip.

He wanted to go along with Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier and International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda, who are now in Afghanistan for meetings with officials and to check out various projects that Canada is involved in. (9)

(Britain-Afghanistan-Prince's Commander)

Buckingham Palace says Prince William is deeply saddened by the death of his former Sandhurst Military College platoon commander, who was killed in an explosion in southern Afghanistan.

Major Alexis Roberts, who was 32, was the highest ranking British officer killed in that country since operations there began in November 2001.

William and younger brother Prince Harry are both serving officers with the Blues and Royals regiment. (9)

(Marion Jones) (Audio: 36)

The head of track and field's world governing body is branding Marion Jones ``one of the biggest frauds in sporting history."

Lamine Diack's condemnation comes a day after the former American track star admitted to taking banned drugs when she won three Olympic golds and two bronze medals at the Sydney Olympics in 2000. The International Olympic Committee is looking to take back her gold medals. (9)

(Kids-Bus)

A 15-bed bus once used to transport the now-defunct Port Huron Flags minor league hockey team has been sold to an Arkansas couple with 17 children.

When the team folded in May, Fred Minnie posted an ad trying to sell the bus in an auto magazine.

He was contacted by Jim Bob and Michelle Duggar, who say they will take their kids on a road trip. (9)

(NewsWatch by Phil Godin)

## --Eighth NewsWatch--

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** ADVISORIES  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 353

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Two federal cabinet ministers are in Afghanistan, pitching the success of Canada's mission there.

The trip by Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier and International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda was kept secret.

About 30 minutes after they arrived in Kabul, a suicide bomber attacked a U-S convoy on the road from the airport, killing an American soldier and four Afghans.

It's the same road they were going to travel on.

After meeting with Afghan President Hamid Karzai, Bernier said it will be up to the Afghan government to decide whether to negotiate with the Taliban. (8)

(Afghan-Cda-Coderre) (Audio: 64)

Liberal Defence critic Denis Coderre is expected to arrive in Afghanistan for his own fact-finding visit tomorrow.

The Montreal M-P made the trip with support from Liberal Leader Stephane Dion, even though the Harper government refused to grant him permission to go.

Coderre says he's showing solidarity with Canadian troops on behalf of the official Opposition and will meet officials with some non-governmental organizations. (8)

(Myanmar Protests) (Audio: 57)

Thousands of demonstrators in cities across Canada, Europe and Asia joined today in protests against the military junta (HOON-ta) in Myanmar.

The regime acknowledged detaining hundreds of Buddhist monks who have been leading huge pro-democracy protests.

There were no visible demonstrations in Myanmar's largest city of Yangon, where bans on gatherings have been enforced by soldiers. (8)

(Pakistan-Politics) (Audio: 67)

Despite protests over his candidacy for another term as Pakistan's president, General Pervez Musharraf has won re-election. The nation's supreme court allowed him to run again despite term limits -- saying it would decide later this month whether it was legal to do so while still head of the army.

For now, Musharraf says the people have spoken -- with most in the Senate and various assemblies supporting him. (8)

(Greens–Poll)

A Canadian Press–Decima poll has found that the recent rise in support for the Green party, coupled with a belief by many that its support will hold in a fall campaign, could make election results more unpredictable than usual.

Of just over one–thousand Canadians surveyed, 37 per cent believe Green party support will remain strong while 28 per cent think it will actually increase.

The Greens garnered just 4.5 per cent of the popular vote in the 2006 general election. (8)

(RCMP–Shooting)

There's been a shooting involving an R–C–M–P officer in Hay River in the Northwest Territories.

It's not known if anyone was killed.

An R–C–M–P spokesman would only say that officers responded to a call this morning, there was a shooting and that someone was injured.

More information should be available at an afternoon news conference in the community 400 kilometres south of Yellowknife. (8)

(NewsWatch by Phil Godin)

# --Tenth NewsWatch--

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** ADVISORIES  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 299

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International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda and Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier are in Kabul, landing a half hour after a suicide bomber struck on the main airport road.

A U-S soldier and four civilians died.

Oda told skeptical Afghan journalists that the shift by insurgents to roadside and suicide bombings shows the success of the western security mission in Afghanistan.

Oda says the fact that suicide bombings are now occurring in the capital shows the Taliban are desperate, because of their inability to win on the battlefield. (10)

(Afghan-Coderre) (Audio: 78)

Liberal defence critic Denis Coderre is in Pakistan, preparing to go to Afghanistan tomorrow.

He says he's going it alone because the Harper government would not let him tag along with two cabinet ministers this weekend.

Coderre says the government played petty politics by not letting him accompany Maxime Bernier and Bev Oda.

Defence Minister Peter MacKay says Coderre's visit is just a stunt. (10)

(Elxn-NL-Whistleblower) (Audio: 66)

Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Danny Williams is promising whistleblower legislation in the next provincial session if he's re-elected.

While at a campaign stop in Carbonear, Newfoundland for Tuesday's election, the Tory leader said he supports legislation that would protect public workers who point out wrongdoing.

This comes after N-D-P Leader Lorraine Michael said she has received late-night phone calls from health-care workers who want to speak out about problems, but are afraid. (10)

(Pakistan-Politics)

Pakistan's president, General Pervez Musharraf has won re-election.

The nation's supreme court allowed Musharraf to run again despite term limits --- saying it would decide later this month whether it was legal for him to run while still army chief.

For now, Musharraf says the people have spoken. (10)

(Myanmar—Protests)

It's an international day of protests against the military regime in Myanmar.

Dozens of people stood in the grey Vancouver rain today to rally in support of dissidents in the former Burma.

Rallies were also held in Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto, as well as in cities around the world. (10)

(Mormon Conference)

The president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has named a new high-ranking church official at the 177th gathering of faithful Mormons.

President Gordon B. Hinckley appointed Elder Henry B. Eyring as the second counsellor in the church's First Presidency.

Eyring replaces James E. Faust, who died August 10th of age-related causes.

The gathering took place in Salt Lake City, Utah. (10)

(NewsWatch by Roger Ward)

# Afghan–Violence

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**DATE:** 2007.10.06  
**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 81

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KABUL, Afghanistan — A suicide car bomber has attacked a U–S convoy in Kabul, Afghanistan.

A U–S soldier and four Afghans were killed.

Twelve Afghans were wounded.

Dozens of shops were damaged and witnesses reported huge flames shooting into the sky.

The attack took place on the sixth anniversary of the U–S–led invasion of Afghanistan.

It also came as Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier and International Co–operation Minister Bev Oda paid a visit to the Afghan capital.

The bomber struck on a tree–lined, four–lane road that leads from the U–S Embassy to the airport \_ a route frequently travelled by foreign convoys.

(The Associated Press)

LAK



# Caption Only

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**IDNUMBER** 200710070093

**PUBLICATION:** Times Colonist (Victoria)

**DATE:** 2007.10.07

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** Monitor

**PAGE:** D5

**COLUMN:** 7 days around the world in pictures

Colour Photo: Darren Stone, Times Colonist / Monday: Lt.-Gov. Steven Point, who was sworn in as B.C.'s 28th lieutenant-governor, inspects the royal guard at the B.C. legislature in Victoria. He's the first person of aboriginal descent in the province's history to hold the position of the Queen's representative. ; Colour Photo: (Rob Shaw) ; Colour Photo: Ahmad Masood, Reuters / Tuesday: The Times Colonist's Rob Shaw, right, part of a Canadian Forces regional media tour in Afghanistan, reports on a suicide attack in Kabul, the sixth since Muslims began observing Ramadan in mid-September. Thirteen people — eight police officers, two children and three adults — were killed when a blast ripped out a bus. ; Colour Photo: Debra Brash, Times Colonist / Wednesday: The USS Abraham Lincoln and its 3,100 crew members (home port, Everett, Wash.) arrive in the capital for a three-day visit. The 1,092-foot Nimitz-class aircraft carrier is a floating city with its own post office and zip code, TV and radio stations, newspaper, fire department, library and hospital. The ship has enough generating power to supply electricity to 100,000 homes, food and supplies to operate for 90 days, and the capability to distill more than 400,000 gallons of fresh water from the sea each day. ; Colour Photo: Handout, Reuters / Thursday: This video frame of Diana, Princess of Wales, in a hotel elevator was presented to the coroner's inquest into her fatal crash in Paris on Aug. 31, 1997. The footage was taken shortly before the crash. ; Colour Photo: Debra Brash, Times Colonist / Friday: Karli Rushton holds up bottled water, left, and tap water at Alexander's Coffee in Sidney. A boil-water advisory was imposed after breaks in the town's watermain led to infiltration of debris that made tap water cloudy. Coffee shops such as Alexander's were forced to use bottled water for hot drinks. ; Colour Photo: Debra Brash, Times Colonist / Saturday: Cyclists descend the hill to Bear Mountain arena after finishing the more than 1,000-kilometre 2007 Tour de Rock Cops for Cancer ride, which raised \$1.5 million. ; Colour Photo: Bruce Stotesbury, Times Colonist / Sunday: Ignoring wind and rain, some of a throng of 5,100 people run or walk along Gordon Head Road during the Run for the Cure, which raised about \$541,000 for breast cancer research, education, diagnosis and treatment. ;

**SOURCE:** Times Colonist; Reuters

# Military career a chance to contribute

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**IDNUMBER** 200710070090  
**PUBLICATION:** Times Colonist (Victoria)  
**DATE:** 2007.10.07  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Letters  
**PAGE:** D3  
**BYLINE:** C.W.J. MacLean  
**SOURCE:** Times Colonist  
**WORD COUNT:** 303

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I am a husband, a father, raise organic pasture-fed chickens, brew my own apple cider and contribute regularly to the local food bank. I was recruited by the Canadian Forces while attending the University of Western Ontario, completing my political science degree there in 1988.

Since then I have served as an infantry officer with the United Nations in Cyprus, where the Canadian Forces kept ethnic Turks and Greeks from killing each other, in the First Gulf War helping to liberate Kuwait after an illegal invasion by Iraq and in the former Yugoslavia where we effectively stopped ethnic cleansing and contributed to the establishment of democratic elections.

I have continued my education, completing a master's degree with Canadian Forces' support. Colleagues of mine responded to earthquakes in Turkey and hurricanes in Haiti and rescued sinking fishermen. They have been injured sheltering civilians from Serb mortar attacks, assisted with the disarming of the contra rebels in Central America and helped plan the evacuation of hundreds of Canadians from Lebanon. Men I've served with have died in Afghanistan trying to bring security to a place where teachers can be executed for allowing girls into their schools.

I am proud of what I've done and what Canadian Forces members are doing throughout the world and am thankful for the opportunities and challenges my 20 years of service have provided.

I was not poor and I was not coerced when I made the informed decision to join the Army. It was a choice I made to join an exceptionally professional organization with the opportunity to make positive change in the world.

Those at the University of Victoria who banned military recruiters from campus have restricted their peers from making informed decisions about a rewarding, meaningful and challenging career.

C.W.J. MacLean,

captain,

The Royal Canadian Regiment,

Victoria.

# Ministers, MP fly in to visit troops in Afghanistan; Tory brass attack Liberal critic for making 'reckless and irresponsible' visit to country

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**IDNUMBER** 200710070009

**PUBLICATION:** Times Colonist (Victoria)

**DATE:** 2007.10.07

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** A3

**ILLUSTRATION:** Photo: Paul Chiasson, CanWest News Service / Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier watches a young schoolgirl write while visiting a school in the Murad Khane district of Kabul. ;

**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan

**BYLINE:** Matthew Fisher

**SOURCE:** CanWest News Service

**WORD COUNT:** 474

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KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan — The competing Conservative and Liberal visions about what Canada should be doing to help bring peace to Afghanistan found an unexpected new stage when Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier arrived at the Canadian base here late yesterday — hours before the expected arrival of Liberal defence critic Denis Coderre.

While saying Coderre was "always welcome in Afghanistan," Bernier criticized the former Liberal cabinet minister for not having gone through proper channels to set up his visit as Tory MPs had done when they were in opposition.

"There is a process to be followed with the government here," Bernier told reporters in Kabul before flying to Kandahar yesterday. "I question why Mr. Coderre doesn't want to make a safe trip. ... It is irresponsible for him to come here without contacting us or planning his progress far in advance to assure his security."

A spokesman for Defence Minister Peter MacKay said "this latest stunt by Mr. Coderre shows complete disregard and disrespect for the military."

Dan Dugas, MacKay's director of communications, said the government's policy is to organize visits by opposition MPs through parliamentary committees, as was done under the previous Liberal government.

"He knows the process and refuses to abide by it," Dugas said in an e-mail.

Coderre has been repeatedly reminded that the Department of Foreign Affairs advises against travelling to Afghanistan, he added.

As an alternative, Coderre was offered the chance to visit Afghanistan later this fall with Liberal Leader Stéphane Dion, said Dugas.

"With this freelance tour to Afghanistan, Mr. Coderre's reckless and irresponsible actions show that he would prefer to break a long standing policy on MP visits to jeopardize the safety and mission of our troops to serve his personal agenda."

Ministers, MP fly in to visit troops in Afghanistan; Tory brass attack Liberal critic for making 'reckless and irre

Coderre was to fly on a United Nations flight from Pakistan to Kabul and from there to Kandahar today.

Although Coderre is a strong critic of the Afghan mission and had given them very little advance notice, the Canadian Forces have indicated that "as a member of Parliament" he will be given a tour of their main base, which is home to many of the 2,300 Canadian troops in Afghanistan.

Coderre's trip was being sponsored by several non-governmental organizations including the Senlis Council, which has been highly critical of the combat role that Canada has played in Afghanistan.

Climbing out of a Canadian Forces CC-130 Hercules transport aircraft after the 70-minute flight from Kabul yesterday, Bernier said he had made the 9,600-kilometre journey to see "what our military people are doing over here for the Afghan people and to share Thanksgiving with the troops."

Bernier, who was appointed to the job in August, was met on the tarmac by several Canadian senior officers including the contingent commander, Brig.-Gen. Guy Laroche.

But what many of the soldiers wanted to know was if the Harper government will extend the current combat mission in Afghanistan beyond February 2009.

"Like you know, the prime minister has made it very clear we will debate this in Parliament and put it to a vote," Bernier said to reporters. "We are very democratic. We will have Parliament decide."

# Forces of law, order chip away at chaos

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**IDNUMBER** 200710070007  
**PUBLICATION:** Times Colonist (Victoria)  
**DATE:** 2007.10.07  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A3  
**COLUMN:** Report from afghanistan  
**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR CITY, Afghanistan  
**BYLINE:** Rob Shaw  
**SOURCE:** Times Colonist  
**WORD COUNT:** 731

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KANDAHAR CITY, Afghanistan — How do you dispense justice in a country where judges don't know the law and warlords run their own prisons?

That's the question facing Canadians as they join other international organizations trying to help Afghans reform their legal system.

"Rule of law is an important governance issue," said Lt.-Cmdr. April English, legal adviser to Canada's Provincial Reconstruction Team in Kandahar province. "Without the rule of law, you have chaos among the people."

Chaos has largely defined Afghan life for the past 30 years, as the country lurched through a failed Russian occupation and civil war.

Until recently, the country's legal system operated largely at the whim of a village elder's ruling, a warlord's edict or the opinion of a judge who may or may not be following the law.

In theory, Afghanistan's law has some similarities to Canada's. When a person is arrested, the state has 72 hours to present its case to a judge, who can then take it to trial. The prosecution and defence are considered neutral parties in the eye of the court.

A judge usually confers with three of his peers to deliver a verdict and sentence. But, as in many aspects of Afghan life, theory and reality are a great distance apart.

In more than 90 per cent of criminal trials in five provinces surveyed recently by the United Nations, the Afghan judge did not understand the law, or the prosecution did not show up to court, or defendants were unaware they were entitled to a lawyer (if you can even find a defence lawyer in the country), said Georgette Gagnon, at the UN's Assistance Mission in Afghanistan law unit.

The judges, who were appointed by previous governments, made verdicts based on opinion instead of law, she said. The UN, and Canada, are working to change that by funding seminars for judges and prosecutors, and hoping the judges, in turn, re-educate their peers.

The Canadian International Development Agency and Department of Foreign Affairs have helped fund training for 75 prosecutors, 68 public defenders, 90 judges (of whom 16 are women), and 20 additional judges to act as trainers to others.

But they can only go so far, said English. "What one has to bear in mind is their justice system is never going to look like ours, because they have a different traditional system," she said. Much of Afghan justice in rural areas is handled by the elder with the most cultural or religious respect.

The elder usually brings together the two parties and arrives at an agreeable solution and punishment, she said. The international community needs to respect Afghan traditions, which are in some ways similar to restorative-justice techniques only beginning to gain widespread acceptance in Canada, she said.

"It's a win-win situation when you can get two parties together to negotiate what's acceptable to both," said English, who also works in the office of the judge advocate general in Edmonton. "Both parties go home happy in a sense."

But the unstable security situation affects progress reforming in the legal system. Part of English's job is to organize settlements when Afghans are accidentally hurt or killed by Canadian soldiers.

Sometimes it takes the form of a cash payment to the family of the dead, and other times it includes things such as livestock. It can keep her busy.

In the past week alone, Canadians have been involved in incidents where a boy was shot in the head and seriously injured, and seven people were hurt when soldiers fired upon a truck that came too close to their armoured convoy.

Among villagers, police are widely distrusted and viewed as corrupt — although the international community is trying to reform them, too. The Afghanistan National Police used to have no female members, as women were barred from working under the Taliban. Now the force has 17 women in uniform in Kandahar, said English.

For the most part, English (who has an aunt and uncle, Joan and Bob Gray, in Ladysmith) said she's optimistic that Afghans will develop and embrace their own legal changes with the help of countries like Canada.

"I love the work," she said. "It's very challenging. It can be frustrating because it takes time to implement solutions."

"Still, Rome wasn't built in a day, and Afghanistan won't be either."

rfshaw@tc.canwest.com

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#### REPORT FROM AFGHANISTAN

Times Colonist reporter Rob Shaw is in Afghanistan as part of a Canadian Forces regional media tour where he'll meet Canadian and Afghan officials, visit reconstruction projects and speak with soldiers. While in the country, Shaw is under escort by military officials. The military doesn't edit his stories, but has asked him not to divulge security information it deems sensitive.

He will file stories and photos during his trip that will appear in the paper and at [www.timescolonist.com](http://www.timescolonist.com).

# Road to Kandahar Liberal MP criticized for unilateral visit to Afghanistan

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**SOURCETAG:** 0710070169  
**PUBLICATION:** The Winnipeg Sun  
**DATE:** 2007.10.07  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** 14  
**ILLUSTRATION:** file photo by Tom Hanson, CP Coderre wants to see the situation in Afghanistan first-hand.  
**BYLINE:** CP  
**DATELINE:** TORONTO  
**WORD COUNT:** 448

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Liberal Defence critic Denis Coderre is in Pakistan, preparing to take a United Nations flight to Kandahar yesterday -- the sixth anniversary of the U.S.-led bombing of Afghanistan.

The Montreal MP said the Afghan mission is a major priority for Canadians and that he's doing his duty by going there, even though the trip doesn't have the approval of the Harper government. Both Defence Minister Peter MacKay and NDP Leader Jack Layton are labelling the trip a stunt.

Coderre told CTV NewsNet in an interview yesterday he's been asking for months to go, but repeated calls to the defence minister asking for permission were ignored or rejected. So he said he decided unilaterally to go on the fact-finding trip and report back to Liberal Leader Stephane Dion in preparation for his own future trip to the war-torn country.

"I took my responsibility. I have a duty, I have a job to do. I am the critic for ... the official Opposition," he said. It's important ... to make sure that we fully participate and contribute to the debate. So I'm gonna let them play their petty politics and I'll do my job,"

The Liberal MP said it would have shown some class and been easier had he been allowed to accompany Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier and International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda, currently in Afghanistan.

"For the sake of democracy it's important that parliamentarians should be there. And I've been asking for months to go," said Coderre.

He said he's going to show solidarity with Canadian troops on behalf of the official Opposition and meet some non-governmental organizations during his visit.

Canada has some 2,500 troops in Afghanistan, most in Kandahar. Seventy-one Canadian soldiers and one diplomat have died since the Canadian mission began in 2002.

Coderre denied suggestions he's putting soldiers' safety at risk with his visit, noting he's going to land at Kandahar Air Field, which is part of the security perimeter.

NDP CRITICIZES

"I will land just at the base. So I'll be there to salute our brave men and women and I'm expecting to have full briefings," Coderre said.

In Toronto, federal NDP Leader Jack Layton had criticism for Coderre's solo trek.

"Involving individual MPs in a sort of 'stunt-like' visit does pose risks ... I'm not on the ground to assess that. But you have to respect the judgment of our military leadership," Layton told CTV NewsNet.

There are a lot of other ways to find out what's going on, on the ground in Afghanistan, he added.

"Being part of official visits is one, being in touch with the NGOs (non-governmental organizations) and working with them, which is what we've done. They're on the ground there now, listening to the UN reports," said Layton.

In an e-mail to The Canadian Press, MacKay's director of communications, Dan Dugas, said it was the Liberals, under then Defence Minister Bill Graham, who began a policy in 2004 of not allowing single-MP travel to Afghanistan.

He said Graham told Conservative MP Sheryl Gallant that all MP travel had to be done by committee because of security and other reasons.

An Associated Press report last week suggested that there is more violence by the Taliban now than there has been since 2001, with the number of insurgency-related deaths this year surpassing 5,000.

KEYWORDS=CANADA



# The trick with Rick Conservatives foolishly float a trial balloon aimed at deflating Canada's popular general

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**SOURCETAG** 0710070165

**PUBLICATION:** The Winnipeg Sun

**DATE:** 2007.10.07

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** Editorial/Opinion

**PAGE:** 13

**ILLUSTRATION:** file photo Canada's Chief of Defence Staff, General Rick Hillier, might be getting too popular for his political masters to handle.

**BYLINE:** SHEILA COPPS

**WORD COUNT:** 609

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Hail to the chief. I am referring of course, not to Prime Minister Stephen Harper but to General Rick Hillier, whose classy response to rumours of his demise proved his political savviness and leadership skills.

Thankfully, we do not have a political system where the prime minister is also the chief of the armed forces. That may not prevent Stephen Harper from parading around in flak jackets looking singularly presidential. But when the pretend chief butts up against the real chief, don't expect the politician to come out on top.

Some political genius probably thought it was a brilliant idea to leak a story about Hillier's demise, a shot across the bow to a military man who was getting too popular, and powerful, for his own good.

Hence the anonymous leak designed to shake up military brass and let Hillier know who's boss. But the leak had the opposite effect. A lot is written these days about clumsy management in Stephane Dion's office, but the Hillier story was a textbook case in how not to communicate.

In full damage control, Prime Minister Harper declared he and his close advisers were not involved in discussions about the future of Canada's most popular soldier. Accepting Harper's vigorous denials, we can only assume that the public thrashing was the brainchild of the defence minister.

Peter MacKay did not exactly jump to the defence of his man. Instead, he mumbled a few platitudes, avoiding the key question about whether Hillier's mandate will be renewed. The PM was more fulsome in his praise, but also deliberately neglected to kill the termination story outright.

Both reactions point to only one possible scenario.

MacKay, with the blessing of the prime minister, floated this trial balloon to gauge public reaction to the firing of a politically overweening general.

When a soldier becomes more popular than his bosses, that hurts.

ODD MANOEUVRE

Harper needs opposition support for continued engagement in Afghanistan. Attacking the chief of the defence staff publicly seems odd way to secure it. Political egos notwithstanding, the government needs Hillier more

The trick with Rick Conservatives foolishly float a trial balloon aimed at deflating Canada's popular general

than he needs the government.

Instead, the Tories went after the very soldier they need to sell their message. After all, Hillier's brilliant communication skills are already making inroads with a cynical public.

His down-to-earth demeanour and hands-on approach has met with far more success than multiple ministerial tours. Even his love of hockey and doughnuts resonates with Canadians. Unfortunately for the government, the chief's positive message has provided stark contrast to the failures of his political masters, including former minister Gordon O'Connor.

This is not the first time ministers and the military have embarked on an inevitable collision course.

Former minister David Collenette stared down defence critics with a plan to slash the number of officers in a top-heavy military structure. In the end, he was temporarily forced out of cabinet, dogged by leaked documents and controversy over an inquiry into the death of a Somali teenager at the hands of the Canadian military.

Former minister Art Eggleton once informed cabinet that politicians would not be welcome at the Petawawa funeral of a slain soldier. The military preferred to keep grieving "in the family" and they made it clear that didn't include politicians.

## SHORT STRAW

When military men (and they have been all men) and their political masters clash, the politicians usually draw the short straw.

Hillier is no fool. He will likely save face by orchestrating his own departure. With the undeserved public humiliation he suffered last week, Hillier would be wise to take control of his own leave-taking.

Shock waves from his exit would reverberate well beyond the military. The loss of Canada's most popular soldier in decades would rankle Harper's own Conservative base. It could also cut into potential parliamentary support for future Afghanistan initiatives. A shove out the door would demoralize the soldiers who are risking their lives in theatre.

Don't expect Hillier to go quietly. If history repeats itself, (and it usually does) his multiple military supporters will soon start inflicting collateral damage on their political bosses. Peter MacKay may wish he had privately pricked this week's trial balloon before it publicly blows him up.

# Canuck ministers tour Kabul

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**SOURCETAG** 0710070154

**PUBLICATION:** The Winnipeg Sun

**DATE:** 2007.10.07

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** 7

**ILLUSTRATION:** photo by Paul Chiasson, Reuters International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda and Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier visit the Murad Khane district of Kabul under tight security yesterday. A deadly suicide bomb attack occurred just 30 minutes before.

**BYLINE:** LES PERREAUX, THE CANADIAN PRESS

**DATELINE:** KABUL

**WORD COUNT:** 210

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Two newly shuffled Canadian cabinet ministers arrived in the Afghan capital just 30 minutes after another deadly suicide bomb attack yesterday, but that didn't daunt their persistent pitch that life is getting better for ordinary Afghans.

International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda and Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier landed a short time after a suicide bomber struck on the main airport road, killing a U.S. soldier and four civilians. That attack came on the eve of the sixth anniversary of the U.S.-led invasion that ousted the Taliban from power.

Oda tried to reassure skeptical Afghan journalists that the shift to roadside and suicide bombings illustrated the success of the western security mission in Afghanistan.

The fact that suicide bombings are now occurring in the capital shows that the Taliban are desperate, Oda said.

When Oda turned the subject to record enrolment in Afghan schools, one Afghan reporter asked about a recent Afghan human rights report that said children were beginning to stay home out of fear.

It's one more reason Afghanistan needs Canadian soldiers, Oda said, referring to the meeting she and Bernier held with President Hamid Karzai. "He explained why we have to stay in Afghanistan," Oda said.

Bernier said he discussed negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban with Karzai.

Karzai has said he is willing to talk to Taliban and other insurgent leaders any time.

Canada's position has not changed, Bernier added, saying the Taliban must first renounce violence.

**KEYWORDS=WORLD**

# World Watch Sunflashes Column

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**PUBLICATION:** The Winnipeg Sun  
**DATE:** 2007.10.07  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** 7  
**ILLUSTRATION:** photo of ALEXIS ROBERTS Taught William  
**BYLINE:** SUN WIRE SERVICES  
**COLUMN:** World Watch Sunflashes  
**WORD COUNT:** 196

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## AFGHAN BOMB KILLS PRINCE'S PAL

LONDON — Prince William said yesterday he was "deeply saddened" by news that his mentor from army training school had been killed in Afghanistan.

Maj. Alexis Roberts, 32, of the Royal Gurkha Rifles, died Thursday after his convoy was hit by an improvised explosive device. He had been the prince's instructor at Sandhurst from which he graduated last year.

## 8 MILITANTS SHOT DEAD

SRINAGAR, India — Eight suspected militants were shot dead by Indian troops yesterday when they tried to sneak into Indian Kashmir from Pakistan, an army spokesman said.

Two soldiers were also killed in two separate clashes in north Kashmir near the Line of Control, a de facto border which divides Kashmir between India and Pakistan.

## ANTI-RIGHT-WING RUCKUS

BERNE — Swiss police fired teargas and anti-right-wing protesters hurled rocks and bottles during a political rally in Switzerland's capital yesterday, in a sign of rising tensions ahead of an unusually divisive election.

The clashes occurred when demonstrators sought to interrupt a march organised by the right-wing Switzerland's People's Party.

## SHIITE RIVALS OK DEAL

BAGHDAD — Two of Iraq's most powerful Shiite leaders agreed yesterday to end a bitter rivalry.

Radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr and Abdul-Aziz al-Hakim, leader of the largest Shiite political party, the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council, have promised to "protect Iraqi blood and enhance cooperation between the two movements for the Islamic and national interests and to save the nation." **KEYWORDS=WORLD**

# The trick with Rick Conservatives foolishly float a trial balloon aimed at deflating Canada's popular general

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**SOURCETAG** 0710070294

**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Sun

**DATE:** 2007.10.07

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** Comment

**PAGE:** C3

**ILLUSTRATION:** file photo Canada's Chief of Defence Staff, General Rick Hillier, might be getting too popular for his political masters to handle.

**BYLINE:** SHEILA COPPS

**WORD COUNT:** 609

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Hail to the chief. I am referring of course, not to Prime Minister Stephen Harper but to General Rick Hillier, whose classy response to rumours of his demise proved his political savviness and leadership skills.

Thankfully, we do not have a political system where the prime minister is also the chief of the armed forces. That may not prevent Stephen Harper from parading around in flak jackets looking singularly presidential. But when the pretend chief butts up against the real chief, don't expect the politician to come out on top.

Some political genius probably thought it was a brilliant idea to leak a story about Hillier's demise, a shot across the bow to a military man who was getting too popular, and powerful, for his own good.

Hence the anonymous leak designed to shake up military brass and let Hillier know who's boss. But the leak had the opposite effect. A lot is written these days about clumsy management in Stephane Dion's office, but the Hillier story was a textbook case in how not to communicate.

In full damage control, Prime Minister Harper declared he and his close advisers were not involved in discussions about the future of Canada's most popular soldier. Accepting Harper's vigorous denials, we can only assume that the public thrashing was the brainchild of the defence minister.

Peter MacKay did not exactly jump to the defence of his man. Instead, he mumbled a few platitudes, avoiding the key question about whether Hillier's mandate will be renewed. The PM was more fulsome in his praise, but also deliberately neglected to kill the termination story outright.

Both reactions point to only one possible scenario.

MacKay, with the blessing of the prime minister, floated this trial balloon to gauge public reaction to the firing of a politically overweening general.

When a soldier becomes more popular than his bosses, that hurts.

ODD MANOEUVRE

Harper needs opposition support for continued engagement in Afghanistan. Attacking the chief of the defence staff publicly seems odd way to secure it. Political egos notwithstanding, the government needs Hillier more

The trick with Rick Conservatives foolishly float a trial balloon aimed at deflating Canada's popular general79

than he needs the government.

Instead, the Tories went after the very soldier they need to sell their message. After all, Hillier's brilliant communication skills are already making inroads with a cynical public.

His down-to-earth demeanour and hands-on approach has met with far more success than multiple ministerial tours. Even his love of hockey and doughnuts resonates with Canadians. Unfortunately for the government, the chief's positive message has provided stark contrast to the failures of his political masters, including former minister Gordon O'Connor.

This is not the first time ministers and the military have embarked on an inevitable collision course.

Former minister David Collenette stared down defence critics with a plan to slash the number of officers in a top-heavy military structure. In the end, he was temporarily forced out of cabinet, dogged by leaked documents and controversy over an inquiry into the death of a Somali teenager at the hands of the Canadian military.

Former minister Art Eggleton once informed cabinet that politicians would not be welcome at the Petawawa funeral of a slain soldier. The military preferred to keep grieving "in the family" and they made it clear that didn't include politicians.

## SHORT STRAW

When military men (and they have been all men) and their political masters clash, the politicians usually draw the short straw.

Hillier is no fool. He will likely save face by orchestrating his own departure. With the undeserved public humiliation he suffered last week, Hillier would be wise to take control of his own leave-taking.

Shock waves from his exit would reverberate well beyond the military. The loss of Canada's most popular soldier in decades would rankle Harper's own Conservative base. It could also cut into potential parliamentary support for future Afghanistan initiatives. A shove out the door would demoralize the soldiers who are risking their lives in theatre.

Don't expect Hillier to go quietly. If history repeats itself, (and it usually does) his multiple military supporters will soon start inflicting collateral damage on their political bosses. Peter MacKay may wish he had privately pricked this week's trial balloon before it publicly blows him up.

# Sunflashes Column

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**SOURCETAG** 0710070252  
**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Sun  
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**ILLUSTRATION:** photo of ALEXIS ROBERTS Taught William  
**BYLINE:** SUN WIRE SERVICES  
**COLUMN:** Sunflashes  
**WORD COUNT:** 196

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## AFGHAN BOMB KILLS PRINCE'S PAL

LONDON — Prince William said yesterday he was "deeply saddened" by news that his mentor from army training school had been killed in Afghanistan.

Maj. Alexis Roberts, 32, of the Royal Gurkha Rifles, died Thursday after his convoy was hit by an improvised explosive device. He had been the prince's instructor at Sandhurst from which he graduated last year.

## 8 MILITANTS SHOT DEAD

SRINAGAR, India — Eight suspected militants were shot dead by Indian troops yesterday when they tried to sneak into Indian Kashmir from Pakistan, an army spokesman said.

Two soldiers were also killed in two separate clashes in north Kashmir near the Line of Control, a de facto border which divides Kashmir between India and Pakistan.

## ANTI-RIGHT-WING RUCKUS

BERNE — Swiss police fired teargas and anti-right-wing protesters hurled rocks and bottles during a political rally in Switzerland's capital yesterday, in a sign of rising tensions ahead of an unusually divisive election.

The clashes occurred when demonstrators sought to interrupt a march organised by the right-wing Switzerland's People's Party.

## SHIITE RIVALS OK DEAL

BAGHDAD — Two of Iraq's most powerful Shiite leaders agreed yesterday to end a bitter rivalry.

Radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr and Abdul-Aziz al-Hakim, leader of the largest Shiite political party, the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council, have promised to "protect Iraqi blood and enhance cooperation between the two movements for the Islamic and national interests and to save the nation." **KEYWORDS=WORLD**

# Canuck ministers tour Kabul

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**SOURCETAG** 0710070251

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**ILLUSTRATION:** photo by Paul Chiasson, Reuters International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda and Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier visit the Murad Khane district of Kabul under tight security yesterday. A deadly suicide bomb attack occurred just 30 minutes before.

**BYLINE:** LES PERREAUX, THE CANADIAN PRESS

**DATELINE:** KABUL

**WORD COUNT:** 210

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Two newly shuffled Canadian cabinet ministers arrived in the Afghan capital just 30 minutes after another deadly suicide bomb attack yesterday, but that didn't daunt their persistent pitch that life is getting better for ordinary Afghans.

International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda and Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier landed a short time after a suicide bomber struck on the main airport road, killing a U.S. soldier and four civilians. That attack came on the eve of the sixth anniversary of the U.S.-led invasion that ousted the Taliban from power.

Oda tried to reassure skeptical Afghan journalists that the shift to roadside and suicide bombings illustrated the success of the western security mission in Afghanistan.

The fact that suicide bombings are now occurring in the capital shows that the Taliban are desperate, Oda said.

When Oda turned the subject to record enrolment in Afghan schools, one Afghan reporter asked about a recent Afghan human rights report that said children were beginning to stay home out of fear.

It's one more reason Afghanistan needs Canadian soldiers, Oda said, referring to the meeting she and Bernier held with President Hamid Karzai. "He explained why we have to stay in Afghanistan," Oda said.

Bernier said he discussed negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban with Karzai.

Karzai has said he is willing to talk to Taliban and other insurgent leaders any time.

Canada's position has not changed, Bernier added, saying the Taliban must first renounce violence.

**KEYWORDS=WORLD**



# War reporter credits her survival to advances in trauma surgery -- and blind luck

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**ILLUSTRATION:** Photo: Reuters / CBS correspondent Kimberly Dozier is carried on a stretcher out of an aircraft and into an ambulance bus at Ramstein airbase in Germany on May 30, 2006. Among her medical challenges was a pesky superbug. ;

**KEYWORDS:** 0

**BYLINE:** Kimberly Dozier

**SOURCE:** The Washington Post

**WORD COUNT:** 1447

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A year and a half ago, I was critically wounded in Iraq while on a reporting assignment. Since then, I've learned more about how the medical profession puts injured troops back together again than I ever wanted to know.

I've also learned that surgeons like the ones who've helped me heal need more information -- and quickly -- about how to deal with the kinds of traumas that troops are suffering today. Because there are only going to be more of them.

On May 29, 2006, a 500-pound car bomb was remotely detonated on a Baghdad street as the U.S. patrol that my CBS television crew was filming approached it.

The explosion killed two of my colleagues -- Paul Douglas, a cameraman, and James Brolan, a sound man -- as well as James Funkhouser, the 4th Infantry Division army captain we were following, and his Iraqi interpreter, "Sam."

The bomb -- one of five that exploded in Baghdad that day -- blew burning shrapnel through the rest of Funkhouser's patrol. Six soldiers were wounded. So was I.

The other soldiers scrambled to keep us safe and patch us up as best they could. I knew that the chaos was an everyday occurrence in Baghdad. What I didn't realize then was that the kind of blast injuries I had suffered to my arms and legs are also common. More than 20,000 U.S. troops -- about four out of five of those wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan -- have suffered what are called "extremity war injuries."

Quick treatment by medics on the ground, coupled with rapid evacuation to nearby hospitals and advances in the science of trauma surgery, have enabled more injured troops to survive in Iraq than in any previous U.S. conflict. In the Vietnam War, the survival rate hovered around 76 per cent. By contrast, about 90 per cent make it home from Iraq.

While this is great news, it also means that many more of the injured survive long enough to develop a host of rarely seen side-effects. And unfortunately, doctors haven't had the resources to figure out how best to treat them -- nor the resources to track the thousands of wounded to figure out which of the treatments that they

tried are working. But this information could make the difference between life and death, or between a life of severe disability and one of manageable limitations, for thousands today and many more to come.

In the days and months after the first series of lifesaving trauma surgeries that I underwent at combat hospitals in Baghdad and Balad, my doctors had a host of debates at my bedside: whether to amputate my right leg; how much dead muscle tissue to cut away; how to fight a multidrug-resistant infection common to injured troops from Iraq and Afghanistan; and how to treat the strange and painful excess bone that can sprout at the site of a break as bones heal from blast injuries.

The blast shattered both my thighbones (one splintered in three places), burned away flesh from my hips to my ankles and sent shrapnel deep into both legs. More than half of my blood drained away through a nicked femoral artery; my heart stopped twice on the operating table in Baghdad.

Two days after the bombing, my right leg was nearly black. It looked as though the circulation had been cut off and the tissue had started to die. Luckily for me, the surgeons at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany, where I was flown within 48 hours of the bombing, decided not to amputate immediately but to watch and wait a few more days.

A decision on whether to amputate a badly damaged arm or leg often rests on little more than a surgeon's best guess as to whether the limb has a viable blood supply and enough working sinews and muscle tissue to survive.

Each time surgeons gamble in this way and win, they learn more about how to judge which tissue is viable. A database of the records of hundreds of amputation decisions and their outcomes would allow doctors to look for patterns that might reveal which characteristics of tissue damage indicate that a limb can be saved — or not.

A couple of weeks later, after surgeons at U.S. National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda had pared away the dead, burned muscle tissue in my upper right leg, I developed an infection of *Acinetobacter baumannii*.

There's some debate about how this bacterium enters the wounds of those injured in Iraq and Afghanistan. Early in the Iraq conflict, doctors thought that it's blown into open wounds from the soil by the force of the bomb blasts. But some limited medical studies have now traced it to hospital infections at U.S. military facilities in Europe.

However it first enters the body, *Acinetobacter* can multiply to dangerous levels when a person's immune system is compromised by blood loss or massive tissue damage. Only one antibiotic is 90 per cent effective against it, and that drug can be toxic to the kidneys. That was the problem I had, forcing me to choose between losing my kidneys or going off the drug and hoping that my body would fight the bacteria on its own. I did the latter, and survived.

But that took another measure of luck. And doctors shouldn't have to rely on luck to win battles against *Acinetobacter*. If they had a large database of cases, they could figure out when exactly the infections tend to flare up in wounded troops — on the battlefield or during later care — so that they'd know better when to begin treatment. Doctors also need safer drugs that can keep the infection in check.

Even as my own infection was clearing up, I developed another problem common to extremity war injuries: heterotopic ossification.

Surgeons don't know why the body does this, but when it heals bones that have been broken by a blast, it often goes a little haywire, laying down so much bone that it looks as though a coral forest is sprouting into the muscle from the site of the break.

The only way to treat this is to wait for the extra bone to stop growing (up to nine months), and then to cut through the muscle and chisel it out — a bloody and painful surgery. I had it in February.

Before the Iraq war, doctors had seen limited cases of heterotopic ossification, but usually only when bones were crushed or injured in something like a motorcycle accident, or in patients who had sustained severe head trauma. Only recently have there been enough patients with the problem to make it possible — and important — to conduct the kind of large studies that could reveal, for example, whether drug treatments or a course of radiation delivered while the wound is new would stop the excess growth.

The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons has been pushing for Congress and the president to fund several initiatives, including the two-year-old Orthopaedic Extremity Trauma Research Program, a competitive grant program that has already sponsored small-scale research on all the problems I've mentioned.

It has been championed by one of my surgeons, Andrew Pollak at the Maryland Shock Trauma Center.

Both Congress and the Defense Department agree that this program and a similar research proposal from Brooke Army Medical Center are important to limiting disability and improving quality of life after severe extremity war injuries. Yet funding for this research has been stalled.

"We funded (traumatic brain injury) research, and amputee research," one House staffer told me, "and assumed that meant extremities were included." But apparently they weren't, so the staffer said that supporters have gone back to the current defence budget to try to find a way to pay for the research.

My own recovery, which was complete this spring, came faster than expected, thanks especially to private physical therapy several days a week. But I could have healed faster early on if I hadn't had to deal with the *Acinetobacter* infection, and I could have returned to walking and running normally months sooner if not for the spiky bone that had grown into my muscle.

Like me, future victims of extremity war injuries will desperately need the kind of knowledge that could be gained from adequate research.

I imagine that some readers might say, "Haven't we spent enough on the war in Iraq? Won't these injuries stop if we get out?" But roadside bombs and car bombs have proven too cheap, too easy and too effective for future adversaries to ignore.

Blast injuries like the ones that I suffered — and that thousands of U.S. soldiers and Iraqi citizens have suffered — are here to stay. We need to know how to fight them, for the sake of everyone in the bombers' path.

Kimberly Dozier is a Middle East-based correspondent for CBS News. She is on temporary assignment in Washington.

# Mysterious foe preys on war wounded; A strange, drug-resistant bacterium was infecting combat casualties in Iraq and Afghanistan. Few had heard of it, and no one was sure where it came from. Then medical detectives set to work

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**ILLUSTRATION:** Photo: Los Angeles Times / U.S. military doctors and other medical staff at the Combat Surgical Hospital in Balad, Iraq, treat the wounds of a soldier injured while on foot patrol. Field hospitals have become the centre of a perfect storm of trauma — tenacious bacteria attacking the weakest patients at their most vulnerable moments. ;

**KEYWORDS:** 0

**BYLINE:** Jia-Rui Chong

**SOURCE:** Los Angeles Times

**WORD COUNT:** 2153

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The young American army medic would not stop bleeding.

He had been put on a powerful regimen of antibiotics by doctors aboard the hospital ship Comfort in the Persian Gulf. But something was wrong.

He was in shock and bleeding from small pricks where nurses had placed intravenous lines. Red, swollen tissue from an active bacterial infection was expanding around his abdominal wound. His immune system was in overdrive.

How odd, thought Dr. Kyle Petersen, an infectious disease specialist. He knew of one injured Iraqi man with similar symptoms and a few days later encountered an Iraqi teenager with gunshot wounds in the same condition.

Within a few days, blood tests confirmed that the medic and the two wounded Iraqis were infected with an unusual bacterium, *Acinetobacter baumannii*.

This particular strain had a deadly twist: it was resistant to a dozen antibiotics. The medic survived, but by the time Petersen connected the dots, the two Iraqi patients were dead.

It was April 2003, early in the Iraq war — and 4 1/2 years later, scientists still are struggling to understand the medical mystery.

The three cases aboard the Comfort were the first of a stubborn outbreak that has spread to at least five other American military hospitals, including Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., and the army's Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany.

Mysterious foe preys on war wounded; A strange, drug-resistant bacterium was infecting combat casualties

Hundreds of patients — the military says it has not tabulated how many — have been infected with the bacterium in their bloodstream, cerebrospinal fluid, bones or lungs. Many of them were troops wounded in Iraq or Afghanistan; others have been civilians infected after stays in military hospitals.

Capt. Trevor Greene, who was ambushed by an axe-wielding Afghan teen during a meeting with village elders, and Pte. William Salikin, who was seriously wounded in the explosion that robbed Master Cpl. Paul Franklin of his legs, are among the Canadian casualties who have been infected with the superbug.

At least 27 people have died in U.S. military hospitals with *Acinetobacter* infections since 2003, although doctors are uncertain how many of the deaths actually were caused by the bacteria.

The rise in infections has been dramatic. In 2001 and 2002, *Acinetobacter* infections made up about two per cent of admissions at the specialized burn unit at Brooke Army Medical Center in Texas. In 2003, the rate jumped to six per cent, and then to 12 per cent by 2005. Other military hospitals have reported similar levels.

In the early days of the war, there were so many infections in an intensive care unit on the Comfort that a nurse posted a sign: "Acinetobacter Alley." In two months, the bacterium was found in 44 of the 211 patients wounded in battle.

It was getting out of control. Petersen pleaded for help with an e-mail to an infectious disease mailing list.

"Can anyone familiar with (the) soil biology of Iraq or the drug-prescribing practices of the pre-regime medical system explain the severe drug resistance pattern we are seeing among our trauma victims?"

It was no surprise that Petersen knew little about *Acinetobacter* — long seen as the slacker of the bacterial world.

The name *Acinetobacter* comes from the Greek word for motionless because the bacterium lacks flagella or cilia to move.

"Organisms that are relatively wimpy pathogens ... are not high on people's list," said Fred Tenover, a microbiologist at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta.

The bacterium, however, is persistent and requires few nutrients. It lives naturally in soil and can survive for days on dry surfaces, such as doorknobs or hospital equipment.

*Acinetobacter* usually threatens only people whose immune systems are compromised because of old age, trauma or disease. Even then, garden-variety *Acinetobacter* is controlled easily with common antibiotics.

But the situation started to change about two decades ago. *Acinetobacter* followed an evolutionary path trod by numerous other bacteria since the Second World War, when antibiotics were first widely introduced.

Bacteria not killed by an antibiotic would pass their resistance onto later generations. The process was hastened by the often profligate use of the drugs, which allowed more bacteria to develop resistance.

Today, a host of diseases, such as tuberculosis and gonorrhea, have highly antibiotic-resistant strains.

"If we use antibiotics to kill off everything else, what is left standing is very, very drug resistant," said Arjun Srinivasan, an epidemiologist at the CDC. "*Acinetobacter* is one of those left standing."

Tenover first noticed a strain of *Acinetobacter* with some drug resistance in the mid-1980s while working at a veterans hospital in Seattle. Several years later, he met with Ghassan Matar, a visiting Lebanese scientist at

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the CDC, whose samples of *Acinetobacter baumannii* from patients in a Beirut hospital raised another red flag.

The infections were a legacy of years of fighting. Positive tests for *Acinetobacter* more than tripled at the hospital from 1983 to 1984 and stayed high for years after. The samples Matar brought were resistant to two important classes of antibiotics.

In the following years, civilian hospitals in the U.S. and around the world reported sporadic outbreaks of drug-resistant *Acinetobacter*.

"You have an organism of relatively low virulence that became more important because you've run out of drugs to treat it with," Tenover said.

The question that Petersen struggled with was how this bug had found its way into modern military hospitals.

Doctors could beat back an infection with the strongest antibiotics, and hospitals could try to scrub away the bacteria. But those weren't solutions.

They had to find the source of the contamination.

Responses to Petersen's plea on the mailing list poured in to the Comfort.

A Canadian soil scientist who worked in Iraq in the 1970s described high rates of antibiotic-resistant *Staphylococcus* bacteria in dirt samples.

The scientist surmised they were caused by the erratic distribution of antibiotics in Iraq. A shipment of drugs would arrive and doctors would use them until they ran out. Then, they would prescribe whatever other antibiotic was sent next, the scientist said.

A microbiologist wrote to Petersen about Australian patients injured in the 2002 nightclub bombings in Bali, Indonesia, who returned home with astronomically high levels of very drug-resistant bacteria, including *Acinetobacter*.

"It gave me an idea that maybe it was something related to the process of aeromedical evacuation or the injury process," said Petersen, 39.

After Comfort reported its first *Acinetobacter* cases, infections began springing up in military hospitals in the Middle East, Germany and the U.S. The facilities took the cases seriously.

The night marine Major K.C. Schuring arrived at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland, a doctor told him that if his fever didn't subside within three days, his left leg probably would have to be amputated.

Schuring, barely conscious and lying on a gurney, heard the doctor tell him that the infection could spread: "This can kill you."

He was taken to the U.S. National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., and immediately isolated. He heard the word *Acinetobacter* for the first time.

Schuring, who had been shot in both legs in Iraq, could take bad news, but this worried him. "I was happy they could treat it, though they said they couldn't necessarily cure it," he said.

Whenever he left the room, he wore a yellow gown to alert others of his infection. Everyone who visited him

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donned yellow gowns and gloves.

He felt "like a freak," he said.

In 2003, Dr. Clint Murray, then a 33-year-old army major at a front-line aid station in Iraq, began to dig for answers.

Whereas some wounded soldiers were sent to aid stations such as Murray's, most were airlifted to more advanced facilities like the Combat Support Hospital in Baghdad, the Iraqi capital.

Murray, an infectious disease specialist, asked a critical care doctor there to take samples from soldiers wounded by gunshots, improvised explosive devices, mortar blasts or other weapons. As doctors scrambled to stabilize patients, two swabs were inserted into the wounds to collect bacteria. Most of the samples were taken within 20 to 40 minutes of the soldiers' injuries.

Out of the samples taken from 49 patients, the doctors found no *Acinetobacter*, although there were plenty of other bacteria, such as *Staphylococcus*.

That still left the possibility that dirt and dust from beyond the battlefield had blown into a wound.

Murray joined a group, including Petersen and Srinivasan, that focused on dirt around field hospitals in Iraq and Kuwait — the next step in the medical evacuation chain that started at front-line aid stations and ended at hospitals in the U.S.

The group gathered 18 dirt samples around seven field hospitals and also looked at 31 archived soil samples collected from around the combat zone.

Only one of the soil samples — taken from outside a field hospital mess hall — turned up positive. The group compared it with strains collected from casualties at the field hospital in Baghdad and larger hospitals including Landstuhl in Germany and found they were not related.

Dirt, it seemed, was not the culprit.

In late 2004, Murray returned to Brooke Army Medical Center. He wondered whether soldiers were carrying the bacterium on their skin and infecting themselves when wounded. He set to work on a study swabbing the nostrils of 293 soldiers at Fort Sam Houston, Tex., who had never been to Iraq or Afghanistan.

None of the soldiers tested positive for *Acinetobacter*, Murray and colleagues reported in the journal *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology* in 2006.

The search continued, and military doctors struggled to find an effective strategy to combat the bug. The treatment could be difficult.

Schuring said doctors experimented with different drugs. Schuring's situation was complicated by his allergy to penicillin.

At one point, he was taking four antibiotics. The infection had taken away his appetite and made him queasy. It took doctors about two weeks to narrow down his treatment to a relatively new intravenous antibiotic, tigecycline.

Doctors operated on him nearly every other day to clean out dead tissue in his legs.

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When the infection began to settle down, doctors installed a 53-centimetre stainless steel plate along his left thigh. The surgery made Schuring dizzy, but the doctors didn't want to give him a blood transfusion for fear of inciting a new infection.

The treatment, Schuring said, was like going "through hell."

Evidence was building that the cause of the infections was something in the military trauma system.

The hospital-based transmission made sense because the bacterium had taken up residence in civilian hospitals. While preliminary typing has not found a link between the U.S. civilian strains and the military casualty strains, the conditions in military hospitals were just right for the bacterium, said Srinivasan, the CDC epidemiologist .

In the hectic environment of field hospitals, it was also difficult to impose strict infection control measures, such as thorough cleaning of hands and equipment after each patient, Murray said.

The field hospitals had become the centre of a perfect storm of trauma — battle-hardened bugs preying on the weakest patients at their most vulnerable moments.

"Soldiers now survive injuries they wouldn't have survived before," Srinivasan said. "That challenge creates soldiers who are sick, who are living in health-care facilities for a long time and are more susceptible to hospital-associated infections."

It took about three years for Murray and his colleagues to look through the entire chain of trauma, from the battlefields, to the field hospitals, to the tertiary care centre in Landstuhl and finally the military hospitals in the U.S.

The results of their labour, published in May in the journal *Clinical Infectious Diseases*, showed that all seven field hospitals tested in Iraq and Kuwait had *Acinetobacter* in patient care areas.

"We can't be 100-per-cent sure, but the data supports that patients are probably getting exposed to *Acinetobacter* in field hospitals in Iraq," Murray said.

How the bacteria became entrenched in the field hospitals is still unknown. But, in many ways, it is irrelevant. It is there and, as civilian hospitals have found, it is not going away easily.

The military strain of the bacterium has caused at least one civilian death. *Acinetobacter* was growing in the lungs and bloodstream of a 35-year-old man whose immune system was suppressed because he had a kidney transplant at Walter Reed in 2005. There were no signs of infection until the man came down with acute shortness of breath one evening and died soon after.

For the most part, doctors have figured out the most effective drugs against the bacterium — an

antibiotic called imipenem and an older class of drugs known as polymyxins. The drugs have made the infections fairly manageable. Through stricter controls, such as monitored hand-washing, infections rates have begun to show signs of dropping in some hospitals.

Petersen, who worked at the U.S. National Naval Medical Center in Maryland after the Comfort's mission ended, treated just one or two cases of *Acinetobacter* infections in July, a dramatic decline from the highs of 15 to 20 a month in 2004 and 2005. So far this year, there have been fewer than a handful of cases each month, according to hospital figures.

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But Murray now wonders whether *Acinetobacter* was the culprit after all.

He and others looked at patients with the worst outcomes at Brooke's specialty burn unit and found that *Acinetobacter* was associated with larger burns but was not causing more deaths by itself.

A study of 35 returning soldiers with the most extreme kinds of shin–bone fractures found that *Acinetobacter* was the most common bacterium around fracture sites when the patients arrived, but it was easy to clear. Those who later suffered serious complications, including amputations, tended to be infected with other serious bacteria, such as *Staphylococcus* and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*.

*Acinetobacter*, it turns out, might only be a marker of vulnerability. "It is not the worst bug," Murray said.

Recently, scientists have noted signs that *Acinetobacter* strains are growing resistant to polymyxins and imipenem, said Tenover, the CDC microbiologist.

There are, however, small victories for humans.

Just before Christmas, after a month of treatment, Schuring returned to his home in Farmington Hills, Mich.

Schuring's wife, Lynn, was nervous about this strange bug her husband had brought back from the war.

What if they kissed? What if her husband put down a drink and one of their young children took a sip? Were her parents, who are in their 70s, at risk if they visited?

Doctors assured her that this bug was no danger to the strong. So far, no one in the family has gotten sick.

But his doctor warned them that they must keep an eye out for any sign of the bacteria, which could lie dormant for years.

Schuring, now a 38–year–old lieutenant colonel, has continued to improve and hobbles around on his own two legs. He has one last surgery at Bethesda in January and then, perhaps, he will run marathons again.

"You know, this is a long process for these guys and their families," Lynn said. "I think we just take it one step at a time. ... Everything we've been through has taught me to take it one step at a time."

# The Bent Spear Incident; How six armed nuclear warheads made an unplanned flight across the continental United States, provoking blunt questions about the safeguarding of atomic weapons

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**ILLUSTRATION:** Photo: Lockheed Martin, Agence France-Presse; Getty Images / A B-52 bomber similar to this one flew the length of the United States in late August mistakenly loaded with six nuclear-armed cruise missiles. Missiles shown are not the same as those in question. ;

**KEYWORDS:** 0

**DATELINE:** WASHINGTON

**BYLINE:** Joby Warrick and Walter Pincus

**SOURCE:** The Washington Post

**WORD COUNT:** 2587

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WASHINGTON – Just after 9 a.m. on Aug. 29, a group of U.S. airmen entered a sod-covered bunker on North Dakota's Minot Air Force Base with orders to collect a set of unarmed cruise missiles bound for a weapons graveyard.

They quickly pulled out a dozen cylinders, all of which appeared identical from a cursory glance, and hauled them along Bomber Boulevard to a waiting B-52 bomber.

The airmen attached the grey missiles to the plane's wings, six on each side. After eyeballing the missiles on the right side, a flight officer signed a manifest that listed a dozen unarmed AGM-129 missiles. The officer did not notice that the six on the left contained nuclear warheads, each with the destructive power of up to 10 Hiroshima bombs.

That detail would escape notice for an astounding 36 hours, during which the missiles were flown across the country to a Louisiana air base that had no idea nuclear warheads were coming. It was the first known flight by a nuclear-armed bomber over U.S. airspace, without special high-level authorization, in nearly 40 years.

The episode, serious enough to trigger a rare "Bent Spear" nuclear incident report that raced through the chain of command to Defence Secretary Robert Gates and President George W. Bush, provoked new questions inside and outside the Pentagon about the adequacy of U.S. nuclear weapons safeguards while the military's attention and resources are devoted to wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

After word of the incident leaked to the public, new details obtained by The Washington Post point to security failures at multiple levels in North Dakota and Louisiana, according to interviews with current and former U.S. officials briefed on the initial results of an air force investigation of the incident.

The warheads were attached to the plane in Minot without special guard for more than 15 hours, and they remained on the plane in Louisiana for nearly nine hours more before being discovered. In total, the warheads

The Bent Spear Incident; How six armed nuclear warheads made an unplanned flight across the continental

slipped from the air force's nuclear safety net for more than a day without anyone's knowledge.

"I have been in the nuclear business since 1966 and am not aware of any incident more disturbing," retired air force Gen. Eugene Habiger, who served as U.S. Strategic Command chief from 1996 to 1998, said in an interview.

A simple error in a missile storage room led to missteps at every turn, as ground crews failed to notice the warheads, and as security teams and flight crew members failed to provide adequate oversight and check the cargo thoroughly. An elaborate nuclear safeguard system, nurtured during the Cold War and infused with rigorous accounting and command procedures, was utterly debased, the investigation's early results show.

The incident came on the heels of multiple warnings — some of which went to the highest levels of the Bush administration, including the National Security Council — of security problems at air force installations where nuclear weapons are kept. The risks are not that warheads might be accidentally detonated, but that sloppy procedures could leave room for theft or damage to a warhead, disseminating its toxic nuclear materials.

A former National Security Council staff member with detailed knowledge described the event as something that people in the White House "have been assured never could happen." What occurred on Aug. 29–30, the former official said, was "a breakdown at a number of levels involving flight crew, munitions, storage and tracking procedures — faults that never were to line up on a single day."

The air base where the incident took place is one of the most remote and, for much of the year, coldest military posts in the continental United States. Veterans of Minot typically describe their assignments by counting the winters passed in the flat, treeless region where January wind chills sometimes exceed 100 F below zero. In airman-speak, a three-year assignment becomes "three winters" at Minot.

The daily routine for many of Minot's crews is a cycle of scheduled maintenance for the base's 35 aging B-52H Stratofortress bombers — mammoth, eight-engine workhorses, the newest of which left the assembly line more than 45 years ago. Workers also tend to 150 intercontinental ballistic missiles kept at the ready in silos scattered across neighbouring cornfields, as well as hundreds of smaller nuclear bombs, warheads and vehicles stored in sod-covered bunkers called igloos.

"We had a continuous workload in maintaining" warheads, said Scott Vest, a former air force captain who spent time in Minot's bunkers in the 1990s. "We had a stockpile of more than 400 ... and some of them were always coming due" for service.

Among the many weapons and airframes, the AGM-129 cruise missile was well known at the base as a nuclear warhead delivery system carried by B-52s. With its unique shape and design, it is easily distinguished from the older AGM-86, which can be fitted with either a nuclear or a conventional warhead.

Last fall, after 17 years in the U.S. arsenal, the air force's more than 400 AGM-129s were ordered into retirement by then defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld. Minot was told to begin shipping out the unarmed missiles in small groups to Barksdale Air Force Base near Shreveport, La., for storage. By Aug. 29, its crews had already sent more than 200 missiles to Barksdale and knew the drill by heart.

The air force's account of what happened that day and the next was provided by multiple sources who spoke on the condition of anonymity because the government's investigation is continuing and classified.

At 9:12 a.m. local time on Aug. 29, according to the account, ground crews in two trucks entered a gated compound at Minot known as the Weapons Storage Area and drove to an igloo where the cruise missiles were stored. The 21-foot missiles were already mounted on pylons, six apiece in clusters of three, for quick

The Bent Spear Incident; How six armed nuclear warheads made an unplanned flight across the continental

mounting to the wings of a B-52.

The AGM-129 is designed to carry silver W-80-1 nuclear warheads, which have a variable yield of between five and 150 kilotons. (A kiloton is equal to the explosive force of 1,000 tons of TNT.) The warheads were meant to have been removed from the missiles before shipment. In their place, crews were supposed to insert metal dummies of the same size and weight, but a different colour, so the missiles could still be properly attached under the bomber's wings.

A munitions custodian officer is supposed to keep track of the nuclear warheads. In the case of cruise missiles, a stamp-size window on the missile's frame allows workers to peer inside to check whether the warheads within are silver. In many cases, a red ribbon or marker attached to the missile serves as an additional warning. Finally, before the missiles are moved, two-man teams are supposed to look at check sheets, bar codes and serial numbers denoting whether the missiles are armed.

Why the warheads were not noticed in this case is not publicly known. But once the missiles were certified as unarmed, a requirement for unique security precautions when nuclear warheads are moved — such as the presence of specially armed security police, the approval of a senior base commander and a special tracking system — evaporated.

The trucks hauled the missile pylons from the bunker into the bustle of normal air base traffic, onto Bomber Boulevard and M Street, before turning onto a tarmac apron where the missiles were loaded onto the B-52. The loading took eight hours because of unusual trouble attaching the pylon on the right side of the plane — the one with the dummy warheads.

By 5:12 p.m., the B-52 was fully loaded. The plane then sat on the tarmac overnight without special guards, protected for 15 hours by only the base's exterior chain-link fence and roving security patrols.

Air force rules required members of the jet's flight crew to examine all of the missiles and warheads before the plane took off. But in this instance, just one person examined only the six unarmed missiles and inexplicably skipped the armed missiles on the left, according to officials familiar with the probe.

"If they're not expecting a live warhead it may be a very casual thing — there's no need to set up the security system and play the whole nuclear game," said Vest, the former Minot airman. "As for the air crew, they're bus drivers at this point, as far as they know."

The plane, which had flown to Minot for the mission and was not certified to carry nuclear weapons, departed the next morning for Louisiana. When the bomber landed at Barksdale at 11:23 a.m., the air crew signed out and left for lunch, according to the probe.

It would be another nine hours — until 8:30 p.m. — before a Barksdale ground crew turned up at the parked aircraft to begin removing the missiles. At 8:45, 15 minutes into the task, a separate missile transport crew arrived in trucks. One of these airmen noticed something unusual about the missiles. Within an hour, a skeptical supervisor had examined them and ordered them secured.

By then it was 10 p.m., more than 36 hours after the warheads left their secure bunker in Minot.

Once the errant warheads were discovered, air force officers in Louisiana were alarmed enough to immediately notify the National Military Command Center, a highly secure area of the Pentagon that serves as the nerve centre for U.S. nuclear war planning. Such Bent Spear events are ranked second in seriousness only to Broken Arrow incidents, which involve the loss, destruction or accidental detonation of a nuclear weapon.

The air force decided at first to keep the mishap under wraps, in part because of policies that prohibit the

confirmation of any details about the storage or movement of nuclear weapons. No public acknowledgement was made until service members leaked the story to the Military Times, which published a brief account Sept. 5.

Officials familiar with the Bent Spear report say air force officials apparently did not anticipate that the episode would cause public concern. One passage in the report contains these four words:

"No press interest anticipated."

The news, when it did leak, provoked a reaction within the defence and national security communities that bordered on disbelief: How could so many safeguards, drilled into generations of nuclear weapons officers and crews, break down at once?

Military officers, nuclear weapons analysts and lawmakers have expressed concern that it was not just a fluke, but a symptom of deeper problems in the handling of nuclear weapons now that Cold War anxieties have abated.

"It is more significant than people first realized, and the more you look at it, the stranger it is," said Joseph Cirincione, director for nuclear policy at the Center for American Progress think-tank and the author of a history of nuclear weapons. "These weapons — the equivalent of 60 Hiroshimas — were out of authorized command and control for more than a day."

The air force has sought to offer assurances that its security system is working. Within days, the service relieved one Minot officer of his command and disciplined several airmen, while assigning a major general to head an investigation that has already been extended for extra weeks. At the same time, Defense Department officials have announced that a Pentagon-appointed scientific advisory board will study the mishap as part of a larger review of procedures for handling nuclear weapons.

"Clearly this incident was unacceptable on many levels," said an air force spokesman, Lt.-Col. Edward Thomas. "Our response has been swift and focused — and it has really just begun. We will spend many months at the air staff and at our commands and bases ensuring that the root causes are addressed."

While air force officials see the Minot event as serious, they also note that it was harmless, because the six nuclear warheads never left the military's control. Even if the bomber had crashed, or if someone had stolen the warheads, fail-safe devices would have prevented a nuclear detonation.

But independent experts warn that whenever nuclear weapons are not properly safeguarded, their fissile materials are at risk of theft and diversion. Moreover, if the plane had crashed and the warheads' casings cracked, these highly toxic materials could have been widely dispersed.

"When what were multiple layers of tight nuclear weapon control internal procedures break down, some bad guy may eventually come along and take advantage of them," said a former senior administration official who had responsibility for nuclear security.

Some air force veterans say the base's officers made an egregious mistake in allowing nuclear-warhead-equipped missiles and unarmed missiles to be stored in the same bunker, a practice that a spokesman confirmed is routine. Charles Curtis, a former deputy energy secretary in the Clinton era, said, "We always relied on segregation of nuclear weapons from conventional ones."

Former nuclear weapons officials have noted that the weapons transfer at the heart of the incident coincides with deep cuts in deployed nuclear forces that will bring the total number of warheads to as few as 1,700 by the year 2012 — a reduction of more than 50 per cent from 2001 levels. But the downsizing has created new

accounting and logistical challenges, because U.S. policy is to keep thousands more warheads in storage, some as a strategic reserve and others awaiting dismantling.

A secret 1998 history of the Air Combat Command warned of "diminished attention for even 'the minimum standards' of nuclear weapons' maintenance, support and security" once such arms became less vital, according to a declassified copy obtained by Hans Kristensen, director of the Federation of American Scientists' nuclear information project.

The air force's inspector general in 2003 found that half of the "nuclear surety" inspections conducted that year resulted in failing grades — the worst performance since inspections of weapons-handling began. Minot's 5th Bomb Wing was among the units that failed, and the Louisiana-based 2nd Bomb Wing at Barksdale garnered an unsatisfactory rating in 2005.

Both units passed subsequent nuclear inspections, and Minot was given high marks in a 2006 inspection. The 2003 report on the 5th Bomb Wing attributed its poor performance to the demands of supporting combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Wartime stresses had "resulted in a lack of time to focus and practice nuclear operations," the report stated.

Last year, the air force eliminated a separate nuclear-operations directorate known informally as the N Staff, which closely tracked the maintenance and security of nuclear weapons in the United States and other NATO countries. Currently, nuclear and space operations are combined in a single directorate. Air force officials say the change was part of a service-wide reorganization and did not reflect diminished importance of nuclear operations.

"Where nuclear weapons have receded into the background is at the senior policy level, where there are other things people have to worry about," said Linton Brooks, who resigned in January as director of the National Nuclear Security Administration. Brooks, who oversaw billions of dollars in U.S. spending to help Russia secure its nuclear stockpile, said the mishandling of U.S. warheads indicates that "something went seriously wrong."

A similar refrain has been voiced hundreds of times in blogs and chat rooms popular with former and current military members. On a website run by the Military Times, a former B-52 crew chief who did not give his name wrote: "What the hell happened here?"

A former air force senior master sergeant wrote separately that "mistakes were made at the lowest level of supervision and this snowballed into one of the biggest mistakes in USAF history. ... I am still scratching my head wondering how this could (have) happened."

# Caption Only

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**IDNUMBER** 200710070127  
**PUBLICATION:** Edmonton Journal  
**DATE:** 2007.10.07  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Sunday Reader  
**PAGE:** E1 / FRONT

Colour Photo: Kai Pfaffenbach, Reuters / UNSEEN ENEMY: Aninjured female soldier, right, and her partner walk the halls of Landstuhl Regional Medical Centre in Germany. The conditions in military hospitals are perfect for spreading the drug-resistant bacterium *Acinetobacter baumannii*. WAR WOUNDS. *Acinetobacter baumannii*, a deadly strain of bacteria that is resistant to most antibiotics, is flourishing in military hospitals from Afghanistan to Germany, from Iraq to America. Scientists are trying to find out why. ;

**ILLUSTRATION:**

**KEYWORDS:** 0  
**SOURCE:** Reuters  
**WORD COUNT:** 4

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NO TEXT

# Canadian minister visits troops; Trip coincides with unauthorized arrival of Liberal defence critic

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**IDNUMBER** 200710070013

**PUBLICATION:** Edmonton Journal

**DATE:** 2007.10.07

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** A4

**ILLUSTRATION:** Photo: CanWest News Service / First-hand look atAfghanistan: Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier watches a schoolgirl write while visiting a community in the Murad Khane district of Kabul on Saturday. Bernier is in Afghanistan visiting Canadian troops. ;

**KEYWORDS:** !@DATELINE=KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan

**BYLINE:** Matthew Fisher

**SOURCE:** CanWest News Service

**WORD COUNT:** 382

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KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier arrived here late Saturday to spend Thanksgiving with the troops at Canada's main military base in Afghanistan and to see "what our military people are doing over here for the Afghan people."

But what many of the soldiers here want to know is if the Harper government will extend the current combat mission in Afghanistan beyond February, 2009.

"Like you know, the prime minister has made it very clear we will debate this in Parliament and put it to a vote," Bernier said in French, shortly after arriving on the base. "We are very democratic. We will have Parliament decide."

Referring to his recent speech on Afghanistan to the United Nations, Bernier said in English: "I was in New York talking about the good work that you're doing here."

Earlier in Kabul, Bernier, who was appointed to the foreign affairs post in August, had what he called good meetings with senior Afghan officials, including President Hamid Karzai about development and reconstruction.

As a Quebec MP , Bernier said he particularly wanted to "see the Royal 22nd Regiment. To see our people."

Bernier's visit coincides with the expected arrival today of Denis Coderre, the Liberal defence critic.

While saying that Coderre was "welcome," Bernier criticized him for not having gone through proper channels as Tory MPs had done when they were in opposition.

"There is a process to be followed with the government here," Bernier said. "I question why Mr. Coderre doesn't want to make a safe trip. ... It is irresponsible for him to come here without contacting us or planning his progress far in advance to assure his security."



Dan Dugas, a spokesman for Defence Minister Peter MacKay, said "this latest stunt by Mr. Coderre shows complete disregard and disrespect for the military."

Dugas said the government's policy is to organize visits by opposition MPs through parliamentary committees, as was done under the previous Liberal government. He added that Coderre has been repeatedly reminded that the Department of Foreign Affairs advises against travelling to Afghanistan.

Coderre was to fly on a United Nations flight from Pakistan to Kabul and from there to Kandahar today.

Although Coderre is a strong critic of the Afghan mission and had given them very little advance notice, the Canadian Forces have indicated that "as a member of Parliament" he will be given a tour of their main base, which is home to many of the 2,300 Canadian troops in Afghanistan.

Coderre's trip is being sponsored by several non-governmental organizations.

Bernier was accompanied to Afghanistan by Bev Oda, the minister of International Co-operation.

# The trick with Rick Conservatives foolishly float a trial balloon aimed at deflating Canada's popular general

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**PUBLICATION:** The Ottawa Sun

**DATE:** 2007.10.07

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** Comment

**PAGE:** 33

**ILLUSTRATION:** file photo Canada's Chief of Defence Staff, General Rick Hillier, might be getting too popular for his political masters to handle.

**BYLINE:** SHEILA COPPS

**WORD COUNT:** 609

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Hail to the chief. I am referring of course, not to Prime Minister Stephen Harper but to General Rick Hillier, whose classy response to rumours of his demise proved his political savviness and leadership skills.

Thankfully, we do not have a political system where the prime minister is also the chief of the armed forces. That may not prevent Stephen Harper from parading around in flak jackets looking singularly presidential. But when the pretend chief butts up against the real chief, don't expect the politician to come out on top.

Some political genius probably thought it was a brilliant idea to leak a story about Hillier's demise, a shot across the bow to a military man who was getting too popular, and powerful, for his own good.

Hence the anonymous leak designed to shake up military brass and let Hillier know who's boss. But the leak had the opposite effect. A lot is written these days about clumsy management in Stephane Dion's office, but the Hillier story was a textbook case in how not to communicate.

In full damage control, Prime Minister Harper declared he and his close advisers were not involved in discussions about the future of Canada's most popular soldier. Accepting Harper's vigorous denials, we can only assume that the public thrashing was the brainchild of the defence minister.

Peter MacKay did not exactly jump to the defence of his man. Instead, he mumbled a few platitudes, avoiding the key question about whether Hillier's mandate will be renewed. The PM was more fulsome in his praise, but also deliberately neglected to kill the termination story outright.

Both reactions point to only one possible scenario.

MacKay, with the blessing of the prime minister, floated this trial balloon to gauge public reaction to the firing of a politically overweening general.

When a soldier becomes more popular than his bosses, that hurts.

ODD MANOEUVRE

Harper needs opposition support for continued engagement in Afghanistan. Attacking the chief of the defence staff publicly seems odd way to secure it. Political egos notwithstanding, the government needs Hillier more

The trick with Rick Conservatives foolishly float a trial balloon aimed at deflating Canada's popular general

than he needs the government.

Instead, the Tories went after the very soldier they need to sell their message. After all, Hillier's brilliant communication skills are already making inroads with a cynical public.

His down-to-earth demeanour and hands-on approach has met with far more success than multiple ministerial tours. Even his love of hockey and doughnuts resonates with Canadians. Unfortunately for the government, the chief's positive message has provided stark contrast to the failures of his political masters, including former minister Gordon O'Connor.

This is not the first time ministers and the military have embarked on an inevitable collision course.

Former minister David Collenette stared down defence critics with a plan to slash the number of officers in a top-heavy military structure. In the end, he was temporarily forced out of cabinet, dogged by leaked documents and controversy over an inquiry into the death of a Somali teenager at the hands of the Canadian military.

Former minister Art Eggleton once informed cabinet that politicians would not be welcome at the Petawawa funeral of a slain soldier. The military preferred to keep grieving "in the family" and they made it clear that didn't include politicians.

## SHORT STRAW

When military men (and they have been all men) and their political masters clash, the politicians usually draw the short straw.

Hillier is no fool. He will likely save face by orchestrating his own departure. With the undeserved public humiliation he suffered last week, Hillier would be wise to take control of his own leave-taking.

Shock waves from his exit would reverberate well beyond the military. The loss of Canada's most popular soldier in decades would rankle Harper's own Conservative base. It could also cut into potential parliamentary support for future Afghanistan initiatives. A shove out the door would demoralize the soldiers who are risking their lives in theatre.

Don't expect Hillier to go quietly. If history repeats itself, (and it usually does) his multiple military supporters will soon start inflicting collateral damage on their political bosses. Peter MacKay may wish he had privately pricked this week's trial balloon before it publicly blows him up.

# Canuck ministers tour Kabul

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**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** 16

**ILLUSTRATION:** photo by Paul Chiasson, Reuters International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda and Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier visit the Murad Khane district of Kabul under tight security yesterday. A deadly suicide bomb attack occurred just 30 minutes before.

**BYLINE:** LES PERREAUX, CP

**DATELINE:** KABUL

**WORD COUNT:** 210

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Two newly shuffled Canadian cabinet ministers arrived in the Afghan capital just 30 minutes after another deadly suicide bomb attack yesterday, but that didn't daunt their persistent pitch that life is getting better for ordinary Afghans.

International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda and Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier landed a short time after a suicide bomber struck on the main airport road, killing a U.S. soldier and four civilians. That attack came on the eve of the sixth anniversary of the U.S.-led invasion that ousted the Taliban from power.

Oda tried to reassure skeptical Afghan journalists that the shift to roadside and suicide bombings illustrated the success of the western security mission in Afghanistan.

The fact that suicide bombings are now occurring in the capital shows that the Taliban are desperate, Oda said.

When Oda turned the subject to record enrolment in Afghan schools, one Afghan reporter asked about a recent Afghan human rights report that said children were beginning to stay home out of fear.

It's one more reason Afghanistan needs Canadian soldiers, Oda said, referring to the meeting she and Bernier held with President Hamid Karzai. "He explained why we have to stay in Afghanistan," Oda said.

Bernier said he discussed negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban with Karzai.

Karzai has said he is willing to talk to Taliban and other insurgent leaders any time.

Canada's position has not changed, Bernier added, saying the Taliban must first renounce violence.

**KEYWORDS=WORLD**

# World Watch Sunflashes Column

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**PUBLICATION:** The Ottawa Sun  
**DATE:** 2007.10.07  
**EDITION:** Final  
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**ILLUSTRATION:** photo of ALEXIS ROBERTS Taught William  
**BYLINE:** SUN WIRE SERVICES  
**COLUMN:** World Watch Sunflashes  
**WORD COUNT:** 196

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## AFGHAN BOMB KILLS PRINCE'S PAL

LONDON — Prince William said yesterday he was "deeply saddened" by news that his mentor from army training school had been killed in Afghanistan.

Maj. Alexis Roberts, 32, of the Royal Gurkha Rifles, died Thursday after his convoy was hit by an improvised explosive device. He had been the prince's instructor at Sandhurst from which he graduated last year.

## 8 MILITANTS SHOT DEAD

SRINAGAR, India — Eight suspected militants were shot dead by Indian troops yesterday when they tried to sneak into Indian Kashmir from Pakistan, an army spokesman said.

Two soldiers were also killed in two separate clashes in north Kashmir near the Line of Control, a de facto border which divides Kashmir between India and Pakistan.

## ANTI-RIGHT-WING RUCKUS

BERNE — Swiss police fired teargas and anti-right-wing protesters hurled rocks and bottles during a political rally in Switzerland's capital yesterday, in a sign of rising tensions ahead of an unusually divisive election.

The clashes occurred when demonstrators sought to interrupt a march organised by the right-wing Switzerland's People's Party.

## SHIITE RIVALS OK DEAL

BAGHDAD — Two of Iraq's most powerful Shiite leaders agreed yesterday to end a bitter rivalry.

Radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr and Abdul-Aziz al-Hakim, leader of the largest Shiite political party, the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council, have promised to "protect Iraqi blood and enhance cooperation between the two movements for the Islamic and national interests and to save the nation." **KEYWORDS=WORLD**

# A team of true heroes Canada's soldiers, not hockey players, define real bravery

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**SOURCETAG:** 0710070704

**PUBLICATION:** The Ottawa Sun

**DATE:** 2007.10.07

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**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** 15

**ILLUSTRATION:** 1. file photo Master Cpl. Paul Franklin, shown with wife Audra, lost his legs while serving in Afghanistan. It's Canada's soldiers such as Franklin who deserve to be lauded as real heroes, writes Earl McRae, even though many of us reserve our hero-worshipping for pro athletes like Dany Heatley. 2. photo of DANY HEATLEY.

**BYLINE:** EARL MCRAE, OTTAWA SUN

**COLUMN:** McRae's World

**WORD COUNT:** 648

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"All I have to do is see some little girl who can't walk and then I don't think I'm such a hero anymore. I think that compared to them, I'm a very small article."

— Bobby Orr

Definition of hero: Illustrious warrior; man of extraordinary bravery, fortitude, or greatness of soul.

— Oxford dictionary

They came to Scotiabank Place last night, his name across the backs of their Senators jerseys. He's their hero. One of them was maybe the woman who phoned the radio show this week. "I'm happy the Senators made Dany Heatley their highest paid player ever. He's my hero."

And, because Dany Heatley is a "hero" for the reason that fans in the world of sports call athletes heroes, his bosses have rewarded his heroism with a salary of \$7.5 million a year.

At 26, and only five seasons in the NHL, Dany Heatley, hero, has joined hockey's multimillionaires club.

## NOT HIS FAULT

It is not Dany Heatley's fault that his hero status is worth \$7.5 million a year to the Ottawa Senators. If you're a hero in pro sports, you get the big bucks for what in pro sports defines heroism. You get hero-worshipped by those who wear your name on their backs and have no problem at all with you being paid \$7.5 million a year for making the world a safer place through a bewitching ability to propel a rubber disc off a stick blade and past a man and into a net without it hitting him the way Paul Franklin, if he had the chance, would try to hit someone with what he shot.

Paul Franklin, who has no fans wearing his name on their backs. Paul Franklin, whose game doesn't sell tickets to the viewing public. Paul Franklin, whose game isn't shown on Saturday night TV. Paul Franklin, who has no one clamouring for his autograph. Paul Franklin, who has no endorsement deals. Paul Franklin, who has no agent. Paul Franklin of whom the hockey artiste Dany Heatley would surely say to all those

who've decided Dany Heatley's a hero for what he does well: "All I have to do is see a soldier who can't walk and then I don't think I'm such a hero anymore. I think that compared to him, I'm a very small article."

Paul Franklin, master corporal in the Canadian Army who came home from Afghanistan without his legs, and whose financial reward for being a volunteer soldier in the uniform of his country and going to war and risking his life every single day to make the world a safer place is not \$7.5 million a year, but \$50,400 a year.

Paul Franklin, soldier for the nation of Canada, who earns \$138 a day compared to Dany Heatley, player for a hockey team in Ottawa, who earns \$20,547 a day. Paul Franklin, soldier, who would take 148 years to earn what Dany Heatley, hockey player, earns in one year.

## GREATNESS OF SOUL

Paul Franklin, illustrious warrior; man of extraordinary bravery, fortitude, or greatness of soul. Paul Franklin, real hero in a real world, and to whom this column is a tribute as well as to all the other illustrious warriors; men and women of extraordinary bravery, fortitude, or greatness of soul: The Canadian Soldier.

To the 42 who've lost their lives in Afghanistan. To the 243 wounded. To the 80 who left playing in the NHL in World War II to fight Hitler. To Red Garrett, New York Ranger, who was killed in action. To Red Tilson, Oshawa General, who was killed in action.

To all in the uniform of Canada serving in harm's way, and acknowledged by Paul Franklin — who had his 138 dollars-a-day body parts blown off in what he does for a living compared to Dany Heatley who'll never have his 20,547 dollars-a-day body parts blown off in what he does for a living — when he said: "If you call me a hero, what you are really saying is that all of them are heroes. I'll take that." KEYWORDS=NATIONAL

# Coderre jaunt to Kandahar labelled a stunt

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**SOURCETAG** 0710070083  
**PUBLICATION:** The London Free Press  
**DATE:** 2007.10.07  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** 9  
**BYLINE:** CP  
**DATELINE:** TORONTO  
**WORD COUNT:** 202

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Liberal Defence critic Denis Coderre is in Pakistan, preparing to take a United Nations flight to Kandahar today — the sixth anniversary of the U.S.-led bombing of Afghanistan.

The Montreal MP said the Afghan mission is a major priority for Canadians and that he's doing his duty by going there, even though the trip doesn't have the approval of the Harper government. Both Defence Minister Peter MacKay and NDP Leader Jack Layton are labelling the trip a stunt.

Coderre told CTV NewsNet in an interview yesterday he's been asking for months to go, but repeated calls to the defence minister asking for permission were ignored or rejected.

So he said he decided unilaterally to go on the fact-finding trip and report back to Liberal Leader Stephane Dion in preparation for Dion's trip to the war-torn country.

"I took my responsibility. I have a duty, I have a job to do. I am the critic for . . . the official Opposition," he said. "It's important, I would say, to make sure that we fully participate and contribute to the debate. So I'm gonna let them play their petty politics and I'll do my job,"

The Liberal MP said it would have shown some class and been easier had he been allowed to accompany Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier and International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda on their trip.  
**KEYWORDS=**CANADA



# U.S. presence, violence grow in Afghanistan

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**DATE:** 2007.10.07  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** 9  
**BYLINE:** JASON STRAZIUSO, AP  
**DATELINE:** BAGRAM, AFGHANISTAN  
**WORD COUNT:** 243

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Six years after the first U.S. bombs began falling on Afghanistan's Taliban government and its al-Qaida guests, America is planning for a long stay.

Originally envisioned as a temporary home for invading U.S. forces, the sprawling American base at Bagram, a former Soviet outpost in the shadow of the towering Hindu Kush mountains, is growing in size by nearly a third.

Today the U.S. has about 25,000 troops in the country, and other NATO countries, including Canada, contribute another 25,000, more than three times the number of international troops in the country four years ago, when the Taliban appeared defeated.

The Islamic militia has come roaring back since then, and 2007 has been the battle's bloodiest year yet.

Barnett Rubin, an expert on Afghanistan at New York University, said U.S. leaders in Washington "utterly failed" to understand what was needed to consolidate that original Taliban rout, which started with air strikes Oct. 7, 2001, less than a month after the Sept. 11 attacks in Washington and New York.

"The Bush administration did not see Afghanistan as a long-term commitment, and its leaders deceived themselves into thinking they had won an irreversible victory," he said.

"Now the U.S. and international community have fallen way behind, and the Taliban are winning strategically, even if we defeat them in every tactical engagement," he added.

At Bagram, new barracks will help accommodate the record number of U.S. troops in the country.

"We've grown in our commitment to Afghanistan by putting another brigade (of troops) here, and with that we know that we're going to have an enduring presence," said Col. Jonathan Ives.

"So this is going to become a long-term base for us, whether that means five years, 10 years — we don't know." **KEYWORDS=WORLD**

# Afghan mission called success Cabinet ministers say Kabul suicide bombings a sign of desperation.

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**SOURCETAG:** 0710070081

**PUBLICATION:** The London Free Press

**DATE:** 2007.10.07

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** 9

**ILLUSTRATION:** photo by Paul Chiasson, CP POSITIVE SPIN ON WAR: Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier watches a school girl write during a visit to the Murad Khane district of Kabul yesterday.

**BYLINE:** LES PERREAUX, CP

**DATELINE:** KABUL, AFGHANISTAN

**WORD COUNT:** 408

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Two newly shuffled Canadian cabinet ministers arrived in the Afghan capital just 30 minutes after another deadly suicide bomb attack yesterday, but that didn't daunt their persistent pitch that life is getting better for ordinary Afghans.

International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda and Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier landed in Kabul a short time after a suicide bomber struck on the main airport road, killing a U.S. soldier and four civilians. That attack came on the eve of the sixth anniversary of the U.S.-led invasion that ousted the Taliban from power.

Oda tried to reassure skeptical Afghan journalists that the shift by the insurgents to roadside and suicide bombings actually illustrated the success of the western security mission in Afghanistan.

Such tactics have long racked southern Afghanistan, but the fact that suicide bombings were now occurring in the capital showed the Taliban were desperate because of their inability to win on the battlefield, Oda said.

Oda said she recently met senior Afghan officials and together they "identified that the difference in the challenge in Kandahar today can be seen as, to a certain extent, success."

Insurgents "are having to resort to other more desperate ways of trying to make their statements," she told a couple dozen Afghan reporters and a handful of Canadians.

Oda's reassurances come amid recent reports that the intensity of the insurgency is growing.

The United Nations' Department of Security and Safety has reported the "security situation in Afghanistan is assessed by most analysts as having deteriorated at a constant rate through 2007."

The UN confirmed rebels were moving away from battlefield confrontations, but "the numbers of incidents are higher than comparable periods in 2006."

Instead of localized battles, bombings have been spreading across the country, the UN said.

Police have become favourite targets and civilians face mounting intimidation, the report added.

A count by AP showed about 5,100 people have died so far this year in insurgency related violence, about 1,000 more than in 2006.

Most of the casualties have been insurgents reportedly killed in battle, accord to numbers supplied by the Afghan government and western forces. The Taliban accuses the West of greatly exaggerating rebel losses.

Once relatively tranquil, Kabul has faced three major bomb attacks in a week. The bombings have claimed 37 lives, mostly civilians and police.

While Oda pointed to signs of progress like the 1,200 Canadian-sponsored wells being dug in the Kandahar region, Bernier added that "we can see the situation in Kandahar has improved."

When Oda turned the subject to record enrolment in Afghan schools, including enrolment among girls, one Afghan reporter asked about a recent Afghan human rights report that said children were beginning to stay home from school out of fear.

One more reason Afghanistan needs Canadian soldiers, Oda said, referring to the meeting she and Bernier held with Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

"He brought this up and he explained why we have to stay in Afghanistan and we have to continue working in Afghanistan." KEYWORDS=WORLD

# U.S. in no hurry to leave Afghanistan

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**SOURCETAG** 0710070620  
**PUBLICATION:** The Edmonton Sun  
**DATE:** 2007.10.07  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** 49  
**BYLINE:** JASON STRAZIUSO, AP  
**DATELINE:** BAGRAM, Afghanistan  
**WORD COUNT:** 446

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Six years after the first U.S. bombs began falling on Afghanistan's Taliban government and its al-Qaida guests, America is planning for a long stay.

Originally envisioned as a temporary home for invading U.S. forces, the sprawling American base at Bagram, a former Soviet outpost in the shadow of the towering Hindu Kush mountains, is growing in size by nearly a third.

Today the U.S. has about 25,000 troops in the country, and other NATO countries contribute another 25,000, more than three times the number of international troops in the country four years ago, when the Taliban appeared defeated.

The Islamic militia has come roaring back since then, and 2007 has been the battle's bloodiest year yet.

Barnett Rubin, an expert on Afghanistan at New York University, said U.S. leaders in Washington "utterly failed" to understand what was needed to consolidate that original Taliban rout, which started with air strikes Oct. 7, 2001, less than a month after the Sept. 11 attacks in Washington and New York.

"The Bush administration did not see Afghanistan as a long-term commitment, and its leaders deceived themselves into thinking they had won an irreversible victory. They did not consider Afghanistan important and always intended to focus on Iraq," Rubin said.

"Now the U.S. and international community have fallen way behind, and the Taliban are winning strategically, even if we defeat them in every tactical engagement," he added.

At Bagram, new barracks will help accommodate the record number of U.S. troops in the country.

"We've grown in our commitment to Afghanistan by putting another brigade (of troops) here, and with that we know that we're going to have an enduring presence," said Col. Jonathan Ives. "So this is going to become a long-term base for us, whether that means five years, 10 years – we don't know."

Insurgents have launched more than 100 suicide attacks this year, an unprecedented pace, including a bombing in Kabul yesterday against a U.S. convoy that killed an American soldier and four Afghan civilians – the third suicide blast in Kabul in a week.

More than 5,100 people – mostly militants – have died in insurgency-related violence so far this year, according to an Associated Press count based on figures from Afghan and western officials. That far outpaces last year's violence, when the AP count topped 4,000 for the entire year.

Some 87 U.S. troops have also died so far this year, also a record pace. About 90 U.S. service members were killed in all of last year.

Wide areas of the south – in Helmand, Kandahar and Uruzgan provinces – are controlled by the Taliban, and the fighting is migrating north, into Ghazni province – where 23 South Koreans were kidnapped in July – and Wardak, right next door to Kabul, the capital.

Osama bin Laden, whose presence here was a trigger for the U.S.-led attack, is still at large, possibly hiding in the mountains along the Afghanistan–Pakistan border.

And Afghan farmers this year grew a record amount of opium poppy, prompting officials to draw up plans to use the military in drug interdiction missions against traffickers. KEYWORDS=WORLD

# Kabul airport convoy bombed, killing 5

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**SOURCETAG** 0710070606  
**PUBLICATION:** The Edmonton Sun  
**DATE:** 2007.10.07  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** 34  
**BYLINE:** RAHIM FAIEZ, AP  
**DATELINE:** KABUL, Afghanistan  
**WORD COUNT:** 322

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Flames shot into the sky after a suicide car bomber attacked a U.S. military convoy on the road to Kabul's airport yesterday, killing an American soldier and four Afghan civilians, officials said.

The bombing – on the sixth anniversary of the U.S.–led invasion of Afghanistan – threw several vehicles onto their sides. Four Afghans were killed and 12 wounded, the Health Ministry said.

The attack targeted U.S. troops responsible for training the Afghan military and police. Lt.–Col. David Johnson, a U.S. spokesman, said one American soldier died in the blast.

Dozens of shops were damaged.

"There was an enormous explosion. The windows of my shop shattered," said tailor Mohammad Isaq. "When I came out I saw the foreigners' vehicles on fire. I saw two injured Afghans and I ran to help them."

Yesterday was the sixth anniversary of the U.S.–led invasion to oust the Taliban for hosting al–Qaida leader Osama bin Laden following the terrorist attacks on the United States of Sept. 11, 2001. This year has been the most violent of the six–year effort. More than 5,100 people – mostly militants – have died in insurgency–related violence in 2007, according to an Associated Press count based on Afghan and western officials.

The suicide bombing was the third major attack in Kabul in a week. On Sept. 29, a bomber targeted an Afghan army bus, killing 30 people. A similar attack on a police bus Tuesday killed 13.

Abdul Manan Farahi, Kabul's counterterrorism chief, said Kabul police in the last six months prevented 156 terror attacks, including 18 suicide bombings. He said one man from Morocco, one from Saudi Arabia and several from Pakistan were among the 18 would–be suicide attackers arrested.

Police displayed a Pakistani man in custody whom Farahi said was arrested in Kandahar before he was able to carry out a suicide bombing.

Farahi called it "unfortunate" that militants have been able to carry out three attacks in Kabul in the past week, and addressed rumours that Afghanistan's intelligence agency believes there are more suicide bombers in the city by saying that Kabul is always a target for such attacks. KEYWORDS=WORLD

# World Watch Sunflashes Column

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**SOURCETAG** 0710070586  
**PUBLICATION:** The Edmonton Sun  
**DATE:** 2007.10.07  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** 23  
**ILLUSTRATION:** photo of ALEXIS ROBERTS Taught William  
**BYLINE:** SUN WIRE SERVICES  
**COLUMN:** World Watch Sunflashes  
**WORD COUNT:** 196

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## AFGHAN BOMB KILLS PRINCE'S PAL

LONDON — Prince William said yesterday he was "deeply saddened" by news that his mentor from army training school had been killed in Afghanistan.

Maj. Alexis Roberts, 32, of the Royal Gurkha Rifles, died Thursday after his convoy was hit by an improvised explosive device. He had been the prince's instructor at Sandhurst from which he graduated last year.

## 8 MILITANTS SHOT DEAD

SRINAGAR, India — Eight suspected militants were shot dead by Indian troops yesterday when they tried to sneak into Indian Kashmir from Pakistan, an army spokesman said.

Two soldiers were also killed in two separate clashes in north Kashmir near the Line of Control, a de facto border which divides Kashmir between India and Pakistan.

## ANTI-RIGHT-WING RUCKUS

BERNE — Swiss police fired teargas and anti-right-wing protesters hurled rocks and bottles during a political rally in Switzerland's capital yesterday, in a sign of rising tensions ahead of an unusually divisive election.

The clashes occurred when demonstrators sought to interrupt a march organised by the right-wing Switzerland's People's Party.

## SHIITE RIVALS OK DEAL

BAGHDAD — Two of Iraq's most powerful Shiite leaders agreed yesterday to end a bitter rivalry.

Radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr and Abdul-Aziz al-Hakim, leader of the largest Shiite political party, the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council, have promised to "protect Iraqi blood and enhance cooperation between the two movements for the Islamic and national interests and to save the nation." KEYWORDS=WORLD

# Canuck ministers tour Kabul

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**SOURCETAG** 0710070584

**PUBLICATION:** The Edmonton Sun

**DATE:** 2007.10.07

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** 23

**ILLUSTRATION:** photo by Paul Chiasson, Reuters International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda and Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier, second from left, visit the Murad Khane district of Kabul under tight security yesterday. A deadly suicide bomb attack occurred just 30 minutes before.

**BYLINE:** LES PERREAUX, CP

**DATELINE:** KABUL

**WORD COUNT:** 210

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The fact that suicide bombings are now occurring in the capital shows that the Taliban are desperate, Oda said.

When Oda turned the subject to record enrolment in Afghan schools, one Afghan reporter asked about a recent Afghan human rights report that said children were beginning to stay home out of fear.

It's one more reason Afghanistan needs Canadian soldiers, Oda said, referring to the meeting she and Bernier held with President Hamid Karzai. "He explained why we have to stay in Afghanistan," Oda said.

Bernier said he discussed negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban with Karzai.

Karzai has said he is willing to talk to Taliban and other insurgent leaders any time.

Canada's position has not changed, Bernier added, saying the Taliban must first renounce violence.

**KEYWORDS=WORLD**



# The trick with Rick Conservatives foolishly float a trial balloon aimed at deflating Canada's popular general

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**SOURCETAG** 0710070448

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**DATE:** 2007.10.07

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** Editorial/Opinion

**PAGE:** 28

**ILLUSTRATION:** file photo Canada's Chief of Defence Staff, General Rick Hillier, might be getting too popular for his political masters to handle.

**BYLINE:** SHEILA COPPS

**WORD COUNT:** 609

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Hail to the chief. I am referring of course, not to Prime Minister Stephen Harper but to General Rick Hillier, whose classy response to rumours of his demise proved his political savviness and leadership skills.

Thankfully, we do not have a political system where the prime minister is also the chief of the armed forces. That may not prevent Stephen Harper from parading around in flak jackets looking singularly presidential. But when the pretend chief butts up against the real chief, don't expect the politician to come out on top.

Some political genius probably thought it was a brilliant idea to leak a story about Hillier's demise, a shot across the bow to a military man who was getting too popular, and powerful, for his own good.

Hence the anonymous leak designed to shake up military brass and let Hillier know who's boss. But the leak had the opposite effect. A lot is written these days about clumsy management in Stephane Dion's office, but the Hillier story was a textbook case in how not to communicate.

In full damage control, Prime Minister Harper declared he and his close advisers were not involved in discussions about the future of Canada's most popular soldier. Accepting Harper's vigorous denials, we can only assume that the public thrashing was the brainchild of the defence minister.

Peter MacKay did not exactly jump to the defence of his man. Instead, he mumbled a few platitudes, avoiding the key question about whether Hillier's mandate will be renewed. The PM was more fulsome in his praise, but also deliberately neglected to kill the termination story outright.

Both reactions point to only one possible scenario.

MacKay, with the blessing of the prime minister, floated this trial balloon to gauge public reaction to the firing of a politically overweening general.

When a soldier becomes more popular than his bosses, that hurts.

## ODD MANOEUVRE

Harper needs opposition support for continued engagement in Afghanistan. Attacking the chief of the defence staff publicly seems odd way to secure it. Political egos notwithstanding, the government needs Hillier more

The trick with Rick Conservatives foolishly float a trial balloon aimed at deflating Canada's popular general

than he needs the government.

Instead, the Tories went after the very soldier they need to sell their message. After all, Hillier's brilliant communication skills are already making inroads with a cynical public.

His down-to-earth demeanour and hands-on approach has met with far more success than multiple ministerial tours. Even his love of hockey and doughnuts resonates with Canadians. Unfortunately for the government, the chief's positive message has provided stark contrast to the failures of his political masters, including former minister Gordon O'Connor.

This is not the first time ministers and the military have embarked on an inevitable collision course.

Former minister David Collenette stared down defence critics with a plan to slash the number of officers in a top-heavy military structure. In the end, he was temporarily forced out of cabinet, dogged by leaked documents and controversy over an inquiry into the death of a Somali teenager at the hands of the Canadian military.

Former minister Art Eggleton once informed cabinet that politicians would not be welcome at the Petawawa funeral of a slain soldier. The military preferred to keep grieving "in the family" and they made it clear that didn't include politicians.

## SHORT STRAW

When military men (and they have been all men) and their political masters clash, the politicians usually draw the short straw.

Hillier is no fool. He will likely save face by orchestrating his own departure. With the undeserved public humiliation he suffered last week, Hillier would be wise to take control of his own leave-taking.

Shock waves from his exit would reverberate well beyond the military. The loss of Canada's most popular soldier in decades would rankle Harper's own Conservative base. It could also cut into potential parliamentary support for future Afghanistan initiatives. A shove out the door would demoralize the soldiers who are risking their lives in theatre.

Don't expect Hillier to go quietly. If history repeats itself, (and it usually does) his multiple military supporters will soon start inflicting collateral damage on their political bosses. Peter MacKay may wish he had privately pricked this week's trial balloon before it publicly blows him up.

# Sunflashes Column

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**DATE:** 2007.10.07  
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**PAGE:** 10  
**ILLUSTRATION:** photo of ALEXIS ROBERTS Taught William  
**BYLINE:** SUN WIRE SERVICES  
**COLUMN:** Sunflashes  
**WORD COUNT:** 195

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**SOURCETAG** 0710070423

**PUBLICATION:** The Calgary Sun

**DATE:** 2007.10.07

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** 10

**ILLUSTRATION:** photo by Paul Chiasson, Reuters International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda and Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier visit the Murad Khane district of Kabul under tight security yesterday. A deadly suicide bomb attack occurred just 30 minutes before.

**BYLINE:** LES PERREAUX, CP

**DATELINE:** KABUL

**WORD COUNT:** 210

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Canada's position has not changed, Bernier added, saying the Taliban must first renounce violence.

**KEYWORDS=WORLD**

# Kite Runner child actors removed from Afghanistan

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**IDNUMBER** 200710070102  
**PUBLICATION:** Calgary Herald  
**DATE:** 2007.10.07  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Books & The Arts  
**PAGE:** C5  
**KEYWORDS:** 0  
**SOURCE:** Reuters  
**WORD COUNT:** 288

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Controversy – The studio behind The Kite Runner, a film about Afghanistan's turmoil, has arranged to get its three young stars out of their homeland before the movie debuts to protect them from a possible backlash.

The U.S. release of the film, based on the bestselling novel by Khaled Hosseini, has been delayed by six weeks to Dec. 14 to ensure the 12-year-old Afghan boys are out of harm's way by then, an executive for Paramount Vantage said.

The extraordinary precautions follow months of shuttle diplomacy and other preparations by the film studio to address concerns about the film's depiction of one boy's rape and other scenes of conflict between rival Pashtun and Hazara tribes.

Worries about the well-being of the young actors have escalated as the level of security in Afghanistan has deteriorated in the months since the film was cast and shot.

Although opinions as to the film's potential for inciting ethnic violence vary widely, "we feel an obligation to put the safety and security of those kids first," said said Megan Colligan, a marketing chief for Paramount Vantage.

The studio hired a former CIA officer to assess the risks facing the child stars while enlisting a human rights worker to serve as their "minder" and liaison between the studio and their families.

All three child stars — Ahmad Khan Mahmoodzada, Zekiria Ebrahimi and Ali Danish Bakhty — were schoolboys with no previous acting experience. The boys, each accompanied by a family member, will likely leave Kabul, at the end of October, more than a month before their school year ends, and travel with a tutor to the United States for several weeks, Colligan said. From there, they'll go to the United Arab Emirates to stay until March, when school starts.

# BestSellers; The New York Times Book Review

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**PUBLICATION:** Calgary Herald  
**DATE:** 2007.10.07  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Books & The Arts  
**PAGE:** C2  
**KEYWORDS:** 0  
**SOURCE:** Calgary Herald  
**WORD COUNT:** 405

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This Last Weeks week FICTION Week On List

You've been warned, by James Patterson and Howard Roughan (Little, Brown, \$27.99) An aspiring photographer working as a nanny and in love with the children's father has terrible visions.

A Thousand Splendid Suns, by Khaled Hosseini (Riverhead, \$25.95) A friendship between two women in Afghanistan during 30 years of war.

Dead Heat by Dick Francis and Felix Francis (Putnam, \$25.95) Someone is out to destroy a young chef's Newmarket restaurant, poisoning food and setting off a bomb.

Making Money by Terry Pratchett (Harper, \$25.95) In this Discworld fantasy, Moist von Lipwig takes over Ankh-Morpork's Royal Mint.

Pontoon, by Garrison Keillor (Viking, \$25.95) After the death of a good Lutheran lady in Lake Wobegon, her daughter learns about her secret life.

The Wheel Of darkness, by Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child (Warner, \$25.99) A Tibetan abbot asks the FBI agent Aloysius Pendergast to help recover a stolen relic with evil powers.

Jonathan's Stor , by Julia London with Alina Adams (Pocket, \$22) The story behind Jonathan's disappearance, based on the TV daytime drama Guiding Light.

The Wednesday letters, by Jason F. Wright (Shadow Mountain, \$19.95) Two brothers and a sister with complicated lives learn about their family's past through love letters discovered after their parents' deaths.

Bones to ashes, by Kathy Reichs (Scribner, \$25.95) Forensic anthropologist Temperance Brennan is asked to examine the skeleton of a young girl in Canada, where, many years ago, her best friend disappeared.

The Bone Garden, by Tess Gerritsen (Ballantine, \$25.95) A woman finds a skull in her garden, while in the 1830s, a medical student tracks a killer.

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This Last Weeks week NON-FICTION Week On List

The Age of turbulence, by Alan Greenspan (Penguin Press, \$35) A memoir by the longtime chairman of the Federal Reserve Board.

If i did it, by the Goldman family (Beaufort, \$24.95) O.J. Simpson's hypothetical confession to the murder of his wife, Nicole, and Ron Goldman.

Giving, by Bill Clinton (Knopf, \$24.95) The former president describes people and projects that save lives and solve problems around the world.

Louder Than Words, by Jenny McCarthy (Dutton, \$23.95) A mother deals with her son's autism and struggles to find treatment.

The Nine, by Jeffery Toobin (Doubleday, \$27.95) A portrait of th Supreme Court since the Reagan administration focuses on the influence of its moderates.

Power to the people, by Laura Ingraham (Regnery \$27.95) The political commentator urges Americans to restore traditional conservative principles.

The heroin diaries, by Nikki Sixx with Ian Gittins (Pocket, \$32.50) The Motley Crue bassist's record of a year of drug addiction.

The war, by Geoffrey C. Ward (Knopf, \$50) A companion to the seven-part PBS documentary directed by Ken Burns, with hundreds of photographs.

Mother teresa:Come be my light, (Doubleday, \$22.95) Writings and reflections on her spiritual journey.

Quiet strength, by Tony Dungy with Nathan Whitaker (Tyndale, \$26.99) A memoir by the first black coach to win a Super Bowl (he did it this year, with the Indianapolis Colts).

# Calgary Bestsellers

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**DATE:** 2007.10.07  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Books & The Arts  
**PAGE:** C2  
**KEYWORDS:** 0  
**SOURCE:** Calgary Herald  
**WORD COUNT:** 171

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## Fiction

- 1 (—) Playing For Pizza, John Grisham. An ex-NFL player heads to Italy to play football and gets more than he bargained for.
- 2 (—) Spanish Fly, Will Ferguson. A trio get caught up in crime and love in the 1930s.
- 3 (—) The Twice Born, Pauline Gedge. A suspenseful novel set in ancient Egypt.
- 4 (7) Harry Potter And The Deathly Hallows, J.K. Rowling. The last book in the popular series.
- 5 (2) A Thousand Splendid Suns, Khaled Hosseini. Two women who are victims of men, set in Afghanistan.
- 6 (—) MacDonald, Roy MacSkimming. A recreation of the last days of Canada's first Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald.
- 7 (—) Bones To Ashes, Kathy Reichs. A forensic anthropologist tries to solve a series of deaths.
- 8 (—) Actualities, Monica Kidd. A collection of poetry.
- 9 (8) Divisadero, Michael Ondaatje. A haunting story that ranges from northern California to central France.
- 10 (6) Late Nights On Air, Elizabeth Hay. A love story set in Yellowknife.

## Non-fiction

- 1 (1) Shock Doctrine, Naomi Klein. The unofficial story of how the free market came to dominate the world.
- 2 (—) Paddling, Portaging & Pageantry, Doreen Guilloux. The story of the world's longest canoe race.
- 3 (—) Cool Dog, Sherri Olsen. Calgary's off-leash areas.
- 4 (—) All Our Sisters, Susan Scott. Stories of homeless women in Canada.
- 5 (6) The Age Of Turbulence, Alan Greenspan. The life of the chairman of the Federal Reserve Board.



- 6 (—) Baby Guide To Calgary, Paula McGarrigle & Elena Rhodes. A local resource book.
- 7 (—) Rick Mercer Report: The Book, Rick Mercer. Satirical rants, writings and comic encounters.
- 8 (4) Other Colors, Orhan Pamuk. Essays by the Nobel Prize-winning author.
- 9 (8) Motorcycle Therapy, Jeremy Kroeker. A motorcycle adventure from Canada to Central America.
- 10 (—) The Braindead Megaphone. George Saunders. Essays on literature, travel and politics.

Information provided by McNally Robinson and Pages on Kensington

# Japan to pull navy helping U.S.-led fight in Afghanistan

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**PUBLICATION:** Calgary Herald  
**DATE:** 2007.10.07  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A13  
**KEYWORDS:** !@DATELINE=TOKYO  
**SOURCE:** Calgary Herald  
**WORD COUNT:** 191

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TOKYO – Japan will next week notify the United States about the imminent withdrawal of the Japanese navy from the Indian Ocean where it is supporting U.S.-led forces in Afghanistan, a report said Saturday.

The Japanese government will report that its navy will pull out of the region as the domestic law allowing its mission is set to expire on Nov. 1, the Nikkei newspaper said without citing sources.

Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura will speak with U.S. Ambassador Thomas Schieffer over the issue and the top official of the Japanese Self-Defence Forces is expected to report the government's decision to his U.S. counterpart, the Nikkei said.

Under legislation passed after the Sept. 11, 2001 terror attacks in the U.S., Japanese ships refuel and give other logistical support to coalition forces which overthrew Afghanistan's extremist Taliban regime.

The Japanese navy has provided the coalition with fuel for free, with the U.S. taking about 80 per cent of it, the Nikkei said.

But Japanese opposition lawmakers have alleged that fuel meant to supply forces only in Afghanistan had been diverted to U.S. operations in Iraq.

The resurgent opposition refused the government's move to extend the anti-terror law, while claiming that the government has withheld information about the operation.

# Bernier beats Grit defence critic to the punch in Afghanistan; Foreign Affairs boss scolds Coderre over unsafe travel plans

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**IDNUMBER** 200710070017

**PUBLICATION:** Calgary Herald

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**PAGE:** A5

**ILLUSTRATION:** Colour Photo: Pool, CanWest News Service / Under tight security, Canada's International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda and Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier visit the Murad Khane district of Kabul, Afghanistan, on Saturday. ;

**KEYWORDS:** !@DATELINE=KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan

**BYLINE:** Matthew Fisher; with a file from Andrew Mayeda

**SOURCE:** CanWest News Service

**WORD COUNT:** 434

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KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – The competing Conservative and Liberal visions about what Canada should be doing to help bring peace to Afghanistan reached an unexpected new stage when Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier arrived at the Canadian base here late Saturday -- hours before the expected arrival of Liberal defence critic Denis Coderre.

While saying Coderre was "always welcome in Afghanistan," Bernier criticized the former Liberal cabinet minister for not having gone through proper channels to set up his visit as Tory MPs had done when they were in opposition.

"There is a process to be followed with the government here," Bernier told reporters in Kabul before flying to Kandahar on Saturday. "I question why Mr. Coderre doesn't want to make a safe trip . . . It is irresponsible for him to come here without contacting us or planning his progress far in advance to assure his security."

Coderre was to fly on a United Nations flight from Pakistan to Kabul and from there to Kandahar on Sunday.

Although Coderre is a strong critic of the Afghan mission and had given them very little advance notice, the Canadian Forces have indicated that "as a member of Parliament" he will be given a tour of their main base, which is home to many of the 2,300 Canadian troops in Afghanistan.

Coderre's trip was being sponsored by several non-governmental organizations including the Senlis Council, which has been highly critical of the combat role that Canada has played in Afghanistan.

Climbing out of a Canadian Forces CC-130 Hercules transport aircraft after the 70-minute flight from Kabul on Saturday, Bernier said he had made the 9,600 kilometre journey to see "what our military people are doing over here for the Afghan people and to share Thanksgiving with the troops."

Bernier, who was appointed to the job in August, was met on the tarmac by several Canadian senior officers including the contingent commander, Brig.-Gen. Guy Laroche.

But what many of the soldiers wanted to know was if the Harper government will extend the current combat mission in Afghanistan beyond February 2009.

"Like you know, the prime minister has made it very clear we will debate this in Parliament and put it to a vote," Bernier said to reporters. "We are very democratic. We will have Parliament decide."

Referring to his recent speech on Afghanistan to the United Nations, Bernier said: "I was in New York talking about the good work that you're doing here."

Earlier in Kabul, Bernier had what he called good meetings with senior Afghan officials including President Hamid Karzai.

Asked by journalists in Kabul about Karzai's recent overtures to the Taliban to open peace talks, Bernier said this was a good thing as long as those representing the insurgents don't "believe in violence" and desire a durable peace.

# Prince's mentor killed in Afghanistan; Major trained William at elite military academy

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<b>PAGE:</b>	A2
<b>ILLUSTRATION:</b>	Photo: Prince William; Photo: Reuters / Alexis Roberts, 32, was a friend and platoon commander of Prince William at Sandhurst academy. ;
<b>KEYWORDS:</b>	MONARCHY; MEDIA; VISITS; ANNIVERSARIES
<b>DATELINE:</b>	LONDON
<b>SOURCE:</b>	Reuters
<b>WORD COUNT:</b>	158

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LONDON – Prince William, second in line to the British throne, said on Saturday he was "deeply saddened" by news that his mentor from army officer training school had been killed in action in Afghanistan.

Major Alexis Roberts of the Royal Gurkha Rifles died in southern Afghanistan on Thursday after his convoy was hit by an improvised explosive device as troops returned to their base in Kandahar, Britain's Ministry of Defence said.

Roberts, 32, was the prince's instructor during his time at the elite Sandhurst training academy from which he graduated last year as a second lieutenant.

"Prince William was deeply saddened to learn of the death in action of Lex Roberts, whom he remembers with great respect as his platoon commander at Sandhurst and as a good friend," said a spokesman for the prince.

"At this time, his thoughts and prayers are with Lex's wife Susie, their two young daughters, and with all his family and friends."

Roberts was the 82nd British soldier to have died in Afghanistan since the Taliban government was toppled in 2001.

# World facing refugee crisis

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**PUBLICATION:** WINNIPEG FREE PRESS

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**SECTION:** Faith

**WORD COUNT:** 812

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Staff Reporter Dr. Asad U. Khan The 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees defined a refugee as a person who "owing to a well founded fear of being persecuted for reason of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country." As of January 2007, according to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, 21 million individuals fall under its mandate. In an another earlier report, the Organization of Islamic Countries reported that there are seven million Muslim refugees in the world who are being sheltered by Islamic countries. This does not include the recent exodus from Iraq.

A large number of the refugees who are currently being given shelter reside in Pakistan, Jordan, Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, Chad and numerous African countries.

In recent years as a result of the growing political and economic instability and poverty in various parts of world, a large number of Muslim refugees have entered the United States and Canada.

The Arab Israeli wars, the Iranian revolution, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the subsequent civil war, the Taliban rule, the civil war in Somalia and Sudan, the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Kosovo, the Gulf war and the war on terrorism in Iraq have all contributed to the growing Muslim refugee population in the United States and Canada.

Approximately 15 per cent of all refugees entering the United States since 1988 have been Muslims; they have come from 77 different countries and represent a variety of ethnicities within their country of origin.

In 2005, the United States accepted 52,868 refugees, and Canada 10,521 refugees for settlement. Muslim refugees who have been resettled in North America come from countries such as Afghanistan, Bosnia, Cambodia, Iraq, Kosovo, and Somalia among others.

In a recent news bulletin from the UNHCR, Iraq has been identified as the new hotspot in the world. Incessant violence across much of Iraq has forced tens of thousands of people to leave their homes every month, presenting the international community with a humanitarian crisis even larger then the upheaval aid agencies had planned for during the 2003 war.

The UNHCR estimates that more than 4.2 million Iraqis have left their homes. Of these some 2.2 millions are displaced internally, while more than two million have fled to neighboring countries, particularly Syria and Jordan. In 2006, Iraqis have become the leading nationality seeking asylum in Europe. Recently the Globe and Mail reported that in the first half of 2007, 19,800 Iraqis requested asylum in 36 western countries including Canada.

In addition to those outside the country, more than one million Iraqis have fled their homes for other areas inside Iraq because of sectarian violence. The displacement within Iraq poses an enormous challenge. Many uprooted Iraqis, according to the UNHCR, fleeing to surrounding countries do not initially seek help, but rely instead on a social net of friends and relatives.

There are 15,000 Palestinian refugees stranded in Iraq, 1,500 of them are housed in makeshift camps on Iraq–Syria border. These Palestinians in Baghdad face threats on a daily basis but cannot leave Iraq. The country's Christians and other minorities are also living under constant threat.

The displacement of Iraqis is presenting an enormous humanitarian challenge and extreme hardship for both the displaced and the Iraqi families trying to help them in host communities.

The United Nations warns of another tragedy that is happening in Muslim Darfur. In their words, since 1998 the worst humanitarian crisis is unfolding in Sudan. Despite the signing of a ceasefire agreement and numerous other international agreements, the government of Sudan and the Janjaweed militia continue to attack civilians with impunity. Forced relocation of settlements for internally displaced people, rape of women by government police officers, and continued attacks on villages continue to plague the region.

Years of fighting in Darfur has destroyed hundreds of villages, created 2.2 million refugees and has killed more than 400,000 residents.

The large number of refugees are seeking shelter in the neighboring country of Chad, and according to the Christian Science Monitor, 1,700 refugees have been given shelter in Israel.

The Muslim community in North America has been very active in helping refugee families after their arrival. Muslim communities in Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto have created informal organizations to help the refugees.

There is often a duplication of effort because of the lack of co–ordination with others in field, and too often refugees are unaware of the existence of these organizations.

The absence for a national Muslim refugee organization is hindering this effort.

Dr. Asad U. Khan is president of the Islamic Education Foundation of Manitoba Inc. He is to be honoured this month by the Canadian Centre for Ecumenism for his efforts to promote interfaith co–operation.

# PCs blast Coderre over visit to Kandahar Not following proper channels show 'disregard for military'

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**SECTION:** Canada Wire

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CP Wire Matthew Fisher KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan — The competing Conservative and Liberal visions about what Canada should be doing to help bring peace to Afghanistan found an unexpected new stage when Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier arrived at the Canadian base here late Saturday — hours before the expected arrival of Liberal defence critic Denis Coderre.

While saying Coderre was "always welcome in Afghanistan," Bernier criticized the former Liberal cabinet minister for not having gone through proper channels to set up his visit as Tory MPs had done when they were in opposition.

"There is a process to be followed with the government here," Bernier told reporters in Kabul before flying to Kandahar on Saturday.

"I question why Mr. Coderre doesn't want to make a safe trip...It is irresponsible for him to come here without contacting us or planning his progress far in advance to assure his security." A spokesman for Defence Minister Peter MacKay said "this latest stunt by Mr. Coderre shows complete disregard and disrespect for the military." Dan Dugas, MacKay's director of communications, said the government's policy is to organize visits by opposition MPs through parliamentary committees, as was done under the previous Liberal government.

"He knows the process and refuses to abide by it," Dugas said in an e-mail.

Coderre has been repeatedly reminded that the Department of Foreign Affairs advises against travelling to Afghanistan, he added.

As an alternative, Coderre was offered the chance to visit Afghanistan later this fall with Liberal Leader Stephane Dion, said Dugas.

"With this freelance tour to Afghanistan, Mr Coderre's reckless and irresponsible actions show that he would prefer to break a long standing policy on MP visits to jeopardize the safety and mission of our troops to serve his personal agenda." Coderre was to fly on a United Nations flight from Pakistan to Kabul and from there to Kandahar on Sunday.

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But what many of the soldiers wanted to know was if the Harper government will extend the current combat mission in Afghanistan beyond February, 2009.

"Like you know, the prime minister has made it very clear we will debate this in Parliament and put it to a vote," Bernier said to reporters. "We are very democratic. We will have Parliament decide." Referring to his recent speech on Afghanistan to the United Nations, Bernier said: "I was in New York talking about the good work that you're doing here." Earlier in Kabul, Bernier had what he called good meetings with senior Afghan officials including President Hamid Karzai about development and reconstruction.

Asked by journalists in Kabul about Karzai's recent overtures to the Taliban to open peace talks, Bernier said this was a good thing as long as those representing the insurgents don't "believe in violence" and desired a durable peace.

Seventy-one Canadian soldiers have died since Canadian troops arrived in Afghanistan in 2002.

— CanWest News Service

# Airdrop specialist's work 'doesn't get any more real than this'

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Lindsey Wiebe Lindsey Wiebe KANDAHAR, AFGHANISTAN — Sgt. Rob Gears has worked on planes carrying top diplomats, Afghan soldiers and even Taliban detainees. But the Winnipegger has also seen a more sombre side of war — escorting the bodies of fallen soldiers on their final flights out of Afghanistan.

Gears hails from Winnipeg's 435 Squadron and works as a loadmaster, a title given to soldiers who "take care of the back of the plane," he said.

It's a position Gears jokingly describes as "the job that nobody wants to do," and one that might involve monitoring and packing cargo, escorting VIPS or taking part in supply drops.

"Your job is to offload and reload as fast as you can and get out of there," said the 43-year-old.

Gears is serving in Afghanistan with a crew of seven, two of whom are from Winnipeg.

Soldiers in his field work in 56-day rotations, flying all over the country with troops, cargo and visiting politicians, among others, and working closely with NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).

"You haul anything ISAF wants, anywhere," he said.

Taking part in drops for items like water, food and ammunition is one of his favourite parts of the job, particularly when the recipients are Canadian forces.

Soldiers on the ground get to see "a piece of home going by," he said. "That means a lot to the guys." But there are also days when a routine flight takes a more serious tone. In late September, said Gears, he took his eighth trip accompanying the body of a soldier who'd died in battle.

Gears, a married father of two, is on his second tour in Afghanistan.

He said he tries not to share every difficult experience with his children, ages eight and 11.

"They don't need to hear the bad stories," he said, adding it's his policy to "always tell them how many lived, not how many died." In a few weeks Gears will head home to Winnipeg, where he often takes part in search and rescue missions. In the meantime, he said he's thrilled to be doing the work he was trained to do.

"This is the best flying I'm ever going to do," he said. "It doesn't get any more real than this."

[lindsey.wiebe@freepress.mb.ca](mailto:lindsey.wiebe@freepress.mb.ca) Lindsey Wiebe is on assignment in Afghanistan this week. Check back for further reports, or visit her blog for updates at [www.winnipegfreepress.com](http://www.winnipegfreepress.com).

{Kandahar AFGHANISTAN}

# Torture All the civilized world's against it, but 'enhanced interrogation' is another story

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**SECTION:** Sunday

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Freelance Writer IN every war, information is a weapon. In a "war against terrorism," where the adversary wears no uniform and hides among the civilian population, information can matter even more. But does that mean that torture can sometimes be justified to extract information? The answer in international law is categorical: no. As laid down in treaties such as the Geneva Conventions, the UN Convention against Torture and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the ban on torture or any cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment is absolute, even in times of war. Along with genocide, torture is the only crime that every state must punish, no matter who commits it or where.

Defenders of this blanket prohibition offer arguments that range from the moral (torture degrades and corrupts the society that allows it) to the practical (people will say anything under torture so the information they provide is unreliable anyway).

The Sept. 11 attacks have not driven any rich democracy to reverse itself and make torture legal. But they have encouraged the bending of definitions and the turning of blind eyes. There is a greater readiness among governments that would never practise torture themselves to use information that less squeamish states have obtained through torture.

Start with definitions. Most civilized people squirm at the thought of putting suspected terrorists on the rack or pulling off toenails.

What if that prisoner knew the whereabouts of a ticking bomb — maybe a biological, chemical or even nuclear one? Wouldn't a little sleep deprivation, sexual humiliation or even water-dunking be justified to save hundreds and perhaps thousands of lives? Whatever the law says, a lot of people seem to think so.

In a BBC survey of 27,000 people in 25 countries last October, more than one out of three people in nine of those countries considered a degree of torture acceptable if it saved lives.

Opposition was highest in most European and English-speaking countries.

Another poll in 2005 by the Pew Research Center found that nearly half of all Americans thought the torture of suspected terrorists was sometimes justified.

Two Republican presidential hopefuls, Rudy Giuliani and Mitt Romney, support the "enhanced" interrogation of suspects in the event of an imminent attack.

United States Vice-President Dick Cheney recently suggested that "dunking" a terrorist in water to save lives was a "no-brainer." The ensuing uproar led him to backtrack, claiming that he was not, of course, referring to "water-boarding," or simulated drowning, a technique regarded as tantamount to torture and banned in the U.S. army's own interrogation manual.

One objection to allowing moderate physical pressure is the difficulty of knowing where to draw the line. If stress positions and sleep deprivation do not work, do you progress to branding with red-hot irons and beating to a pulp? Can you rely on interrogators to heed such distinctions? It is the danger of a slippery slope that makes opponents of torture insist on a total ban.

Israel is the only country in modern times to have openly allowed "moderate physical pressure" as a "last resort." Since interrogators used such methods anyway, it was argued, passing an explicit law would at least make it possible to set out some limits.

But in 1999, citing the slippery-slope argument, Israel's Supreme Court ruled that torture could never be justified, even in the case of a ticking bomb. It went on to outlaw techniques such as sleep deprivation, exposure to extremes of hot and cold, prolonged stress positions, hooding and violent shaking.

In the 1970s, Britain used similar techniques against suspected terrorists in Northern Ireland. These were banned in 1978 following a case brought by the Republic of Ireland to the European Court of Human Rights. Although not torture, such methods did amount to inhumane treatment, the court ruled. In 2002 the International Criminal Court for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague decided that prolonged solitary confinement constituted torture.

Such rulings did not prevent the U.S. from resorting to such harsh techniques when interrogating suspects in Afghanistan, Iraq and Guantanamo Bay, however. Former detainees in those places have spoken of severe beatings, water-boarding, excruciating stress positions, mock executions, sleep deprivation and much else besides.

Administration lawyers have argued that since al-Qaida and its Taliban allies were not a state party to the Geneva Conventions they were not covered by its ban on torture and other maltreatment.

True, the U.S. had ratified (in 1988) the Convention against Torture, but that applied only to acts carried out on American soil, they said. And though the U.S.'s own 1994 federal statute against torture did cover acts by Americans abroad, this applied only to full-blown torture, not lesser abuses.

In the notorious "torture memos" drawn up by the Department of Justice and the Pentagon in 2002 and 2003, the same lawyers sought to restrict the normal definition of torture — "severe pain or suffering" — to extreme acts equivalent to "serious physical injury, organ failure, or even death." Furthermore, as a wartime commander in chief whose main duty was to protect the American people, the president had the power to override both domestic and international law, they argued.

After being leaked in 2004 most of these memos were "withdrawn," though not the one on the president's wartime powers.

Bush and his colleagues have always said that the U.S. neither authorizes nor condones torture. "We don't do torture," the president famously said. But Bush has been vaguer about the grey area between torture and more moderate pressure.

Soon after suspected terrorists were first sent to Guantanamo in January 2002, he said that U.S. armed forces would treat the detainees "humanely" in a manner "consistent with the Geneva Conventions" — but only "to the extent appropriate and consistent with military necessity." Not until the Supreme Court's ruling in Hamdan in 2006 did the administration accept that all detainees, wherever held, were protected by Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions, which bans all forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment as well as torture. The 2005 Detainee Treatment Act, incorporating an amendment by Senator John McCain, already prohibited such treatment by American soldiers anywhere in the world. But it did not apply to the CIA.

Yet it is the CIA that has been responsible for the "extraordinary rendition" of suspects to clandestine prisons in third countries for "enhanced" interrogation (whether by that country's agents or the CIA itself) amounting at times, many suspect, to torture.

The program's existence was not officially confirmed until Bush announced last year the transfer to Guantanamo of the last 14 "high-value" detainees then being held in so-called "black sites" around the world. Of some 100 suspected terrorists believed to have been "rendered" over the past six years, 39 remain unaccounted for, Human Rights Watch, a New York-based lobby group, says.

In July this year Bush set out new broad guidelines for interrogations under a resumed CIA program. He says the newly authorized techniques now comply fully with the Geneva Conventions' ban on "outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment" as well as torture.

Even if true (which is hard to know because the details have not been disclosed), the program itself with its enforced disappearances and black sites, which even the International Red Cross is not allowed to visit, violates basic tenets of international law.

Even if a country bans torture, how should it treat information that others have extracted this way? In 2004, Britain's Court of Appeal ruled that information acquired through torture was admissible as evidence in court.

David Blunkett, then Britain's home secretary, welcomed the ruling.

Although the government "unreservedly" condemned torture, he said, it would be "irresponsible not to take appropriate account of any information which could help protect national security and public safety." But the ruling was later overturned by the House of Lords.

A separate question is whether governments should use information extracted under torture by others for counter-terrorist purposes, even if it is not admissible as evidence. Most probably agree with Blunkett that it would be irresponsible not to. But a case can be made that this is, in effect, condoning the use of torture by allies.

To date, 144 countries have ratified the Convention against Torture.

(The holdouts include such usual suspects as Sudan, North Korea, Myanmar and Zimbabwe, but also India.) And yet, the UN's special rapporteur told the Security Council in June, torture remains widespread.

Amnesty International noted cases of state-sponsored torture or other inhumane treatment in 102 of the 153 countries included in its 2007 report. The worst offenders were China, Egypt (both of which are parties to the convention), Myanmar and North Korea, along with several African countries.

The U.S.'s transgressions are trivial by comparison. The worry, argues Kenneth Roth, director of Human Rights Watch, is that when the U.S. breaks the rules it encourages others to do the same.

— The Economist The Arar debacle CANADA does not officially condone torture, but the Maher Arar affair revealed some ugly truths.

Arar, born in Syria in 1970, came to Canada as a teen and became a Canadian citizen. In 2002, the RCMP for sure, and possibly the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service, erroneously concluded Arar was an al-Qaida operative and passed that conclusion to U.S.

authorities.

U.S. officials stopped him at a New York airport in September 2002, as he returned to Ottawa from a vacation in Tunisia. After questioning him, they deported him to Syria, ignoring his Canadian passport.

He endured a year of torture in Syria, returning to Canada in October 2003.

Franco Pillarella, Canadian ambassador to Syria through that period, said that at the time he had no reason to believe Arar had been badly treated, and had no proof that Syria engaged in routine torture.

Pillarella was widely disbelieved, but he was not disciplined and remains in the diplomatic service. He is now the ambassador to Romania.

In October 2002, while the Americans were grilling Arar in New York, deputy CSIS director Jack Hooper wrote in a memo: "I think the United States would like to get Arar to Jordan where they can have their way with him." When that memo surfaced years later, it was the first conclusive evidence that CSIS, and not just the RCMP, knew that a Canadian was going to be tortured at the request of the United States. CSIS drew mild criticism in Judge Dennis O'Connor's inquiry into Arar's ordeal, but no member was disciplined. Hooper has since retired.

In all the duplicity and incompetence that led to Arar's deportation and torture, only RCMP commissioner Giuliano Zaccardelli paid a price — he resigned after it emerged that he had given false testimony to a House of Commons committee.

In the end, Arar got a cheque for \$12.5 million from the federal government — \$2 million of it for legal fees — and an apology from Prime Minister Stephen Harper "for any role Canadian officials may have played in the terrible ordeal." — Buzz Currie, from Free Press files Ignatieff's argument WHY does torture endure? Part of the reason, argues Michael Ignatieff, the former Harvard academic who is now a prominent Liberal MP in Toronto, may be that it is at times motivated not so much by a desire to extract vital information but by something baser, such as an urge to inflict pain, exact revenge, or even just for fun. That seems to have been part of the motivation of the Americans who abused prisoners in Abu Ghraib, for example. But torture may also endure because it sometimes works.

Many critics of torture claim that it is ineffective as well as repugnant. Since people will say anything just to stop the pain, the information gleaned may not be reliable. On the other hand, if people do say anything under torture, you might expect some of what they say to be true and therefore — if those being tortured really are terrorists — useful to the authorities. Torture certainly helped induce Guy Fawkes to betray his co-conspirators after they had tried to blow up King James I and the British Parliament on Nov. 5, 1605.

Asked recently about the CIA's use of enhanced interrogation in secret prisons, George Tenet, the CIA's director until 2004, replied that the agency's widely condemned rendition program had saved lives, disrupted plots and provided "invaluable" information in the war against terrorism.

Indeed, while denying the use of full-blown torture, he said that the program on its own was "worth more than the FBI, the CIA and the National Security Agency put together have been able to tell us." Ignatieff, for his own part, sees no trumping argument on behalf of terrorists that makes their claims to human rights and dignity prevail over the security interests — and right to life — of the majority. Yet he continues to advocate a total ban.

"We cannot torture, in other words, because of who we are," he says. He knows that many will disagree.

# Bernier, Coderre share Afghan stage; Liberal defence critic makes unexpected visit at same time as foreign affairs minister

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**ILLUSTRATION:** Colour Photo: Paul Chiasson/Pool/CanWest News Service /Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier watches a young school girl write while visiting a school in the Murad Khane district of Kabul, Afghanistan, yesterday. ;

**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR AIRFIELD

**BYLINE:** Matthew Fisher; With files from Andrew Mayeda

**SOURCE:** The Ottawa Citizen

**WORD COUNT:** 631

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While saying Mr. Coderre was "always welcome in Afghanistan," Mr. Bernier criticized the former Liberal cabinet minister for not having gone through proper channels to set up his visit as Tory MPs had done when they were in opposition.

"There is a process to be followed with the government here," Mr. Bernier told reporters in Kabul before flying to Kandahar yesterday. "I question why Mr. Coderre doesn't want to make a safe trip ... It is irresponsible for him to come here without contacting us, or planning his progress far in advance to assure his security."

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Mr. Coderre's trip was being sponsored by several non-governmental organizations including the Senlis Council, which has been highly critical of the combat role that Canada has played in Afghanistan.

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Mr. Bernier, who was appointed to the job in August, was met on the tarmac by several Canadian senior officers including the contingent commander, Brig.-Gen. Guy Laroche.

But what many of the soldiers wanted to know was if the Harper government will extend the current combat mission beyond February, 2009.

"Like you know, the prime minister has made it very clear we will debate this in Parliament and put it to a vote," Mr. Bernier said to reporters. "We will have Parliament decide."

Referring to his recent speech on Afghanistan to the UN, Mr. Bernier said: "I was in New York talking about the good work that you're doing here."

Earlier in Kabul, Mr. Bernier had what he called good meetings with senior Afghan officials including President Hamid Karzai about development and reconstruction.

Asked by journalists in Kabul about Mr. Karzai's recent overtures to the Taliban to open peace talks, Mr. Bernier said this was a good thing as long as those representing the insurgents don't "believe in violence" and desired a durable peace.

As a Quebec MP, Mr. Bernier said he particularly wanted to "see the Royal 22nd Regiment, to see our people."

Mr. Bernier was accompanied from Ottawa by Bev Oda, the minister for international co-operation.

"I want to commend the Afghan government for its unwavering perseverance and its vision of a better future ... and commend the people of Afghanistan for their resilience and determination," Ms. Oda said in Kabul. "We are proud to be part of the international community that is establishing great things in this country."

Among the successes cited were the number of Afghan children now attending school.



# Prince William's army mentor killed

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Prince William said yesterday he was "deeply saddened" by news that his mentor from army officer training school had been killed in action in Afghanistan.

Maj. Alexis Roberts, of the Royal Gurkha Rifles, died Thursday after his convoy was hit by an improvised explosive device as it returned to its base in Kandahar, Britain's Ministry of Defence said.

Maj. Roberts, 32, had been the prince's instructor during his time at the elite Sandhurst training academy from which he graduated last year as a second lieutenant.

"Prince William was deeply saddened to learn of the death in action of Lex Roberts whom he remembers with great respect as his platoon commander at Sandhurst and as a good friend," said a spokesman for prince.

"At this time his thoughts and prayers are with Lex's wife, Susie, their two young daughters, and with all his family and friends."

# Musharraf elected for another 5-year term; Top court still to approve results

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Lawmakers yesterday overwhelmingly endorsed a new five-year presidential term for Gen. Pervez Musharraf, according to unofficial results, but the legitimacy of the vote has yet to be decided by the Supreme Court.

The lopsided balloting, held simultaneously by Pakistan's national parliament and four provincial assemblies, was denounced as a sham by Gen. Musharraf's opponents. The government praised it as a show of orderly democracy.

The Supreme Court is to rule this month on whether Gen. Musharraf is eligible under the constitution to seek a new term in office while serving as head of Pakistan's powerful military, a role he has promised to relinquish only once his victory is sealed. Opponents still hope to see the 64-year-old leader retroactively disqualified.

That left Gen. Musharraf and his allies celebrating an uneasy triumph. "It's the day of the general — apparently," said Adeel Sabir, an anchor on the Dawn television news channel.

Despite an opposition boycott, the general himself sought to portray the vote as an unqualified show of support.

"A majority, a vast majority, have voted for me," he told reporters in a brief appearance in which he wore civilian clothes rather than his army uniform.

Although the formal outcome is legally on hold, the balloting was seen as a watershed in Gen. Musharraf's months-long struggle to remain in power despite huge public antipathy.

The Pakistani leader is considered a key U.S. ally in the fight against the Taliban and al-Qaeda, and events here are being watched closely by the Bush administration. Gen. Musharraf has sent troops to battle Islamic militants who have found shelter in Pakistan's tribal areas bordering Afghanistan, but that military push is foundering.

Yesterday's vote took place under tight security that included phalanxes of riot police and barbed-wire barricades around the national and provincial assembly buildings. But protesters still managed to stage small demonstrations near the voting venues.

Outside the regional Parliament in the restive North–West Frontier Province, lawyers in their trademark black suits and starched shirts burned an effigy of the general in uniform and pelted a police armoured–personnel carrier with rocks. Police fired tear gas to scatter them.

The general had little meaningful competition in the vote. The two other contestants — Wajihuddin Ahmed, representing a lawyers group, and Makhdoom Amin Fahim from the party of exiled Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto — both described their candidacies as largely symbolic.

More than 150 opposition lawmakers quit their seats in protest before the balloting, and Ms. Bhutto's party abstained, but that made little dent in Gen. Musharraf's near–total support. He won 671 votes out of the 685 cast in parliament and the provincial assemblies, officials said.