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We're losing our best

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Seventy-one of our boys have already been shipped home from Afghanistan in a box. These boys were loved by parents, siblings, wives and children.

My heart bleeds every time this happens. These boys were the "cream of the crop." They needed an A1 medical report. They are loved by their waiting friends and families.

A desire for warfare on the part of American President George W. Bush has destroyed thousands of lives and sent people home to grieving relatives and friends.

I find it hard to believe that our prime minister was so ready to follow Bush's strong push for war. Canada has been known to send its enlisted men and women on peace missions. Now they end up in warfare on the battlefield. What has been gained? Now it's a war that even Bush cannot stop.

I wonder how he can lay his head on the pillow at night and sleep in peace.

Norman Weber

Elmira

Military mentors want to ensure pay gets to police trainees in Afghanistan

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International forces training the Afghan National Police want to find ways to make sure their trainees get paid directly so the notoriously corrupt bureaucracy wouldn't have the chance to skim money off their salaries.

Sporadic pay days for the Afghan officers, along with the skimming that takes place at just about every level of bureaucracy, means police have often gone months without pay and ended up with just a fraction of their already meagre salary.

Many turn to extorting locals in order to make ends meet.

"The big issue is that there was a lot of corruption among the ANP and (the Afghan Nation Auxiliary Police), and that was mainly due to the fact that there were no controls over the pay," said Capt. Sylvain Gagnon, planning officer for the Canadian military's Operational Mentor Liaison Team, which works directly with the Afghan police and army.

"A lot of them didn't get any money."

It's a problem that puts at risk the Canadian and other NATO forces who live and work side by side with the Afghan national security forces.

Cash salaries will soon be delivered directly to Afghan police throughout Kandahar province, Gagnon said. It's unclear yet who will make those deliveries — whether it will be NATO mentors or Afghan pay officers.

The money will still come from international donations via the Afghan Interior Ministry, but it's hoped that putting the cash in hand will end the opportunity for corrupt officials to skim off the top.

"We'll have the control and we'll be able to pay them so they'll stop 'taxing' the local population," Gagnon said.

Pay will be handed out regularly, probably bimonthly.

It's one more step toward preparing the Afghan national security forces to take over security in their own country.

Six-member teams of Canadian military police and infantry recently began mentoring Afghan police around

the clock at five police substations in the dangerous Zhari and Panjwai districts of Kandahar province. U.S., Dutch and French forces are also involved in the mentoring program.

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

Afghanistan: war won, lost

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BYLINE: Gwynne Dyer World Affairs
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This week is the sixth anniversary of the start of U.S. air strikes against al-Qaeda and its Taliban hosts in Afghanistan. It was a very clever politico-military operation, and by December of 2001 all of Afghanistan was under the control of the United States and its local allies for a total cost of 12 American dead.

Then, for no good reason, it fell apart, and now the war is lost.

In the days just after 9/11 George Tenet, the Central Intelligence Agency's chief, came up with a bold proposal. Why invade Afghanistan with a large American army, deploying massive firepower that kills large numbers of locals and alienates the population? Why give Osama bin Laden the long anti-American guerilla war that he was undoubtedly counting on?

Instead, Tenet proposed sending teams of CIA agents and special forces into the country to win the support of the various militias, loosely linked as the Northern Alliance, that still dominated the northern regions of the country. Although the Taliban had controlled most of the country since 1996, they had never decisively won the civil war. So why not intervene in that war, shower their opponents with money and weapons, and tip the balance against the Taliban?

It worked like a charm. By mid-December 2001 the United States effectively controlled Afghanistan through its local allies, all drawn from the northern minority groups: Tajiks, Uzbeks and Hazara. There had not been the mass killing of innocent bystanders that would inevitably have accompanied a conventional U. S. invasion, so there was no guerilla war. The traditional ruling group and biggest minority, the Pashtun, who had put their money on the Taliban and lost, would have to be brought back into the game somehow, but the usual Afghan deal- making would suffice.

Washington had the wit to make Mahmoud Karzai, a Pashtun from a clan that never had much to do with the Taliban, its puppet president in Kabul, but it didn't carry through. It froze out all the prominent Pashtun political and religious leaders who had dealings with the Taliban -- which was, of course, almost all of them.

The Taliban had been the government of Afghanistan for almost five years, and were at the time the political vehicle of the Pashtun ascendancy in the country. If you were a traditional Pashtun leader, how could you not have had dealings with them? An amnesty that turned a blind eye to the past, plus pressure by the United States on its recent allies to grant the Pashtuns a fair share of the national pie, would have created a regime in Kabul to which Pashtuns could give their loyalty, even if they were less dominant at the centre than usual. But that never happened.

Afghanistan has usually been run by regional and tribal warlords with little central control: nothing new there. But now it is also a country where the biggest minority has been largely excluded from power by foreign invaders who sided with the smaller minorities, and then blocked the process of accommodation by which the

various Afghan ethnic groups normally make power– sharing deals.

The Taliban are still the main political vehicle of the Pashtuns, because there has been no time to build another. It doesn't mean that all Pashtuns are fanatics or terrorists.

The current fighting in the south, the Pashtun heartland, which is causing a steady dribble of American, British and Canadian casualties, will continue until the Western countries pull out. (Most other NATO members sent their troops to various parts of northern Afghanistan, where non–Pashtun warlords rule non–Pashtun populations and nobody dares attack the foreigners.) Then, after the foreigners are gone, the Afghans will make the traditional inter– ethnic deals and something like peace will return.

Will Karzai still be the president after that?

Yes, if he can convince the Pashtuns that he is open to such a deal once the foreigners leave.

Will the Taliban come back to power?

No, only to a share of power, and only to the extent that they can still command the loyalty of the Pashtuns once it is no longer a question of resistance to foreigners.

Will Osama bin Laden return and recreate a "nest of terrorists" in Afghanistan?

Very unlikely.

The Afghans paid too high a price for their hospitality the first time round.

n Gwynne Dyer is a London–based independent journalist whose articles are published in 45 countries.

Pakistani battles leave 250 dead; Army resorts to heavy firepower to regain state control in insurgent territory

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Fighting between Islamic militants and security forces near the Afghan border has killed as many as 250 people over four days — the deadliest clashes in Pakistan since it threw its support behind the U.S.-led war on terror in 2001, the army said yesterday.

Air strikes hit a village bazaar in North Waziristan tribal region yesterday afternoon, killing more than 50 militants and civilians and wounding scores more, said resident Noor Hassan.

"The bombing destroyed many shops and homes," Hassan said by telephone from the village of Epi. "We are leaving."

Twelve huge explosions rocked the village and bombs also hit the nearby village of Hader Khel, Hassan added.

Army spokesman Maj.-Gen. Waheed Arshad said military aircraft struck "one or two places" near the town of Mir Ali — about 2 1/2 miles from Epi — and there were unconfirmed reports that about 50 militants had been killed.

Arshad acknowledged that civilians may also have died but had no exact numbers.

"We had confirmed reports about the presence of militants, and the air power was used to target those militant hideouts," he told The Associated Press.

Also yesterday, a roadside bomb killed two soldiers, the army said.

The fighting began Saturday after a roadside bomb hit a truckload of paramilitary troops, sparking bitter clashes.

The bodies of dozens of soldiers, many with their throats slit, have been recovered from deserted areas of the region, fleeing residents said.

The violence comes as Gen. Pervez Musharraf tries to secure another term as president, vowing to shore up Pakistan's troubled effort against Islamic extremism.

The army appeared to be resorting to heavy firepower. Pakistani troops have suffered mounting losses as they try to reassert state authority in a swath of mountainous territory where warlords supportive of the Taliban and

Pakistani battles leave 250 dead; Army resorts to heavy firepower to regain state control in insurgent territory

al-Qaida are in control.

Before yesterday's air strikes, the army reported that battles had killed 150 local fighters and 45 soldiers since Saturday. About a dozen to 15 troops were missing, and an addition 50 militants and 20 soldiers had been wounded.

Security forces have rejected a ceasefire proposed by the militants and will "continue punitive action till complete peace is restored" in the area, an army statement said.

Pakistan struck a ceasefire deal with militants in North Waziristan last year. U.S. officials criticized the pact, claiming it gave a safe haven for al-Qaida and provided a rear base for Taliban guerrillas fighting NATO troops in Afghanistan.

In July, Pakistan's army redeployed troops at key checkpoints in the region, sparking fresh hostilities.

After Saturday's bombing, about 300 militants ambushed an army convoy travelling to the scene, killing 22 troops and wounding 11. Others soldiers were taken prisoner.

One resident of Isu Khel village said three soldiers came to his home asking for protection but he refused, fearing militants might target him. The three soldiers later escaped in a military truck, said the villager, speaking after fleeing to the region's main town, Miran Shah.

Other residents of Isu Khel and nearby Melagan village said they spotted soldiers' bodies abandoned in deserted areas and a roadside, many with their throats slit.

Canada's response to Afghan executions muted; Senior Tory suggests Harper gov't reluctant to 'interfere' in internal Afghan matters

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Canada's Foreign Affairs Department offered a muted response yesterday to the execution of 15 prisoners in Afghanistan.

It refused to criticize the government of President Hamid Karzai, but noted that NATO-captured prisoners must be spared the death penalty and that human rights in general must be respected.

A Foreign Affairs spokesman read a prepared two-line statement after human rights groups criticized the silence coming out of Ottawa.

"Canada expects the government of Afghanistan to live up to its international human rights obligations," said Jamie Christoff.

"The arrangements the government of Canada has signed with the government of Afghanistan, concerning the treatment of detainees, stipulates that no Canadian transferred detainees may receive the death penalty."

The bland statement stands in contrast to the Dutch foreign ministry, which called the executions "extremely unwelcome."

Both Canada and the Netherlands oppose the death penalty.

A senior Conservative, who spoke off the record, suggested that the Harper government is reluctant to "interfere" in what is an internal matter for the Afghans. Canadian military officials in Kandahar said the same thing.

The prisoners were tried under Afghan law, government officials said. But several organizations, including the United Nations, have expressed concern about the state of the war-torn country's justice system, which has been described as "a work in progress."

The lawyer for two human rights groups said the Conservative government's initial silence and then half-hearted response raises serious questions about its commitment to upholding Canada's opposition to the death penalty.

"This calls into question our involvement with the Afghan government generally," said Paul Champ, a lawyer for Amnesty International and the B.C. Civil Liberties Association.

Canada's response to Afghan executions muted; Senior Tory suggests Harper gov't reluctant to 'interfere' in

"When it comes to the detainees Canada and other NATO countries are handing over, we have to be seriously concerned about whether the death penalty is going to be applied to those individuals."

On Sunday, Afghanistan's chief of prisons announced that 15 prisoners had been executed, including the man responsible for the murders of three Western journalists and a local photographer in 2001.

Letter | Peace an easy sell, all say they want it

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want it
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In all the posturing around the yellow ribbon uproar, we hear too little about the strength of character of our valiant Canadian soldiers fighting against terrorism.

These are young Canadians who freely and bravely choose to thrust themselves into positions of great responsibility and danger. What's even more remarkable is they are in the military knowing full well it is very likely they will be sent to Afghanistan.

Where is the widespread public recognition of this inspiring selfless idealism? It certainly hasn't been in many of the recent letters and not in the anti-war, anti-American choruses some are singing.

Principles require action. Obviously, some in Canada don't believe this. They've adopted the paradoxical position that they, in fact, support our soldiers, but it's soldiering they hate. They see a strictly peacekeeping role for our soldiers but would likely fly a white flag the moment one gets hurt.

You wonder about those who go around with John Lennon signs saying, "War is Not the Answer," or the Fredericton Peace Coalition's "Bring Them Home."

Have they really thought about what their slogans mean? Because sometimes war is the answer. When you've been attacked or when war has been declared on you or for fanatical religious reasons or by horde of lunatics — all of which has happened to contemporary Western civilization.

Marketing experts know you don't sell people what they need; you sell them what they want. That's why peace sells so well — everybody wants it. But there is a problem. You can't trade for peace if one of the participants involved in the deal doesn't want peace. That's the situation in the Middle East today.

Thaddée Renault

Fredericton

Letters | Important message not lost

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In Neville/Jones House at UNB Fredericton, we believe every person, man or woman, is born with dignity.

We believe every child should have the right to live free from harm.

We believe violence and abuse are wrong. And we believe that there is a serious problem in our society.

Transition houses in New Brunswick provide shelter and support for more than 1,000 women each year. Add to that the number of crisis calls these houses receive, and it is clear transition houses are a much needed resource. Without them, women and children who suffer domestic abuse would be forced to continue to live in coercive, demeaning and often violent situations.

It is not enough for us merely to pledge not to be violent. So 15 years ago Neville/Jones House began a journey — the Bed Push journey, a fundraiser and a marathon.

Every fall, the men of Neville/Jones stage a city-wide canvass to support Women in Transition House. We get sponsors, then push a wheeled bed from Saint John to Fredericton, covering the 106 kilometres in about 10 hours.

Since 1993, we have raised more than \$160,000, last year setting a record with \$25,500. This year the bed and our donation will reach the farmers' market Oct. 20 at 10 a.m.

Although we will never know the women and children who seek this shelter, we know this funding is important to help them establish a new life.

It is easy for the message to get lost, so we want to remind you of it.

You will see us canvassing door to door this fall, and you will see us at the Boyce Farmers' Market with the bed. You may even see us running on Fredericton's trails, training for this year's Bed Push trek. And we will certainly appreciate your financial support for Women in Transition House, Inc.

But regardless of the money we raise, please keep our message in mind. It is consistent, clear and unwavering: violence against women is wrong, and it must end.

For more information about the Neville/Jones Bed Push, email push@nevillejones.ca or visit <http://bedpush.nevillejones.ca>.

Evan Scott

Fredericton

Vandalism not new to core

Regarding the vandalism on York Street and the comments of that area's city councillor, I would like to point out that he didn't comment when a store in his ward was held up for the seventh time either, a case of selective hearing and reading, I think.

This has not been the quietest year, since Coun. Stephen Kelly has been involved in municipal politics, on my section of York Street. My house was actual broken into, a step up from the bottle thrown through my window and the vandalism done to my car which happened the year before. Also my mother's Colter Court house also had the side windows smashed.

This is not downtown New York City, this is Fredericton. But in my opinion, New York's Times Square is safer.

Martin Aitken

Fredericton

Thanks to supporters

Capital Region Crime Stoppers would like to thank everyone who supported our fundraising breakfast and those who visited our display at the RCMP Musical Ride in July.

Also a thank you to everyone who purchased tickets on the draw for the print. The lucky winner was Bob White of Lincoln.

David Miller

President

Capital Region CrimeStoppers

What about Campobello Island?

When are the federal and provincial governments going to realize Campobello Island is Canadian and part of New Brunswick?

We are sick of being the forgotten republic of Campobello.

Other than the school, Department of Transport garage and part-time doctor we have no government services. Yet we have some of the highest valued property in the province.

Where are our tax dollars going? To Moncton or up north?

We must take an international trip to get to the hospital or government services. It's a 200-kilometre trip with four stops at Canada Customs and waits sometimes hours long and at least two searches. Sometimes that's just to get your driver's licence renewed or pay a visit to the doctor.

There is a bridge to Maine but since 9-11 it has been very difficult to enter the United States. If you have a criminal record, it's a bridge to nowhere.

Why didn't the provincial government include Campobello in the Fundy Isles transportation project? Is it not

one of the Fundy Isles?

As Canadian citizens, we are supposed to be able to travel freely and work anywhere in Canada as guaranteed by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This right is not available to Campobello citizens. Must we sue for the government to realize this? What's going to happen in January when the U.S. requires passports for everybody older than 16?

A lot of people will be prisoners on the rock until the privately run ferry to Deer Island starts operating July 1.

What about our sports teams at school? They won't be able to travel to away games, and other teams won't come to Campobello because of border hassles.

It's time for government action. Include us in the Fundy Isles transportation plan. Give us a ferry to the mainland, give us a Service NB office, pave our roads, help with our lighthouse project (a provincial icon, after all), protect our fishermen, help build a rec centre for our children, and most important, let us be Canadian.

Mac Greene

Wilson's Beach, N.B.

Five reasons to support peace

I have five reasons why I will support any peace group as long as its members are non violent, obey the law and cause no damage.

I have five reasons:

1. As a veteran of the Second World War, I have been saying "never again" for 62 years. I appreciate young people interested in peace.
2. As a Christian. I know Jesus taught peace not war and violence.
3. As a grandfather, my generation gave the world the United Nations with its goal to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war."

Our soldiers in wars such as Afghanistan represent succeeding generations needing to be reminded of the goal and gift of soldiers of the Second World War.

4. The International Criminal Court and U.N Peacekeepers are available when violence is a problem.

5. Because police in my country put agitators among non-violent protestors at Montebello, Que. in August to foment violence. It sounded like Germany 65 years ago with the kill to win policy applied domestically as well as internationally.

From June 1942 to February 1943 in Munich Germany, White Rose students and their professor protested the Nazis and killing of Jews. They were arrested and hanged. The Rosenstrasse protest in Berlin in March 1943 had German wives of Jewish men demanding they be released. The Nazi machine gave in. We learn from history who should have been listened to but were rejected.

I respect anyone resisting the violent world we have created.

R.H. Young

Fredericton

Troops want to secure pay for Afghan officers

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DATE: 2007.10.10

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DATELINE: KANDAHAR, Afghanistan

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International forces training the Afghan National Police want to find ways to make sure their trainees get paid directly so that the notoriously corrupt bureaucracy wouldn't have the chance to skim money off their salaries.

Sporadic pay days for the Afghan officers, along with the skimming that takes place at just about every level of bureaucracy above them, means police have often gone months without pay and ended up with just a fraction of their already meagre salary.

Many turn to extorting locals in order to make ends meet.

"The big issue is that there was a lot of corruption among the ANP and [Afghan Nation Auxiliary Police], and that was mainly due to the fact that there were no controls over the pay," said Capt. Sylvain Gagnon, planning officer for the Canadian military's Operational Mentor Liaison Team, which works directly with the Afghan police and army.

"A lot of them didn't get any money."

It's a problem that puts at risk the Canadian and other NATO forces who live and work side-by-side with the Afghan national security forces.

Cash salaries will soon be delivered directly to Afghan police throughout Kandahar province, Gagnon said. It's unclear yet who will make those deliveries – whether it will be NATO mentors or Afghan pay officers.

The money will still come from international donations via the Afghan Interior Ministry, but it's hoped that putting the cash in hand will end the opportunity for corrupt officials to skim off the top.

"We'll have the control and we'll be able to pay them so they'll stop 'taxing' the local population," Gagnon said.

Pay will be handed out regularly, probably bi-monthly.

It's one more step toward preparing the Afghan national security forces to take over security in their own country.

Six-member teams of Canadian military police and infantrymen recently began mentoring Afghan police around the clock at five police substations in the dangerous Zhari and Panjwaii districts of Kandahar province. U.S., Dutch and French forces are also involved in the mentoring program.

They have a massive task ahead of them. Resolving the pay issue may help but first they must figure out should even be on the payroll.

Afghan executions concern groups

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DATELINE: Ottawa

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Human rights groups say the silence from Ottawa following Afghanistan's execution of 15 prisoners is troubling, and raises immediate concerns about the Conservative government's policy of handing over captured insurgents to Afghan authorities.

"This calls into question our involvement with the Afghan government generally," said Paul Champ, a lawyer for Amnesty International and the B.C. Civil Liberties Association.

"When it comes to the detainees Canada and other NATO countries are handing over, we have to be seriously concerned about whether the death penalty is going to be applied to those individuals."

On Sunday, Afghanistan's chief of prisons announced that 15 prisoners had been executed, including the man responsible for the murders of three Western journalists and a local photographer in 2001.

It's the first time in three years that the Afghan government has imposed the death penalty and it prompted an immediate condemnation from the Dutch foreign ministry, which called the executions "extremely unwelcome."

The sentences were carried out as Canada's foreign affairs minister, Maxime Bernier, wrapped up a visit to Kandahar.

There has been no comment from Bernier.

In Kandahar, Liberal defence critic Denis Coderre said he's worried about the executions and wonders whether the Afghan justice system is fair and independent enough to allow such drastic punishment.

He said it harkens back to the days when the Taliban held public executions in soccer stadiums.

"I'm against capital punishment so I'm very, very concerned," he said. "The Taliban were doing that. It's the same thing."

The Afghan government says it will continue to execute prisoners, but not those captured by NATO forces – a guarantee Champ says no one can rely on because detainees in Afghan jails routinely go missing.

"They can't rely on any of the assurances that the Afghan government provides," he said.

Military mentors want to ensure Afghan police trainees get salary

PUBLICATION: The Guardian (Charlottetown)

DATE: 2007.10.10

SECTION: World

PAGE: B8

COLUMN: Around the globe

SOURCE: The Canadian Press

DATELINE: KANDAHAR, Afghanistan

WORD COUNT: 194

International forces training the Afghan National Police want to find ways to make sure their trainees get paid directly so that the notoriously corrupt bureaucracy wouldn't have the chance to skim money off their salaries.

Sporadic pay days for the Afghan officers, along with the skimming that takes place at just about every level of bureaucracy above them, means police have often gone months without pay and ended up with just a fraction of their already meagre salary.

Many turn to extorting locals in order to make ends meet.

"The big issue is that there was a lot of corruption among the ANP and (Afghan Nation Auxiliary Police), and that was mainly due to the fact that there were no controls over the pay," said Capt. Sylvain Gagnon, planning officer for the Canadian military's Operational Mentor Liaison Team, which works directly with the Afghan police and army.

"A lot of them didn't get any money."

It's a problem that puts at risk the Canadian and other NATO forces who live and work side-by-side with the Afghan national security forces.

Cash salaries will soon be delivered directly to Afghan police throughout Kandahar province, Gagnon said. It's unclear yet who will make those deliveries – whether it will be NATO mentors or Afghan pay officers.

Denis Coderre doing his job

PUBLICATION: The Guardian (Charlottetown)

DATE: 2007.10.10

SECTION: Editorial

PAGE: A6

COLUMN: Letters to the editor

WORD COUNT: 156

Editor:

I find it extremely pitiful that the newly appointed minister of Defence, Peter MacKay, is accusing Liberal defence critic, Denis Coderre, of being in the wrong by going to visit the Canadian troops in Afghanistan.

With a slim lead in national polls lately, it seems apparent that the federal Tories are perhaps scared that the Canadian electorate will realize that the Liberals do indeed care about the troops in Afghanistan, and are against the fact that both the Opposition leader and the defence critic are showing an interest in visiting troops.

Minister MacKay claims that going there will only put the soldiers at more risk, but MacKay seems not to fret over the soldiers' safety when members of the Conservative caucus go over.

In all, the politicians are doing their jobs, especially the defence critic. Many lives have been lost thus far in the peacekeeping effort, and playing politics with the matter will only make matters worse.

Cory Stevenson,

Springton

Canada reminds Afghanistan not to execute captured insurgents

PUBLICATION: The Telegram (St. John's)

DATE: 2007.10.10

SECTION: National

PAGE: A9

SOURCE: The Canadian Press

BYLINE: Murray Brewster

DATELINE: Ottawa

WORD COUNT: 330

Canada's Foreign Affairs Department offered a muted response Tuesday to the execution of 15 prisoners in Afghanistan.

It refused to criticize the government of President Hamid Karzai, but noted that NATO–captured prisoners must be spared the death penalty and that human rights in general must be respected.

A Foreign Affairs spokesman read a prepared two–line statement after human rights groups criticized the silence coming out of Ottawa.

"Canada expects the government of Afghanistan to live up to its international human rights obligations," said Jamie Christoff.

"The arrangements the government of Canada has signed with the government of Afghanistan, concerning the treatment of detainees, stipulates that no Canadian transferred detainees may receive the death penalty."

The bland statement stands in contrast to the Dutch foreign ministry, which called the executions "extremely unwelcome."

Both Canada and the Netherlands oppose the death penalty.

A senior Conservative, who spoke off the record, suggested that the Harper government is reluctant to "interfere" in what is an internal matter for the Afghans.

Canadian military officials in Kandahar said the same thing.

The prisoners were tried under Afghan law, government officials said. But several organizations, including the United Nations, have expressed concern about the state of the war–torn country's justice system, which has been described as "a work in progress."

The lawyer for two human rights groups said the Conservative government's initial silence and then half–hearted response raises serious questions about its commitment to upholding Canada's opposition to the death penalty.

"This calls into question our involvement with the Afghan government generally," said Paul Champ, a lawyer for Amnesty International and the B.C. Civil Liberties Association.

"When it comes to the detainees Canada and other NATO countries are handing over, we have to be seriously concerned about whether the death penalty is going to be applied to those individuals," Champ said in an interview.

On Sunday, Afghanistan's chief of prisons announced that 15 prisoners had been executed, including the man responsible for the murders of three Western journalists and a local photographer in 2001.

It's the first time in three years the death penalty has been imposed in Afghanistan and likely won't be the last.

Karzai's government says it will continue to execute prisoners, but not those captured by NATO forces – a guarantee Champ says no one can rely on because detainees in Afghan jails routinely go missing.

Lawyers for Khadr file appeal to try to stop U.S. military case against him

PUBLICATION: The Telegram (St. John's)

DATE: 2007.10.10

SECTION: National/World

PAGE: A7

SOURCE: The Canadian Press

BYLINE: Beth Gorham

DATELINE: Washington

WORD COUNT: 105

Lawyers for Canadian terror suspect Omar Khadr have filed an appeal with the U.S. Court of Appeals to try to stop the legal case against him from proceeding.

Military lawyer Cmdr. William Kuebler says a special military appeals court was wrong last month when it said the case could go ahead in Guantanamo Bay.

At issue is the fact that Khadr hasn't been designated an illegal enemy combatant as required by Congress.

Kuebler also argues that the murder trial at the U.S. naval base in Cuba wouldn't allow him to raise key issues of international and constitutional law.

Khadr, now 21, was 15 years old when he allegedly threw a grenade that killed a U.S. medic in a 2002 firefight in Afghanistan.

Khadr's military commission is scheduled to resume Nov. 8.

Executions to continue

PUBLICATION: The Telegram (St. John's)

DATE: 2007.10.10

SECTION: National/World

PAGE: A7

ILLUSTRATION: The body of a prisoner is transported to his home for burial in Kabul, Afghanistan, Tuesday. Afghanistan will continue with executions of inmates on death row, despite international concern over the recent killing of 15 convicted prisoners by gunfire at the country's main prison, a presidential spokesman said Tuesday. – Photo by The Associated Press

Military mentors want to ensure police trainees get their salary

PUBLICATION: The Telegram (St. John's)

DATE: 2007.10.10

SECTION: National/World

PAGE: A7

SOURCE: The Canadian Press

BYLINE: Dene Moore

DATELINE: Kandahar, Afghanistan

WORD COUNT: 313

International forces training the Afghan National Police want to find ways to make sure their trainees get paid directly so that the notoriously corrupt bureaucracy wouldn't have the chance to skim money off their salaries.

Sporadic pay days for the Afghan officers, along with the skimming that takes place at just about every level of bureaucracy above them, means police have often gone months without pay and ended up with just a fraction of their already meagre salary.

Many turn to extorting locals in order to make ends meet.

"The big issue is that there was a lot of corruption among the ANP and (Afghan Nation Auxiliary Police), and that was mainly due to the fact that there were no controls over the pay," said Capt. Sylvain Gagnon, planning officer for the Canadian military's Operational Mentor Liaison Team, which works directly with the Afghan police and army.

"A lot of them didn't get any money."

It's a problem that puts at risk the Canadian and other NATO forces who live and work side-by-side with the Afghan national security forces.

Cash salaries will soon be delivered directly to Afghan police throughout Kandahar province, Gagnon said. It's unclear yet who will make those deliveries – whether it will be NATO mentors or Afghan pay officers.

The money will still come from international donations via the Afghan Interior Ministry, but it's hoped that putting the cash in hand will end the opportunity for corrupt officials to skim off the top.

"We'll have the control and we'll be able to pay them so they'll stop 'taxing' the local population," Gagnon said.

Pay will be handed out regularly, probably bimonthly.

It's one more step toward preparing the Afghan national security forces to take over security in their own country.

Six-member teams of Canadian military police and infantrymen recently began mentoring Afghan police around the clock at five police substations in the dangerous Zhari and Panjwahi districts of Kandahar province. U.S., Dutch and French forces are also involved in the mentoring program.

They have a massive task ahead of them. Resolving the pay issue may help but first they must figure out should even be on the payroll.

We're not heroes: Book details a friendship forged in war

DATE: 2007.10.09
KEYWORDS: BOOKS ENTERTAINMENT
PUBLICATION: cpw
WORD COUNT: 872

PHILADELPHIA _ After parachuting into Europe during the Second World War, battling along a strip of road called Hell's Highway in the Netherlands and surviving the freezing woods of Bastogne surrounded by German troops, William Guarnere and Edward Heffron do not consider themselves heroes.

Guarnere, 84, and Heffron, 84, are among the surviving members of the fabled Easy Company memorialized in the HBO miniseries ``Band of Brothers." To them, the real heroes are the men whose bodies stayed buried in that foreign soil and the mothers who sent their sons off to war, praying for a safe return.

It is so their sacrifices are not forgotten that Guarnere and Heffron have written ``Brothers in Battle: Best of Friends," recently published by the Berkley Publishing Group.

``Sitting there in the plane, you wonder why you're up there," says Heffron. ``You could be home, but then when you land there, and you go through these villages and you look at those people's faces ... now you know why we're here."

Heffron sits in Guarnere's Philadelphia house, surrounded by pictures of soldiers the two served with and mementos emblazoned with the Screaming Eagle of the 101st Airborne Division, of which they were part.

The book, with a foreword by actor Tom Hanks, one of the miniseries' producers, tells the story of how the two young men from South Philly became paratroopers, fought in some of the Second World War's major battles and survived to form a lifelong friendship.

And the book comes at just the right time, says Berkley's Natalee Rosenstein. ``It's a period of time when we're all looking for real heroes," she said.

Guarnere was one of the original members of Easy Company who dropped into Normandy ahead of D-Day in 1944, while Heffron, often called ``Babe," was one of the replacements who joined the unit later. Guarnere earned the nickname ``Wild Bill" because just before D-Day, he discovered that his brother had been killed in Italy and he became obsessed with getting back at the Germans.

Both authors take part in Operation Market Garden, a massive jump into the Netherlands designed to get Allied troops into northern Germany, and the winter Battle of the Bulge in which they were surrounded and outnumbered in a Belgian city called Bastogne but helped repel Hitler's final effort to push into Belgium.

Buried in foxholes as shells exploded above them, the men were dubbed ``The Battered Bastards of Bastogne."

It was at the Battle of the Bulge that Guarnere lost his leg saving a friend. Easy Company and Heffron went on to Germany, liberated a concentration camp at Landsberg and captured Hitler's mountain fortress, The Eagle's Nest.

The book began after the two were interviewed for a magazine article in 2001 when the miniseries aired. They hadn't talked to their families much about the war, but as some of the last remaining members of Easy Company _ Guarnere estimates about 23 are still alive _ they felt an obligation to tell their story.

The book is told through alternating voices, each man describing his childhood, the war and the years that followed.

Guarnere's voice has a raw, unvarnished ``tell it like it was," quality while Heffron's is an often-introspective look at the war and life. But neither is sanitized or rosy-eyed. Both speak plainly about killing German troops, the looting that sometimes occurred and the drinking and partying that went on after the war and when they were on leave.

But they said it was important to give as accurate a picture as they could about what they experienced, saying that they were simply trying to do their job the best they could and protect their friends.

``Once you start lying and trying to change things, it's no good," Guarnere says. ``You tell the truth, and that's it."

After the war, Heffron met up with Guarnere in South Philly; he found him on the street, playing craps. Since then, they've talked almost every day, see each other almost as often, travel together, finish each other's bad jokes or roll their eyes when they know a story they've heard before is coming.

When Guarnere had a heart attack this summer, Heffron was at his bedside daily, said Robyn Post, who collaborated on the book with the two men. ``It's one of the most profound friendships I've ever seen. They would lay down their lives for each other _ even today."

Both Heffron and Guarnere have nothing but praise for the 10-part HBO miniseries. Ever since, they have been swamped with requests for photos and speaking engagements. Letters from fans arrive daily, people drop off gifts of beer on their doorsteps and random strangers want to buy them drinks.

Since the war's end, Guarnere has organized yearly reunions for the men of Easy Company, and Heffron and Guarnere have travelled back to the places where they fought. They've also visited American soldiers in Germany and the United States who have been injured in Iraq or Afghanistan.

During one trip, Heffron recalls how Guarnere talked to a serviceman who had also lost his leg. ``This guy had his leg off. Bill said to him ..., 'Next time I see you, I want to see you dancing.'"

Both men constantly wonder how it was that they survived the war and went on to such long prosperous lives, and they say they are left with a sense of war's random luck and of the responsibility to remember the men who were not so lucky.

``They ain't never going to forgive you if you don't," says Heffron, pointing toward the sky.

Canada reminds Afghanistan not to execute captured insurgents

DATE: 2007.10.09
KEYWORDS: ADVISORIES
PUBLICATION: cpw
WORD COUNT: 802

Dozens arrested in downtown Montreal in connection with telemarketing scheme

MONTREAL _ Police swept down on a Montreal office building Tuesday and arrested dozens of people in connection with an international telemarketing scheme that targeted small business.

A steady stream of suspects was paraded out of the building over several hours into three waiting yellow school buses parked outside.

Many of those arrested hid their faces with coats and plastic bags that contained their wallets and personal papers.

The police operation, which involved the federal Competition Bureau and was spearheaded by the RCMP, ended with the arrest of 130 people in five locations.

Most of the arrests took place at the downtown Montreal building, but several private residences and a warehouse were also raided.

Those arrested face charges of fraud and could also be charged under the federal Competition Act, RCMP Cpl. Elaine Lavergne told reporters.

“The organization was targeting small- and medium-sized businesses, especially in Canada, but also in the United States and Europe,” she said.

Liberals sag in Quebec, new poll gives Tories seven-point national lead

OTTAWA _ Three weeks of internal Liberal cockfighting came home to roost Tuesday with a new poll suggesting the federal party trails the governing Conservatives by seven percentage points.

The Canadian Press Harris-Decima survey put support for Prime Minister Stephen Harper's governing Tories at 35 per cent _ still well short of majority government territory and below what the Conservatives earned on election day in 2006.

The Liberals, meanwhile slumped to 28 per cent nationally in the wake of three dispiriting byelection losses in Quebec last month.

And it is in Quebec where the Liberal sky is truly falling.

The poll of just more than 1,000 Canadians last Thursday through Sunday put national support for the NDP at 17 per cent, the Green party at 10 per cent and the Bloc Quebecois at eight per cent.

But in Quebec, the Liberals were mired among the NDP and Green also-rans.

Some 35 per cent of Quebecers backed the Bloc, followed by the Conservatives at 26 per cent. The Liberals trailed with 14 per cent, the Greens were at 12 and the New Democrats at 11.

The beleaguered Liberal leader said Tuesday that the dip was to be expected.

“It would have been surprising that three weeks of these kinds of difficulties would not have any affect on our approval ratings.”

Human rights groups urge Harper to lift secrecy veil at torture inquiry

OTTAWA _ Human rights groups are appealing directly to Stephen Harper to lift the secrecy shrouding a federal inquiry into the cases of three Arab-Canadians who say they were tortured abroad with the connivance of authorities at home.

“We are gravely concerned that this inquiry has, to date, been deeply unfair to the three men at the centre of its work, and lacking the transparency necessary to the public interest,” the groups said in a letter to the prime minister made public Tuesday.

“We urge you to take steps now to help ensure this process is opened up.”

At issue are complaints by Abdullah Almalki, Ahmad El Maati and Muayyed Nureddin, who maintain they were tortured in Syria _ and in the case of El Maati in Egypt as well _ after the RCMP and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service labelled them as terrorist suspects.

All deny any terrorist ties and believe the Mounties and CSIS tipped off foreign intelligence agencies about their travel plans in the Middle East and provided questions for their captors to ask.

Former Supreme Court justice Frank Iacobucci was named last December to investigate the affair, which strongly resembles the better-known case of Maher Arar, who was eventually cleared of suspicion and paid over \$10 million in compensation by Ottawa.

Unlike the Arar inquiry, however, the current investigation has been conducted almost entirely behind closed doors so far.

First Nation wants apology from mining CEO amid vitriol over Kemess rejection

VANCOUVER _ The chief of the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council is demanding an apology from the CEO of Northgate Minerals Corp. (TSX:NGX.WT) as relations between the mining and aboriginal communities become increasingly bitter following the rejection of a Northgate mine proposal in Northern B.C.

Chief David Luggi said since Ken Stowe made his comments at a Denver mining forum, an electronic message board for Northgate investors has been rampant with racist comments and a mining journal has used “extremely offensive language” about First Nations.

“It's not kind, it's unproductive, it's quite surprising,” Luggi said in response to what he sees as sarcasm and name-calling.

The anger comes after a government panel last month ruled against Northgate's Kemess copper and gold mine project in north-central British Columbia because of adverse environmental, social and cultural effects.

Two week later, Stowe told a Denver mining conference the Kemess project was rejected by an environmental review panel even though

OTTAWA _ Canada's Foreign Affairs Department offered a muted response Tuesday to the execution of 15 prisoners in Afghanistan.

It refused to criticize the government of President Hamid Karzai, but noted that NATO–captured prisoners must be spared the death penalty and that human rights in general must be respected.

A Foreign Affairs spokesman read a prepared two–line statement after human rights groups criticized the silence coming out of Ottawa.

“Canada expects the government of Afghanistan to live up to its international human rights obligations,” said Jamie Christoff.

“The arrangements the government of Canada has signed with the government of Afghanistan, concerning the treatment of detainees, stipulates that no Canadian transferred detainees may receive the death penalty.”

The bland statement stands in contrast to the Dutch foreign ministry, which called the executions “extremely unwelcome.”

Both Canada and the Netherlands oppose the death penalty. the project didn't have any identifiable environmental impacts.

“There's things in there that went on the panel like people talking about speaking to bears. So it's pretty hard to talk science,” he said at the Sept. 25 forum.

Military mentors want to ensure Afghan police trainees get their salary

DATE: 2007.10.09
KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL
PUBLICATION: cpw
WORD COUNT: 481

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan _ International forces training the Afghan National Police want to find ways to make sure their trainees get paid directly so that the notoriously corrupt bureaucracy wouldn't have the chance to skim money off their salaries.

Sporadic pay days for the Afghan officers, along with the skimming that takes place at just about every level of bureaucracy above them, means police have often gone months without pay and ended up with just a fraction of their already meagre salary.

Many turn to extorting locals in order to make ends meet.

“The big issue is that there was a lot of corruption among the ANP and (Afghan Nation Auxiliary Police), and that was mainly due to the fact that there were no controls over the pay,” said Capt. Sylvain Gagnon, planning officer for the Canadian military's Operational Mentor Liaison Team, which works directly with the Afghan police and army.

“A lot of them didn't get any money.”

It's a problem that puts at risk the Canadian and other NATO forces who live and work side-by-side with the Afghan national security forces.

Cash salaries will soon be delivered directly to Afghan police throughout Kandahar province, Gagnon said. It's unclear yet who will make those deliveries _ whether it will be NATO mentors or Afghan pay officers.

The money will still come from international donations via the Afghan Interior Ministry, but it's hoped that putting the cash in hand will end the opportunity for corrupt officials to skim off the top.

“We'll have the control and we'll be able to pay them so they'll stop `taxing' the local population,” Gagnon said.

Pay will be handed out regularly, probably bi-monthly.

It's one more step toward preparing the Afghan national security forces to take over security in their own country.

Six-member teams of Canadian military police and infantrymen recently began mentoring Afghan police around the clock at five police substations in the dangerous Zhari and Panjwaii districts of Kandahar province. U.S., Dutch and French forces are also involved in the mentoring program.

They have a massive task ahead of them. Resolving the pay issue may help but first they must figure out should even be on the payroll.

“What we've seen is, usually, for every district there's a third who are ANP, so fully trained; a third who are ANAP, with only a couple of weeks training; then a third who are just wearing the uniform,” said Maj. Eric Landry, chief planner for Canadian Forces operations in Afghanistan.

NATO forces are taking a census of Afghan police, taking fingerprints and retinal scans. Eventually, they'll hand out identification cards.

Afghan police are literally hunted by insurgents.

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

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

On paper, Afghan police earn an average of about \$77 a month. Afghan officials have promised a raise that to about \$150 a month but that has yet to happen.

In reality, they see much less.

“The problem is that sometimes police don't get paid,” Maj. Louis Lapointe, commander of the Police Operational Mentor Liaison Team, said in a recent interview.

“You have to understand that they've got a family to feed.”

Lawyers for Khadr file appeal to try to stop U.S. military case against him

DATE: 2007.10.09

KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE POLITICS

PUBLICATION: cpw

WORD COUNT: 106

WASHINGTON _ Lawyers for Canadian terror suspect Omar Khadr have filed an appeal with the U.S. Court of Appeals to try to stop the legal case against him from proceeding.

Military lawyer Cmdr. William Kuebler says a special military appeals court was wrong last month when it said the case could go ahead in Guantanamo Bay.

At issue is the fact that Khadr hasn't been designated an illegal enemy combatant as required by Congress.

Kuebler also argues that the murder trial at the U.S. naval base in Cuba wouldn't allow him to raise key issues of international and constitutional law.

Khadr, now 21, was 15 years old when he allegedly threw a grenade that killed a U.S. medic in a 2002 firefight in Afghanistan.

Khadr's military commission is scheduled to resume Nov. 8.

Canada reminds Afghanistan not to execute captured insurgents

DATE: 2007.10.09

KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE POLITICS SOCIAL

PUBLICATION: cpw

WORD COUNT: 553

OTTAWA _ Canada's Foreign Affairs Department offered a muted response Tuesday to the execution of 15 prisoners in Afghanistan.

It refused to criticize the government of President Hamid Karzai, but noted that NATO-captured prisoners must be spared the death penalty and that human rights in general must be respected.

A Foreign Affairs spokesman read a prepared two-line statement after human rights groups criticized the silence coming out of Ottawa.

"Canada expects the government of Afghanistan to live up to its international human rights obligations," said Jamie Christoff.

"The arrangements the government of Canada has signed with the government of Afghanistan, concerning the treatment of detainees, stipulates that no Canadian transferred detainees may receive the death penalty."

The bland statement stands in contrast to the Dutch foreign ministry, which called the executions "extremely unwelcome."

Both Canada and the Netherlands oppose the death penalty.

A senior Conservative, who spoke off the record, suggested that the Harper government is reluctant to "interfere" in what is an internal matter for the Afghans. Canadian military officials in Kandahar said the same thing.

The prisoners were tried under Afghan law, government officials said. But several organizations, including the United Nations, have expressed concern about the state of the war-torn country's justice system, which has been described as "a work in progress."

The lawyer for two human rights groups said the Conservative government's initial silence and then half-hearted response raises serious questions about its commitment to upholding Canada's opposition to the death penalty.

"This calls into question our involvement with the Afghan government generally," said Paul Champ, a lawyer for Amnesty International and the B.C. Civil Liberties Association.

"When it comes to the detainees Canada and other NATO countries are handing over, we have to be seriously concerned about whether the death penalty is going to be applied to those individuals."

On Sunday, Afghanistan's chief of prisons announced that 15 prisoners had been executed, including the man responsible for the murders of three Western journalists and a local photographer in 2001.

It's the first time in three years that the death penalty has been imposed in Afghanistan and likely won't be the last. Karzai's government says it will continue to execute prisoners, but not those captured by NATO forces _ a guarantee Champ says no one can rely on because detainees in Afghan jails routinely go missing.

``They can't rely on any of the assurances that the Afghan government provides," he said.

``It's not because the Afghan government is deceptive or dishonest. The simple fact of the matter is they do not have the capacity to ensure they are going to observe those promises."

The sentences were carried out as Canada's foreign affairs minister, Maxime Bernier, wrapped up a visit to Kandahar over the weekend.

In Kandahar, Liberal defence critic Denis Coderre said he's worried about the executions and wonders whether the Afghan justice system is fair and independent enough to allow such drastic punishment. He said it harks back to the days when the Taliban held public executions in soccer stadiums.

``I'm against capital punishment so I'm very, very concerned," he said. ``The Taliban were doing that. It's the same thing."

Both Amnesty and the civil liberties association have been fighting to halt the transfer to Afghan authorities of insurgents captured by Canadian troops. Both groups have warned that Afghanistan's spotty human rights record means that there is a likelihood that the prisoners could be abused or even killed.

Last spring, published reports said as many as three dozen Taliban fighters handed over to the Afghan prison system by Canadians had been abused. The revelation led Canada to sign a revised, tougher transfer agreement with the Karzai government.

INDEX:Defence, International, Politics

DATE: 2007.10.09

KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

PUBLICATION: bnw

WORD COUNT: 153

OTTAWA – The lawyer for Amnesty International and the B.C. Civil Liberties Association says the silence from Ottawa following Afghanistan's execution of 15 prisoners is troubling.

Paul Champ says it raises fresh and immediate concerns about the Conservative government's policy of handing over captured insurgents to Afghan authorities.

On Sunday, Afghanistan's chief of prisons announced it had executed 15 prisoners, including the man responsible for the murders of three Western journalists and a local photographer in 2001.

It is the first time in three years the Afghan government has imposed the death penalty and it prompted an immediate condemnation from the Dutch foreign ministry, which called the executions 'extremely unwelcome.'

The sentences were carried out as Canada's foreign affairs minister, Maxime Bernier, wrapped up a visit to Kandahar.

The government in Kabul says it will continue to execute prisoners, but not those captured by NATO forces – a guarantee Champ says no one can rely on because detainees in Afghan jails routinely go missing.

(The Canadian Press)

TOR OUT YYY

DATE: 2007.10.09
KEYWORDS: ADVISORIES
PUBLICATION: bnw
WORD COUNT: 317

Residents of Hay River, Northwest Territories are suggesting it took the R-C-M-P about an hour to respond to the shooting of one of their own.

One man tells The Globe and Mail he was monitoring his police scanner when he heard a Yellowknife dispatcher repeatedly hail Constable Christopher Worden for 45 minutes.

The Mountie — a married father of a baby girl — was gunned down early Saturday while answering a trouble call at a house.

His widow, Jodie Worden, says she's grateful to know the nation recognizes and appreciates the ultimate sacrifice her husband made.

Police continue to search for the shooting suspect — 23-year-old Emrah Bulatci of Alberta. (4)

(Elxns-Nfld/Ont)

It's a busy election week in this country.

Voters in Newfoundland and Labrador are heading to the polls today to elect a new provincial government.

It's widely expected Premier Danny Williams' Tories will score an easy victory.

And today marks the last full day of campaigning before tomorrow's Ontario election.

The latest poll by The Canadian Press/Harris-Decima suggests the Liberals have 42-per-cent of decided voter support, followed by the Tories at 31 per cent, the N-D-P at 17 and the Green Party at nine. (4)

(BC-Vcr-Civic-Strike)

Piles of garbage could grow even higher along Vancouver's streets, as striking unions enter a second day of voting today.

Leaders of two striking locals are recommending members vote against a mediator's recommendations aimed at ending the three-month-old labour dispute.

Three separate Vancouver city unions representing inside workers, outside workers and librarians have been on strike since July. (4)

(US-Plane-Crash)

Recovery efforts will resume once daylight comes at the crash site of a plane in Washington's Cascade mountains.

All 10 people who were on board the plane are presumed dead.

The wreckage was spotted last night, about 24 hours after the plane full of skydivers went missing while returning to Washington state from an event in Idaho.

Seven bodies have been found so far. (4)

(Afghan–Food–Bandits)

The Canadian government has announced another 25–(m) million dollars for emergency food supplies in Afghanistan.

Yesterday's aid news comes on the heels of a U–N official saying convoys carrying food donations to needy Afghans are increasingly under attack in the country's south.

Rick Corsino says more food donations have been lost in attacks in the past 12 months than in the previous three years. (4)

(Nobel–Physics)

A German and a Frenchman have won this year's Nobel Prize in physics.

Peter Gruenberg and Albert Fert discovered giant magnetoresistance _ technology that's used to read information from computer hard drives. (4)

(NewsWatch by Karen Rebot)

INDEX:Defence, International

DATE: 2007.10.09
KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL
PUBLICATION: bnw
WORD COUNT: 160

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan – International forces training the Afghan National Police want to make sure their trainees get paid.

Capt. Sylvain Gagnon of the Canadian military's Operational Mentor Liaison Team says a lot of the Afghan police officers don't get paid at all because of corruption.

Sporadic pay days and the skimming that takes place at just about every level of bureaucracy above them means police officers end up with just a fraction of their meagre salary or none at all.

Many turn to extorting locals to make ends meet, and this put at risk the international mentors who live and work with them.

To stem the unauthorized 'taxing' of local people, Gagnon says cash salaries will soon be delivered directly to Afghan police throughout Kandahar province. It's not clear yet who will make those deliveries – whether NATO mentors or Afghan pay officers.

But it's hoped that putting the cash in hand will end the opportunity for corrupt officials to skim off the top. The money will still come from international donations via the Afghan Interior Ministry.

(The Canadian Press)

INDEX:Defence, International, Justice, Politics

DATE: 2007.10.09

KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE POLITICS

PUBLICATION: bnw

WORD COUNT: 108

WASHINGTON – Lawyers for Canadian terror suspect Omar Khadr have filed an appeal with the U.S. Court of Appeals to try to stop the legal case against him from proceeding.

Military lawyer Cmdr. William Kuebler says a special military appeals court was wrong last month when it said the case could go ahead in Guantanamo Bay.

At issue is the fact that Khadr hasn't been designated an illegal enemy combatant as required by Congress.

Kuebler also argues that the murder trial at the U.S. naval base in Cuba wouldn't allow him to raise key issues of international and constitutional law.

Khadr, now 21, was 15 years old when he allegedly threw a grenade that killed a U.S. medic in a 2002 firefight in Afghanistan.

Khadr's military commission is scheduled to resume Nov. 8.

(The Canadian Press)

Afghan–Cda–Executions–Update (adds Foreign Affairs)

DATE: 2007.10.09

KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE POLITICS SOCIAL

PUBLICATION: bnw

WORD COUNT: 138

OTTAWA -- Canada's Foreign Affairs Department has offered a muted response to the execution of 15 prisoners in Afghanistan.

It refused to criticize the government of President Hamid Karzai, but notes NATO–captured prisoners must be spared the death penalty and that human rights in general must be respected.

A Foreign Affairs spokesman read a prepared two–line statement after human rights groups criticized the silence coming out of Ottawa.

Jamie Christoff says Canada expects Afghanistan to live up to its international human rights obligations.

He adds the arrangement Canada has signed with Afghanistan, concerning the treatment of detainees, stipulates no Canadian transferred detainees may receive the death penalty.

The bland statement stands in contrast to the Dutch foreign ministry, which called the executions “extremely unwelcome.”

Both Canada and the Netherlands oppose the death penalty.

The lawyer for two human rights groups says the Conservative government's initial silence and then half–hearted response raises serious questions about its commitment to upholding Canada's opposition to the death penalty.

(The Canadian Press)

Afghan-Cda-Food-Bandits

DATE: 2007.10.09

KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

PUBLICATION: bnw

WORD COUNT: 132

OTTAWA -- The federal government has announced another 25- (m) million dollars for emergency food supplies in Afghanistan.

Bev Oda, the minister responsible for international aid, says at Thanksgiving, Canadians are reminded of their responsibility to the people of Afghanistan.

Yesterday's announcement comes on the heels of a U-N official saying convoys carrying food donations are increasingly under attack in southern Afghanistan.

Rick Corsino, the local director of the United Nations World Food Programme, says more food donations have been lost in attacks in the past 12 months than in the previous three years.

Corsino estimates about one-thousand tonnes of wheat, beans, cooking oil and fortified biscuits have been waylaid or have vanished since January.

About 30 attacks on local Afghan trucks moving the food between volatile southern districts are blamed on insurgents who resent foreign intervention.

Sometimes bandits take and then sell donations meant to sustain the poorest families.

(The Canadian Press)

NMC

INDEX:Defence, International

DATE: 2007.10.09
KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL
PUBLICATION: bnw
WORD COUNT: 143

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan – International forces training the Afghan National Police will make sure their trainees get paid.

Capt. Sylvain Gagnon of the Canadian military's Operational Mentor Liaison Team says a lot of the Afghan police officers don't get paid at all because of corruption.

Sporadic pay days and the skimming that takes place at just about every level of bureaucracy above them means police officers end up with just a fraction of their meagre salary.

Many turn to extorting locals to make ends meet, and this put at risk the Canadian and international mentors who live and work with them.

To stem the unauthorized 'taxing' of local people, Gagnon says U.S. military mentors will soon be delivering cash salaries to Afghan police in Kandahar province.

The money will still come from the international donations to the Afghan Interior Ministry, but there will be no opportunity for corrupt officials to skim off the top. Pay will be handed out regularly.

(The Canadian Press)

INDEX:Defence, International, Politics

DATE: 2007.10.09
KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS
PUBLICATION: bnw
WORD COUNT: 110

MIRAN SHAH, Pakistan _ Pakistan's army says fighting between Islamic militants and its security forces near the Afghan border has killed as many as 250 people, including 45 soldiers, over four days.

They are the deadliest clashes in the country since Pakistan threw its support behind the U-S-led war on terror in 2001.

A resident of a village in the North Waziristan tribal region says more than 50 militants and civilians were killed today when a dozen bombs hit the village.

Elsewhere, a roadside bomb killed two soldiers.

Pakistan struck a ceasefire deal with militants in North Waziristan last year.

U-S officials criticized the pact, claiming it gave a safe haven for al-Qaida and provided a rear base for Taliban guerrillas fighting NATO troops in Afghanistan.

(The Associated Press)

mcw

U.S. court threatens Arar's bid for redress; Top justices refuse to hear similar case involving torture, CIA

IDNUMBER 200710100074
PUBLICATION: The Toronto Star
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Met
SECTION: World And Comment
PAGE: AA01
ILLUSTRATION: Khaled el-Masri says he was a victim of mistaken identity.;
BYLINE: Tim Harper
SOURCE: Toronto Star
COPYRIGHT: © 2007 Torstar Corporation
WORD COUNT: 698

The U.S. Supreme Court has refused to hear the appeal of a German man who says he was tortured as part of Washington's practice of "extraordinary rendition," a move that could derail Maher Arar's quest for justice in this country.

The court, without comment, denied the bid by 44-year-old Khaled el-Masri, essentially upholding the Bush administration's argument that "state secrets" would be endangered if the German man's lawsuit against the CIA was allowed to proceed.

It was the first time a case of rendition, often referred to as the out-sourcing of torture, has reached the country's highest court.

El-Masri has maintained he was a victim of mistaken identity when he was picked up by CIA agents in Macedonia on New Year's Eve 2003, then beaten, shackled, drugged and chained to the floor of a so-called "ghost flight" and sent to a "black site" prison in Afghanistan.

There he claimed he was tortured and abused for five months before being unceremoniously dumped on a hillside in Albania and told to find his own way home.

The White House has never acknowledged it rendered el-Masri, but his story has been documented in extensive media accounts, backed by European investigations and accepted by the government of German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

The only other rendition victim seeking redress in American courts is Canadian telecommunications engineer Maher Arar. Arar was shuttled to a Syrian prison, where he was tortured after being picked up by American authorities at New York's JFK Airport in 2002.

His U.S. lawyer said Arar's appeal of a lower court ruling would proceed in New York on Nov. 9 and pointed to differences in the two cases that could keep the Canadian's case alive.

Maria LaHood said in the el-Masri case, the government argued it cannot even reveal if the German was rendered.

But in the Arar case, the government has acknowledged the Canadian was removed to Syria, she said, but has argued it cannot reveal why.

Washington argues the reason Arar was sent to Syria is a "state secret," but LaHood said she will argue on appeal that the reasons are not relevant, only the rendition is at issue.

"This was a real disappointment that the court would not even hear the case and would just defer to the executive," she said.

"But we believe that these issues will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

"(Yesterday's) decision doesn't bode well for the judiciary's role in our government, but it does not necessarily have an impact on Maher's case."

The el-Masri case has strained German-U.S. relations and yesterday's decision could further fray ties.

"This will shatter all trust in the American justice system," el-Masri's German lawyer, Manfred Gnjidic, told The Associated Press.

Merkel has said U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice privately acknowledged the case of mistaken identity in the el-Masri case, an assertion Rice publicly denied.

German prosecutors have issued arrest warrants for 13 CIA agents involved in el-Masri's abduction.

He had sought \$75,000 in a suit naming former CIA director George Tenet. Arar's suit does not specify damages.

The American Civil Liberties Union, which took up the el-Masri case in the U. S., said the decision marked another sad day for Americans who care about the rule of law and the United States' reputation in the world.

A Massachusetts Democratic congressman who has introduced legislation to ban extraordinary rendition said the Bush administration uses the "state secrets" argument to mask improper behaviour.

"The Bush administration reflexively responds with the 'state secrets' defence whenever it is caught bending or simply ignoring the law," Ed Markey said.

"Sending detainees abroad to be tortured? State secret.

"Listening in on American citizen's phone calls? State secret."

White House spokesperson Dana Perino said she could not answer questions about whether el-Masri was abducted, mistreated, or mistaken for someone else, even though the case was no longer before the courts.

"This is a country that's facing unprecedented threats that we've not dealt with before, in terms of Al Qaeda and other terrorists," she said. "I believe the justice department is judicious in applying the State Secrets Act when it goes in front of the courts."

No U.S. court has challenged an administration's claim of state secrets in half a century, since it was first invoked to block a lawsuit by three widows seeking information on a B-29 bomber crash that killed their husbands.

Besides Arar and el-Masri, a third case before the U.S. courts pits five rendition victims against a Boeing

U.S. court threatens Arar's bid for redress; Top justices refuse to hear similar case involving torture, CIA

subsidiary, Jeppesen Dataplan Inc., for its alleged logistic support of so-called "ghost flights" that transported rendition victims to secret black site prisons.

El-Masri had embarked on an aggressive public campaign for justice until his arrest in May on suspicion of arson, an act his lawyer said was a result of his not receiving psychological counselling to deal with his Afghan ordeal.

Coderre heads to Afghanistan, mind tightly closed

IDNUMBER 200710100046
PUBLICATION: Times Colonist (Victoria)
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Comment
PAGE: A12
COLUMN: Iain Hunter
BYLINE: Iain Hunter
SOURCE: Times Colonist
WORD COUNT: 676

You've got to admire Denis Coderre's style. The Liberal MP and defence critic is in Afghanistan on what's described as a fact-finding mission.

But it doesn't extend beyond the barbed wire surrounding the Canadian military base at the Kandahar Airfield; it doesn't include talking to troops in the field or the Afghan people for whose freedom and security they're supposed to be fighting.

Coderre's presence is probably calculated to be as much of a morale-booster among the Canadian soldiers as the Tim Hortons outlet where he seems to have spent most of his time.

But as a fact-finding mission, this jaunt by the former Liberal cabinet minister who took part in the decision in 2002 to send the troops to fight there is a joke. For as Coderre says repeatedly, he's already made up his mind: Our troops should stop combat operations in Afghanistan in February 2009, when their commitment runs out. If anything, his resolve has been reinforced by hot chocolate and Timbits.

As far as I can see, Coderre, like Conservative Foreign Minister Maxime Bernier, who undertook an only slightly more wide-ranging mission in Afghanistan just hours earlier, is less interested in facts than votes.

But if he thinks he can win the support of troops in Kandahar by telling them to come home for dinner before the deadly game they're playing is over, he's sadly mistaken. Canadian soldiers have made up their minds, too: They know the battle's far from won, and they're eager to stay -- at least until other countries provide the fighting units needed.

"We are pretty clear about the notion of rotation," Coderre said on his Thanksgiving Day landing.

Well, not much was said about rotation when our troops were dispatched to take on the murderers and scumbags. And rotation only works when someone else is prepared to join the happy circle.

So far no cavalry is evident on the ridge riding to our relief.

Countries like Germany, France, Italy and Spain have declared caveats prohibiting their soldiers from deployment to the south of the country, where the fighting, and danger, are intense.

Some 1,700 Dutch troops are fighting practically shoulder to shoulder with the 2,500 Canadians in the south, but back in Holland, enthusiasm for leaving them there after their commitment ends in August 2008 is waning.

And when they've gone, if no other country steps in, the combat role will be left up to 7,000 British and 26,000 U.S. troops. Only 14,000 of the Americans are under the NATO umbrella.

The commander of NATO forces warns that the survival of this international organization is in jeopardy if members don't step up to fight.

The commander, who happens to be an American general at present, has about 50,000 Western forces in Afghanistan under him. There are also around 50,000 Afghan security forces and police units in various stages of readiness to take the field.

The U.S. Forces Counter-Insurgency Manual, the Daily Telegraph reports, estimates that a force of 400,000 to 600,000 troops is necessary to pacify a country like Afghanistan.

Mind you, that's probably the same manual upon which the Americans relied in marching into Iraq. And look where that got them.

There are bombs killing people still in Baghdad. The "surge" of American troops calculated to secure conditions for gradual withdrawal has had limited success in limited sectors.

The Brits, who have already abandoned Basra, are preparing to withdraw half their remaining troops in Iraq sometime next spring, and there's speculation in Westminster that some of them will end up in Afghanistan.

The Turkish government has given approval for a possible military invasion of northern Iraq to quell the separatist Kurdish uprising that has spilled over the border as a result of the American desire to impose freedom and democracy on that tumultuous part of the world.

It was the Americans, too, who drew NATO into Afghanistan and gave peace-weary Canadian politicians the battlefield of choice. And look where that got us.

The British commander in Helmand province says his troops have a "marathon mission" that will last decades. How does that compare to the Canadian mission next door, the mission that Coderre, viewing it from his Tim Hortons stool behind the barbed wire, thinks is practically over?

There are reports out of Ottawa that senior planners say Canada's military commitment, like its commitment to redevelop the country, is double what we can deliver.

Coderre was there when the commitments were made. He thinks they can be abandoned, unfilled, like a hole in a doughnut.

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Arar's lawyers remain upbeat despite reversal in similar case

IDNUMBER 200710100029
PUBLICATION: Times Colonist (Victoria)
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A9
ILLUSTRATION: Photo: Khaled Al-Masri: Case rejected;
DATELINE: NEW YORK
BYLINE: Steven Edwards
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 269

NEW YORK — Lawyers for Syrian-born Canadian Maher Arar say his bid to sue the U.S. government for secretly shipping him to Syria for torture is unaffected by a U.S. Supreme Court decision yesterday to reject another high-profile "extraordinary rendition" case.

In a statement, the lawyers outline differences between Arar's case and that of Khaled al-Masri, a Lebanese-born German citizen who has also seen lower courts cite national security concerns for refusing to consider his accusation the CIA kidnapped and tortured him.

"The [government's] state secrets assertion in [Arar's] case seeks to protect the reasons U.S. officials sent him to Syria instead of Canada, not whether they were even involved in his rendition, as in Mr. al-Masri's case," says the statement from the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York.

The difference is significant, says the centre's executive director Vincent Warren, because its lawyers don't believe they need to know why the U.S. government deported Arar to Syria in order to win the case — only that they did so.

U.S. officials arrested Arar in 2002 as he returned to his Ottawa home via New York's John F. Kennedy Airport, claiming he had links to al-Qaeda based on information provided by the RCMP. They later deported him to Syria.

The Canadian government has agreed to pay Arar and his family \$11.5 million in compensation.

But in the U.S., a federal trial court judge threw out Arar's lawsuit claiming U.S. compensation in February 2006, on grounds that going ahead could damage national security. His lawyers seek to have the ruling overturned in an appeal scheduled for Nov. 9 in New York.

Al-Masri says the CIA abducted him in Macedonia in 2003 and flew him to Afghanistan.

Afghan aid dependent on military support: general

IDNUMBER 200710100007
PUBLICATION: Times Colonist (Victoria)
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A3
COLUMN: Report From Afghanistan
BYLINE: Rob Shaw
SOURCE: Times Colonist
WORD COUNT: 559

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — Canadian troops are fighting smaller groups of insurgents now than they did last year, but the security situation remains too unstable in southern Afghanistan to allow development and aid officials to work without military protection, says the Canadian general in charge in Afghanistan.

"It depends on where you are," said Brig.-Gen. Guy Laroche, commander of Task Force Afghanistan, explaining that the areas around the country's capital city, Kabul, are really the only spots aid workers could venture without security.

"In the southern regions of Afghanistan [where Canadian troops are based], that's not the case at this time. We hope to get there," he said.

"But in the Zharey/Panjwai [districts], where we are presently conducting operations, it would not be possible to do any development without having security forces down there."

Canada has approximately 2,500 troops in Afghanistan, most of them based at Kandahar Airfield. They now typically fight small groups of insurgents, about 10 to 20 people, whereas last year they often faced groups of 300 or more, Laroche said in an interview.

The smaller number of insurgents, plus a better-trained Afghan national army and police force, mean the Canadian troops should make more progress this year over last in securing territory from insurgents.

Yet, Canadian troops and convoys are still the target of roadside bombs and suicide attacks — strikes that require only a handful of insurgents to organize.

And some non-governmental organizations report having workers threatened by the Taliban for co-operating with Canadian aid workers and the coalition-backed Afghanistan government.

"In one province, we suspended our work five months ago," said Fazila Banu Lily, program manager for Humanitarian Aid for Women in Afghanistan, which uses Canadian funding to provide food, micro loans and training for widows. Eleven of her staff were told that if they didn't stop supporting the government and foreign troops they would be killed, she said.

In Kabul, where her office is located, there have been three major suicide bombings in the past week.

The attacks are a stark warning that, six years after the launch of the U.S.-led mission against the Taliban after the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks, Afghanistan isn't a stable country.

In Canada, debate rages in the House of Commons about whether the government should extend the Forces' combat mission in Afghanistan beyond early 2009, and whether the focus should be more on aid and development.

But Laroche argued that the military presence and development are, right now, interdependent.

"If people think by pulling back all ISAF [International Security and Assistance Force, which Canada is a part of] out of Afghanistan we would be able to do development, that's not the case at all."

Most of Canada's aid in southern Afghanistan funnels through the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Kandahar, where the different branches of government and military say they work closely together on projects such as building schools and police stations.

The PRT is also constructing four bridges, a mountain pass and two dams in the northern part of the province, as well as helping to train Afghan police.

But the reconstruction team of foreign officials and aid workers also has its own battle group for protection.

Those soldiers are absolutely necessary for safety, said Capt. Bruno Talbot, project manager for the civilian military co-operation unit.

"They create the sandbox," he said, describing the relationship between military soldiers and aid workers. "After that, we play inside."

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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.

Stories and photos from his trip appear in the paper and at:

www.timescolonist.com.

Afghan mission more important than photo-ops

IDNUMBER 200710100035
PUBLICATION: The StarPhoenix (Saskatoon)
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Forum
PAGE: A10
SOURCE: The StarPhoenix
WORD COUNT: 744

Between a government that's treating the war in Afghanistan as its own political tool and the antics of Liberal defence critic Denis Coderre who arrived in Kandahar on a "fact finding" trip with his mind firmly made up, Canadians have good reason to be disgusted.

In all, 71 young Canadian soldiers and a diplomat have died in Afghanistan and another 2,500 put their lives at risk almost every day in a war they joined at the behest of the former Liberal government and continue under Stephen Harper's Conservative administration.

So, if a Liberal parliamentarian such as Coderre, with a critic's responsibility to his party, the House and all Canadians, wants to gain a first-hand look at military operations being conducted by this country's soldiers, it is incumbent upon the government to facilitate his travel. That's especially the case when its own cabinet ministers are travelling to the theatre and the incremental cost of including another MP is a fraction of what it would cost for members to travel on their own.

However, with the policy discussion of this country's participation in Afghanistan long having degenerated into cheap political theatrics and photo-ops, Canadians can't expect anything substantive, especially with a federal election in the wind.

Prime Minister Harper's take on Canada's military role in Afghanistan has been murky, to say the least, with Foreign Minister Maxime Bernier's weekend pronouncements in Kandahar coming across as if the government is setting the stage to declare a win and move on, even in the face of all evidence to the contrary.

Bernier's claims that security in Kandahar has improved flies in the face of assessments from many other quarters including fellow NATO members.

And as to how far thing need to go before a functional security apparatus is in place in the province, it's evident from reports that the Canadian military has had to take on the job itself of directly paying in cash Afghan police officers. Their pay was being so badly skimmed off by various government operatives before it reached them that many cops were resorting to thievery to sustain themselves and their families.

In such an environment, Bernier's claims of improved security are just so much hogwash, as are Coderre's pronouncements on Canada being able to quit its current role in 2009 with its head held high, having delivered on its NATO commitment.

Coderre's claim that "We are not abandoning the Afghan people," is the kind of happy talk that might allow the Liberals to pander to a Canadian body politic that's deluded itself about the nature of peacekeeping and the ability to deliver reconstruction and aid in an area where constant attacks by insurgents render it impossible.

If, as Coderre says, nothing he hears from the troops during his trip will make him change his mind from the Liberal party's position that Canada should pull out in 2009 and leave it to NATO fill the void, then why is he even in Kandahar, other than as a pre-election political stunt?

Coderre suggests that part of his job was to lay the groundwork for an eventual visit to the area by Liberal Leader Stephane Dion. But if Dion shows up with the same closed-minded attitude as did his defence critic — something the leader suggested at a press conference Tuesday was precisely his intention — exactly what is the value of wasting money trips that only add to global warming and serve to demoralize soldiers who are risking their lives on a mission they believe is serving the needs of Afghans?

Whether President Hamid Karzai's recent overtures to the Taliban on negotiations to form a coalition government is prompted by his assessment that NATO's backbone to carry through on its commitment is weakening or if he thinks the war against the insurgents is unwinnable, the events that are transpiring in Afghanistan need some talk from Canada's leaders and a realistic assessment as to where this country stands.

Instead, what we — and the rest of the world — get is empty posturing and crassly self-serving rhetoric from political leaders who seem to have no shame about using Canadian soldiers as pawns and photo-ops while paying lip service to the ideals of internationalism.

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"Democracy cannot be maintained without its foundation: free public opinion and free discussion throughout the nation of all matters affecting the state within the limits set by the criminal code and the common law."

—The Supreme Court of Canada, 1938

Arar's U.S. suit not affected, lawyers say

IDNUMBER 200710100035
PUBLICATION: Vancouver Sun
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
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PAGE: A15
KEYWORDS: INQUIRIES; DEPORTATION; CANADA
DATELINE: NEW YORK
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 321

NEW YORK — Lawyers for Syrian-born Canadian Maher Arar say his bid to sue the U.S. government for secretly shipping him to Syria for torture is unaffected by a U.S. Supreme Court decision Tuesday to reject another high-profile "extraordinary rendition" case.

Their statement outlines differences between Arar's case and that of Khaled al-Masri, a Lebanese-born German citizen who has also seen lower courts cite national security concerns for refusing to consider his accusation the CIA kidnapped and tortured him.

"The (government's) state secrets assertion in (Arar's) case seeks to protect the reasons U.S. officials sent him to Syria instead of Canada, not whether they were even involved in his rendition, as in Mr. al-Masri's case," says the statement from the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York.

Its executive director Vincent Warren says lawyers don't believe they need to know why the U.S. government deported Arar to Syria to win the case — only that they did so. On the deportation, Warren says, exposing new government secrets is unnecessary because the long-running Canadian judicial inquiry into Arar's case exposed a "significant amount" of what had been secret about the U.S. involvement in his deportation.

Al-Masri says the CIA abducted him in Macedonia in 2003 and flew him to Afghanistan for interrogation.

The Supreme Court decision in his appeal means a lower court's ruling that his case can't be heard on national security grounds will stand.

"More than any government in our history, (the administration of George W. Bush) has hidden behind the state secrets privilege to avoid being held accountable for breaking the law," Warren said. "Khaled al-Masri has been denied justice. Soon we will see if this truly is a country that sends innocent men to be tortured and then sweeps its mess under the carpet, or whether we will at least grant Maher Arar some small measure of justice for what he endured."

Save us from instant experts

IDNUMBER 200710100059
PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Citizen
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A14
COLUMN: Susan Riley
BYLINE: Susan Riley
SOURCE: The Ottawa Citizen
WORD COUNT: 844

It didn't take Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier and the minister responsible for CIDA, Bev Oda, long to get the goods on Afghanistan: in less than 36 hours, on their first visit, barely settled into their new jobs, they confidently declared that security is improving in troubled Kandahar province where Canadian troops are doing daily battle with the Taliban.

In fact, their comments were so eerily familiar, you would swear they were scripted before the duo even left Ottawa. Or maybe these two are exceptionally quick studies: what with back-to-back photo ops, distributing Joe Louis cakes to Quebec-based troops and trying to keep one jump ahead of Liberal MP Denis Coderre, it is a wonder they found time to question actual Afghans, meet aid workers, or do any independent research at all.

Not that independent research, and its dangerous corollary, independent thinking, is necessary, or even desirable. There is only one approved message on Canada's participation in this war and everyone from Prime Minister Stephen Harper to the lowliest media relations officer at DND adheres to it scrupulously: we are winning the battle for hearts and minds, the Taliban are retreating and Afghans will, eventually — not by 2009, but some unspecified time after — be able to take care of their own security.

This unvarying narrative doesn't leave much room for questions, or conflicting evidence. A recent United Nations report, for instance, says Kandahar is less secure now than it was a year ago. Trucking food into southern villages is becoming increasingly difficult, according to a World Food Program official in Kandahar. Anyone who follows the news will be aware of the constant danger to our troops from buried roadside bombs. For Oda, this is a sign of progress: the Taliban are no longer strong enough to confront NATO in battle, so are resorting, in desperation, to terrorist tactics — which, the neophyte military tactician failed to add, are just as deadly.

There is also our moral obligation to "the poor people of Kandahar," as Harper put it last week, and to families of soldiers who have died. "We took that responsibility as a country. I think we should see that responsibility through to the best of our ability. We think we have a moral obligation there. It's not a matter of just playing to the polls."

How we discharge that moral responsibility, however, should be open to searching debate, given the stakes. But, as author Rory Stewart, who runs a development project in Kabul, wrote recently: "By emphasizing moral necessity, politicians can justify almost any risk, uncertainty or sacrifice and make compromise seem cowardly and criticism treasonous."

Unlike Bernier and Oda, Stewart has strayed beyond the safe confines of military bases. In 2002, the young Scottish diplomat walked across Afghanistan and neighbouring countries which inspired a revealing inside look at Afghan culture called *The Places Between*. He also worked as a British diplomat in Iraq before returning to Kabul to launch a project aimed at cleaning up and restoring the historic centre of the city and reviving exports in Afghan crafts and ceramics.

In Ottawa last week, Stewart lamented the "strange, dishonest rhetoric" that overstates progress in Afghanistan and creates unrealistic expectations. In his view, there is scant hope for reconstruction in the south because local Pashtun leaders are historically anti-state, and suspicious of outsiders and non-Muslims. "These are societies that do not fit at all comfortably into the modern western notion of the nation state."

He doesn't advocate either withdrawing, or augmenting, NATO forces in the south, but rather continuing to try to contain the Taliban "from running tanks up the streets of Kabul." But the focus of rebuilding should be in the northern, settled parts of the country where foreign assistance is welcome. Signs of tangible progress could bolster the fragile regime of Hamid Karzai, whose government's problem is not endemic corruption, says Stewart, so much as a "failure to deliver."

He urges the international community, including Canada, to "chose a handful of projects they can do well --- they might be relatively limited in scope but they should be symbolic, visible and rapid." Road-building, fixing sewers, helping establish a reliable banking system, providing clean water: the focus should be on "unfashionable" infrastructure projects that make measurable improvements in the daily lives of Afghans.

Too many development projects, in his view, "are absolutely bizarre." Attempts to refashion Afghanistan's justice system (mass executions, anyone?), promote gender sensitivity, encourage human rights, or teach trauma counselling, while well-intentioned, are often seen by Afghans as "culturally insensitive."

Will the instant experts selling our Afghan mission listen to these uncomfortable truths? Or will they continue to talk to us as if we are children, too?

Susan Riley writes Wednesday, Friday and Monday. She can be reached at sriley@thecitizen.canwest.com

Pakistani jets pound militant outpost; Fighting reaches six-year peak

IDNUMBER 200710100041

PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Citizen

DATE: 2007.10.10

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: A11

ILLUSTRATION: Colour Photo: AFP/Getty Images / A Pakistani child is comforted by a relative at a hospital in Bannu yesterday, after he was brought there from the tribal district of North Waziristan, in Pakistan's insurgency-hit tribal belt bordering Afghanistan, where recent clashes between security forces and militants have left at least 250 dead. ;

DATELINE: MIRANSHAH, Pakistan

SOURCE: Agence France-Presse

WORD COUNT: 238

MIRANSHAH, Pakistan – Pakistani jets pounded militant hideouts in a troubled tribal region yesterday, taking the death toll to 250 from three of the heaviest days of fighting in the region since 2001.

The clashes have forced thousands to flee Mir Ali, a town in lawless North Waziristan district that President Pervez Musharraf has previously pinpointed as a den of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda network.

Residents said dozens of people, including women and children, were killed in the latest airstrikes in the rugged region bordering Afghanistan, but security officials insisted the dead were all Islamist fighters.

The unrest puts extra pressure on military ruler Gen. Musharraf — a key ally in the U.S.-led "war on terror" — as he waits for the Supreme Court to legitimize his victory in Saturday's presidential election.

Chief military spokesman Maj.-Gen. Waheed Arshad said at least 150 militants and 45 soldiers had been killed in battles that first erupted on Sunday after pro-Taliban rebels ambushed an army convoy. But residents said about a dozen bombs dropped by two fighter jets exploded in the main bazaar in Khedar Khel, a village near Mir Ali, destroying several houses.

Most of the 50,000 inhabitants of Mir Ali had fled after more than 50 houses were damaged and the army placed the town under virtual curfew, residents said. Desperate citizens used mosque loudspeakers to beg the military not to fire at their homes, tribal elder Malik Iqbal Khan said.

National. Khadr appeals facing U.S. tribunal

IDNUMBER 200710100029
PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Citizen
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Early
SECTION: News
PAGE: A7
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 172

Omar Khadr, the sole Canadian held in the Guantanamo "war on terror" prison in Cuba, has appealed to a U.S. federal court to avoid facing a military tribunal, his lawyers said yesterday. Mr. Khadr was 15 when he was captured in Afghanistan in 2002 and held on suspicion of belonging to the al-Qaeda terror network. He is charged with killing a U.S. soldier with a grenade when he was being arrested. Mr. Khadr's attorneys say he is a child soldier and illegally imprisoned. In June, the military judge handling the case, Col. Peter Brownback, dismissed all charges against Mr. Khadr on grounds that his designation as an "enemy combatant" did not meet the standard required for trial by military commission. But a military review court rejected the ruling on Oct. 2, and Col. Brownback has scheduled a new hearing on the Khadr case on Nov. 8.

Van Doos count on French for air support; Jets have helped Canadians 'many times'

IDNUMBER 200710100021
PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Citizen
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A6
DATELINE: KANDAHAR AIRFIELD,
Afghanistan
BYLINE: Matthew Fisher
SOURCE: The Ottawa Citizen
WORD COUNT: 344

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – As recently as four days ago, French fighter jets scrambled in response to a call for close air support from troops from the Quebec-based Royal 22nd Regiment fighting insurgents.

While details of that mission remain secret, it was not the first time France has come to the aid of Canadian ground troops fighting in Kandahar.

"I've helped the Canadians many times," said Lt.- Col. Fabien Mandon, commander of the Kandahar Air Expeditionary Group as he stood in front of one of the first three French Mirage 2000 jets to be based here. "But the nationality is not important. We will do this for everybody here."

The French air presence at Kandahar is less than two weeks old. Before that, the Mirages flew missions over Afghanistan from a base in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. But getting to the main battlefields in southern and eastern Afghanistan took more than an hour and required three refuellings from tanker aircraft. Being based in the heart of the war zone means pilots can get their jets over troops in distress in 15 minutes or less.

"I prefer to be here. This really puts us in the fight," Lt.- Col. Mandon said. "Even if pilots were well aware of what was going on in the operational area, we were too far away. Now we are in the middle of the rockets that fall on this base and we can understand better what is happening."

One of the best things about being in Kandahar was being able to speak with soldiers of the Royal 22nd Regiment, the Van Doos, even if the accents of the Quebec-based troops were sometimes difficult to understand, Lt.- Col. Mandon said.

"We met a Canadian here last week who spoke French who had been on the ground during one of our combat missions," he said.

"Such meetings are a real advantage of being here because we can improve our tactics. We can understand why they must do things we don't like and they can understand why we do things they don't like.

"We learned what the Canadians face on the ground. It is not just about us. They use artillery, too.

"It helps us better understand the fight."

The six French Mirage 2000s to be based at Kandahar are in addition to fighters from Britain and the Netherlands.

Two Canadian soldiers face jail for alleged 'gay bashing' in Amsterdam; Troops were on leave from Afghan mission

IDNUMBER 200710100004
PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Citizen
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A1 / FRONT
SOURCE: The Ottawa Citizen
WORD COUNT: 197

Two Canadian soldiers charged in what Dutch media are describing as a "gay-bashing" are expected to be sentenced in the next several weeks.

The two soldiers, on leave from the mission in Afghanistan, were arrested May 26 by Dutch police after an incident in Amsterdam, a Canadian Defence Department official confirmed.

The men were originally charged with attempted manslaughter, attempted criminal negligence causing bodily harm and public violence, but there have been ongoing discussions to reduce those charges.

The charges were laid under the Dutch criminal code.

The Dutch charges do not have an equivalent in the Canadian legal system, military officials said.

The Dutch news media reported that the two men were involved in beating up a gay man and prosecutors are asking for an eight-month sentence for one of the soldiers, who is 22 years old.

A second soldier, also 22, should be sentenced to six weeks in jail, according to prosecutors.

The men were given bail in July, but are required to stay in the Netherlands, said Canadian Defence Department official Jillian Van Acker.

The men spent at least 60 days in a Dutch jail.

Ms. Van Acker said the two soldiers have been assigned to a Canadian Forces installation in the Netherlands until their legal situation has been resolved.

Military officials are not releasing the names of the men, citing Canadian privacy regulations.

Ms. Van Acker said that at this point, the two are paying their own legal expenses. "They were provided with Dutch lawyers and have been receiving assistance from Dutch and Canadian authorities," she added.

Canucks make a difference While things in Afghanistan are far from perfect, there are signs of life returning

SOURCETAG: 0710100536

PUBLICATION: The Toronto Sun

DATE: 2007.10.10

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 34

ILLUSTRATION: photo by Michael Den Tandt, Sun Media Students at Mazara School, on the outskirts of Kabul, mug for the camera as soldiers of the Canadian Provincial Reconstruction Team visit. The team's engineers designed and supervised the construction of a security wall around the school. The \$24,000 tab was picked up by the Canadian government.

BYLINE: MICHAEL DEN TANDT

DATELINE: KANDAHAR CITY

WORD COUNT: 757

If Canada's mission to Afghanistan succeeds, it will be because of this place. And if Canadians knew a little more about what goes on here, the tenor of the Afghan debate in Ottawa might be quite different.

This one-hectare, white-washed compound — a former tomato-canning plant turned Soviet base, turned Taliban base, turned American base and finally turned Canadian base — is where a small team of Canadian soldiers came in July 2005 to help the Afghans begin to rebuild their country.

The conditions they met were worse than appalling: Grinding poverty, 80% illiteracy, rampant disease, a filthy, primitive hospital, schools regularly burned by the Taliban in the night.

The Islamist insurgency was then just gearing up, and Canadian troops began sustaining the first serious injuries and casualties from suicide attacks and roadside bombs. Still, the numbers were small. At that time, few people back home seemed to notice.

All that changed on Jan. 15, 2006, when senior diplomat Glyn Berry was killed by a suicide blast. The same attack, which occurred just a few hundred metres from the Canadian Provincial Reconstruction Team's main gate, cost Master Cpl. Paul Franklin his legs and injured two other soldiers (both of whom have since recovered). Suddenly, Canadians, and the Canadian media, were focused on the mission.

I arrived here about a week after the bombing. The PRT's soldiers and a handful of civilians from other government departments, such as the RCMP and the Canadian International Development Agency, were still in shock. Nevertheless, their work went on just as before. If anything, they worked with greater determination.

Each day, convoys of armoured Mercedes jeeps left the PRT's razor-wired front gate and made their way through the city to various projects: An orphanage, a school, a new police station on the outskirts of town. By night, convoys raced up the road to the Kandahar Airfield, avoiding the increasingly treacherous warrens of the downtown whenever possible.

BOMBINGS ROUTINE

Canucks make a difference While things in Afghanistan are far from perfect, there are signs of life returning

Bombings in the city were routine. There was gunfire nearly every night. Foot patrols, which until then had been carried out regularly, slowed to a trickle, then stopped. The Canadians' jeeps were replaced by heavily armoured LAV III troop carriers.

During the month or so that I was here in 2006, I met and interviewed as many Afghans as I could, given the constraints on travel outside the wire. What I learned was frightening: A minister of education terrified by death threats and a grenade left hanging from his office door; medical clinics burned to the ground.

The agriculture minister complained that local farmers were starving, because western aid had failed to reach the intended recipients.

The police seemed utterly incapable of defending themselves. They went out in groups, hanging off the backs of pickup trucks, and were blown up. The main guard post of Kandahar's police station was struck by a motorcycle-borne suicide bomber, killing 13 Afghans.

I saw the injured and the dying as they lay in an unsanitary ward at Kandahar City's Mirwais hospital.

Their bodies were burned black. There were no nurses on the ward, no doctors — only grieving family members.

By the time I left Kandahar, I was deeply skeptical about whether any kind of progress could ever take place here, given the virulence of the insurgents' hatred for any kind of progress.

And yet, it seems to me that there has been progress in the face of extraordinary odds.

Certainly, the insurgency is still raging. A week ago, Kandahar Airfield sustained two rocket attacks.

In the past two months, the PRT itself has been targeted three times by insurgents firing rocket-propelled grenades. Travel through the city and throughout the province is still very dangerous. Every foray by western troops outside the perimeters of their armed camps is treated, tactically, as a mission into enemy territory.

WORK GOES ON

But in spite of that, development work goes doggedly on. In early 2006, there were two RCMP officers here helping train the Afghan National Police. There are now 11. Over the past year, three police stations have been built in the city, each costing between \$200,000 and \$400,000. Two more are in construction. All have been designed and planned by Canadian army engineers, but built by local contractors, as a means of stimulating the local economy. Thirteen mobile police checkpoints have been built within the last eight months.

The PRT's civilian-military co-operation unit, better known as CIMIC, has 200 projects in various stages of completion, ranging from small village wells, to bridges, to police stations. The Afghan National Army, which Canadians are helping train, is growing in strength and competence. And the woeful under-training of the Afghan National Police is finally being seriously addressed.

This is not to deny that the province, and the country, are still beset by enormous problems. Mirwais hospital is still hopelessly inadequate. The country is still covered in Soviet-era mines. Tribal infighting and corruption are rampant. Poppy cultivation is exploding.

But, there are signs of life returning. And all that is happening largely thanks to this extremely stubborn PRT.

KEYWORDS=WORLD

Canucks make a difference While things in Afghanistan are far from perfect, there are signs of life ~~66~~turning

PM takes aim at Liberal leader

SOURCETAG 0710100527

PUBLICATION: The Toronto Sun

DATE: 2007.10.10

EDITION: Final

SECTION: Editorial/Opinion

PAGE: 20

ILLUSTRATION: file photo Prime Minister Stephen Harper is clear that he won't allow Liberal Leader Stephane Dion to obstruct his government's priorities.

BYLINE: LICIA CORBELLA

WORD COUNT: 856

With three turkey dinners under his belt and a positive new countrywide poll that has him seven points higher than the Liberals, Prime Minister Stephen Harper says he's not prepared to play chicken with Liberal Leader Stephane Dion, when it comes to a possible election.

Instead, he plans on driving his "reasonable" agenda straight down the road of his mandate and it will be up to Dion to take it or leave it.

"We're all waiting with bated breath to hear what Mr. Dion is going to say today," said a smiling Harper, prior to Dion coming out of one week of hiding to respond to Harper's "fish or cut bait" ultimatum with reference to the government's Oct. 16 throne speech.

Harper didn't have to wait long. Shortly after the PM's exclusive interview with Sun Media, Dion emerged after a minor shadow cabinet shuffle to, not surprisingly, tell awaiting Ottawa media he doesn't want a fall election either, but he will be ready to vote against the throne speech if it is not "reasonable."

"We have not been obstructionist and we do not intend to be," Dion told reporters. "We will assess very carefully how well (the speech) addresses what Canada needs."

Harper reiterated his position again on a swing through Calgary, where he celebrated Thanksgiving with his extended family before meeting with business leaders at the Petroleum Club in this city's downtown.

Last week and again yesterday, Harper vowed that he will consider not only the throne speech as a matter of confidence that could bring down the government, but any major plank of legislation flowing from it, which could lead to the government falling at any time.

"I still think the best thing for the government and this country in the long term is to keep governing and to keep getting done the things we promised Canadians we would do in the last election, but if Mr. Dion forces an election we will be ready for him."

Harper said the speech will lay out his government's intentions — including broad-based tax cuts, key economic mechanisms to protect Canada's manufacturing, tourism and forestry sectors hit hard by a soaring Canadian loonie and an eased wording of the government's position on Afghanistan, which just might give Dion enough wiggle room to stay away from forcing an election.

"In terms of Afghanistan, the throne speech will be clear on where we're going," said Harper. "We have been shifting our emphasis in the past year on training Afghanistan security forces. My view is we should leave

when we can safely turn over security to the Afghans. I don't think that will be in February 2009, but I understand that the public wants it to be on some kind of realistic time frame.

"I don't think the goal realistically can be to quote 'defeat the insurgency' because that's a country that's likely to have some level of insurgency for some time," admitted the PM.

Since Dion has repeatedly threatened that he does not support the "current" focus of the Canadian mission, it's possible he can say he supports the "shift" in focus.

Then again, Dion has been all over the map when it comes to where he stands on the Afghan mission. And the Harper government is prepared to show electors just how big a waffler Dion is on most issues.

As the Tory election machine prepares for potential battle, they have pulled together Dion's contradictory positions on the war in Afghanistan that covers two pages single spaced as well as a host of other quotes that show him flipping and flopping all over the place.

For instance, in 2005 Dion voted in favour of the Kandahar mission. In March 2006, Dion told a Canadian Press reporter: "It's a very important mission and we want to be there."

Two months later, Dion voted against extending the mission in Kandahar, a mission his Liberal government committed Canada to when he was in cabinet.

"Before we have a debate in Parliament," said Harper, "we're going to present a range of possible options, but I think in the end all of them should make sure when we leave we do not leave chaos, we do not embarrass our international reputation and we do not dishonour the men and women of the Canadian Forces who have sacrificed so much on behalf of our country to advance security in that part of the world."

But Harper is clear. He will not allow Dion to obstruct his government from getting its mandate implemented.

"Since Mr. Dion took leadership it's apparent to me his inclination is to oppose us no matter what our position is.

"Mr. Dion said in August he would likely vote against a speech from the throne and he said this BEFORE I had announced there would even be a speech from the throne. He said two weeks before the budget he would vote against it, even though he didn't know what would be in the budget," said Harper, referring to his government's last budget which many conservative pundits criticized as being too liberal.

"So, the ball is entirely in their (the Liberals) court. I've said repeatedly that I think the public wants us to govern and they want the minority Parliament to get on and do what we were elected to do."

CALL TO WILLIAMS

Harper also said he planned to call Newfoundland Premier Danny Williams last night to congratulate him on what was expected to be a resounding electoral victory.

"I still think notwithstanding the differences he and I have had, he is the best choice for Newfoundlanders, so I wish him well," said Harper, despite the fact Williams has urged Canadians to vote ABC — anybody but the (federal) Conservatives.

"We have to do unto others as we wish they did unto us — though I'm not necessarily counting on that," he said with a laugh.

"Not from anyone. We're ready for anything."

Dion to PM: Forget election Calls on Harper to stop posturing

SOURCETAG: 0710100517

PUBLICATION: The Toronto Sun

DATE: 2007.10.10

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 12

ILLUSTRATION: photo by Chris Wattie, Reuters Liberal Leader Stephane Dion gestures yesterday in Ottawa as he called on Prime Minister Stephen Harper to quit threatening an election and get to work.

BYLINE: ALAN FINDLAY, NATIONAL BUREAU

DATELINE: OTTAWA

WORD COUNT: 261

Beleaguered Liberal Leader Stephane Dion called on Prime Minister Stephen Harper to focus more on governing and less on brinkmanship yesterday in a bid to ward off a fall federal election.

"Most Canadians do not want a federal election," Dion told reporters. "The current Parliament needs to get to work."

Dion's comments were his first public remarks since Harper warned Dion and other opposition leaders last week to "fish or cut bait" by backing government bills or forcing an election.

PM TALKED TOUGH

Harper fuelled speculation of an autumn vote last week by stating that substantive government bills will be treated as confidence matters in order to push opposition parties into supporting them or bringing them down.

"We have not been obstructionist and we do not intend to be," Dion said.

If there is an election, however, it will be Harper's doing, he said.

"The Liberals will give them a fight that they will regret having started," he said.

IN LIBERALS' HANDS

The NDP and Bloc Quebecois have already laid out specific demands for next Tuesday's throne speech that will almost certainly end with their members voting against the speech. That eventuality leaves the fate of the confidence vote in the hands of the Liberal party.

Asked about his specific expectations for the Throne Speech, Dion remained vague on issues of the environment and Afghanistan and what it will take to support the government's new legislative plan. All options will be kept open, he said.

"We'll only be able to decide once we have the speech in hand," Dion said.

He said each subsequent government bill will have to be viewed individually before the party will take a position.

Dion has been faced with a number of internal party problems in recent weeks, including criticism over dismal showings in three Quebec by-elections last month.

An apparent legal dispute with outgoing party national director Jamie Carroll continued to drag on yesterday. Dion described the conflict between Carroll (a long-time staffer and supporter) and various Quebec party officials and MPs as a sad affair. KEYWORDS=CANADA

Afghanistan told not to kill captives

SOURCETAG 0710100628
PUBLICATION: The London Free Press
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A5
BYLINE: MURRAY BREWSTER, CP
DATELINE: OTTAWA
WORD COUNT: 230

Canada's Foreign Affairs Department offered a muted response yesterday to the execution of 15 prisoners in Afghanistan.

It refused to criticize the government of President Hamid Karzai, but noted that NATO-captured prisoners must be spared the death penalty and that human rights in general must be respected.

A Foreign Affairs spokesperson read a prepared two-line statement after human rights groups criticized the silence coming out of Ottawa.

"Canada expects the government of Afghanistan to live up to its international human rights obligations," said Jamie Christoff.

"The arrangements the government of Canada has signed with the government of Afghanistan, concerning the treatment of detainees, stipulates that no Canadian transferred detainees may receive the death penalty."

The bland statement stands in contrast to the Dutch Foreign Ministry, which called the executions "extremely unwelcome."

Both Canada and the Netherlands oppose the death penalty.

A senior Conservative, who spoke off the record, suggested that the Harper government is reluctant to "interfere" in what is an internal matter for the Afghans. Canadian military officials in Kandahar said the same thing.

The prisoners were tried under Afghan law, government officials said. But several organizations, including the United Nations, have expressed concern about the state of the war-torn country's justice system, which has been described as "a work in progress."

The lawyer for two human rights groups said the Conservative government's initial silence and then half-hearted response raises serious questions about its commitment to upholding Canada's opposition to the death penalty. "This calls into question our involvement with the Afghan government generally," said Paul Champ, a lawyer for Amnesty and the B.C. Civil Liberties Association. KEYWORDS=WORLD

Trainers want police to get salary directly

SOURCETAG 0710100627

PUBLICATION: The London Free Press

DATE: 2007.10.10

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: A5

ILLUSTRATION: photo by Reuters ARMED: An Afghan police officer holds an RPG as U.S. soldiers check police weapons in a house in a village about 30 kilometres west of Kandahar yesterday.

BYLINE: DENE MOORE, CP

DATELINE: KANDAHAR

WORD COUNT: 127

International forces training Afghanistan's national police want to find ways to make sure their trainees get paid directly so that the notoriously corrupt bureaucracy wouldn't have the chance to skim money off their salaries.

Sporadic pay days for the Afghan officers, along with the skimming that takes place at just about every level of bureaucracy above them, means police have often gone months without pay and ended up with just a fraction of their already meagre salary.

Many turn to extorting locals in order to make ends meet.

"The big issue is that there was a lot of corruption among the ANP and (Afghan nation auxiliary police), and that was mainly due to the fact that there were no controls over the pay," said Capt. Sylvain Gagnon, a planning officer for the Canadian military. KEYWORDS=WORLD

Hundreds dead as Pakistan fights militants

SOURCETAG 0710100897
PUBLICATION: The Edmonton Sun
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: 42
BYLINE: AP
DATELINE: MIRAN SHAH, Pakistan
WORD COUNT: 306

Fighting between Islamic militants and security forces near the Afghan border has killed as many as 250 people over four days – the deadliest clashes in Pakistan since it threw its support behind the U.S.–led war on terror in 2001, the army said yesterday.

Air strikes hit a village bazaar in North Waziristan tribal region yesterday afternoon, killing more than 50 militants and civilians and wounding scores more, said resident Noor Hassan.

"The bombing destroyed many shops and homes," Hassan said by telephone from the village of Epi. "We are leaving."

Twelve huge explosions rocked the village and bombs also hit the nearby village of Hader Khel, Hassan added.

Army spokesman Maj.–Gen. Waheed Arshad said military aircraft struck "one or two places" near the town of Mir Ali – about 2 1/2 miles from Epi – and there were unconfirmed reports that about 50 militants had been killed.

Arshad acknowledged that civilians may also have died but had no exact numbers.

"We had confirmed reports about the presence of militants, and the air power was used to target those militant hideouts," he told The Associated Press.

Also yesterday, a roadside bomb killed two soldiers, the army said.

The fighting began Saturday after a roadside bomb hit a truckload of paramilitary troops, sparking bitter clashes.

The bodies of dozens of soldiers, many with their throats slit, have been recovered from deserted areas of the region, fleeing residents said.

The violence comes as Gen. Pervez Musharraf tries to secure another term as president, vowing to shore up Pakistan's troubled effort against Islamic extremism.

The army appeared to be resorting to heavy firepower. Pakistani troops have suffered mounting losses as they try to reassert state authority in a swath of mountainous territory where warlords supportive of the Taliban and al–Qaida are in control.

Before yesterday's air strikes, the army reported that battles had killed 150 local fighters and 45 soldiers since Saturday.

Security forces have rejected a ceasefire proposed by the militants and will "continue punitive action till complete peace is restored" in the area, an army statement said.

Pakistan struck a ceasefire deal with militants in North Waziristan last year. U.S. officials criticized the pact, claiming it gave a safe haven for al-Qaida and provided a rear base for the Taliban fighting NATO troops in Afghanistan. KEYWORDS=WORLD

Direct pay hoped to end cop corruption

SOURCETAG 0710100896
PUBLICATION: The Edmonton Sun
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: 42
BYLINE: DENE MOORE, THE CANADIAN PRESS
DATELINE: KANDAHAR, Afghanistan
WORD COUNT: 214

International forces training the Afghan National Police want to find ways to make sure their trainees get paid directly so that the notoriously corrupt bureaucracy won't have a chance to skim money off their salaries.

Sporadic pay days for the Afghan officers, along with the skimming that takes place at just about every level of bureaucracy above them, means police have often gone months without pay and ended up with just a fraction of their already meagre salary.

Many turn to extorting locals in order to make ends meet.

"The big issue is that there was a lot of corruption among the ANP and (Afghan Nation Auxiliary Police), and that was mainly due to the fact that there were no controls over the pay," said Capt. Sylvain Gagnon, planning officer for the Canadian military's Operational Mentor Liaison Team, which works directly with the Afghan police and army.

"A lot of them didn't get any money."

It's a problem that puts at risk the Canadian and other NATO forces who live and work side-by-side with the Afghan national security forces.

Cash salaries will soon be delivered directly to Afghan police throughout Kandahar province, Gagnon said. It's unclear yet who will make those deliveries – whether it will be NATO mentors or Afghan pay officers.

The money will still come from international donations via the Afghan Interior Ministry, but it's hoped that putting the cash in hand will end the opportunity for corrupt officials to skim off the top.

KEYWORDS=WORLD

Critics take note, there's progress here

SOURCETAG 0710100776

PUBLICATION: The Calgary Sun

DATE: 2007.10.10

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 33

ILLUSTRATION: photo Students at a school near Kabul were visited by the Canadian Provincial Reconstruction Team, which designed and supervised construction of a security wall around the school.

BYLINE: MICHAEL DEN TANDT

DATELINE: KANDAHAR CITY

WORD COUNT: 374

If Canada's mission to Afghanistan succeeds, it'll be because of this place.

And if Canadians knew more about what goes on here, the tenor of the Afghan debate in Ottawa might be different.

This three-acre, white-washed compound — a former tomato-canning plant turned stronghold for the Soviets, then Taliban, then Americans, and finally Canadians — is where a small team of Canadian soldiers came in July 2005 to help the Afghans rebuild their country.

Conditions they met were appalling: poverty, 80% illiteracy, disease, a filthy hospital, and schools burnt by Taliban.

At the time, the insurgency was just getting started, and Canadian troops were sustaining the first serious injuries and casualties. But the numbers were small and few back home seemed to notice.

That all changed Jan. 15, 2006, when diplomat Glyn Berry was killed by a suicide blast. The same attack, which happened just a few hundred metres from the Canadian Provincial Reconstruction Team's main gate, cost Master Cpl. Paul Franklin his legs and injured two other soldiers.

Suddenly, Canadians and Canadian media were focused on the mission.

I arrived here a week after the bombing. Members of the PRT and members of other government departments were still in shock. But their work went on just as before. If anything, they worked with greater determination.

Each day, convoys of armoured jeeps left the razor-wired front gates of the base went through the city to various projects — an orphanage, a school, a new police station.

By night, convoys raced up the road to Kandahar Airfield, avoiding the treacherous warrens of downtown.

City bombings were routine with gunfire nearly every night. Foot patrols slowed to a trickle, then stopped. Canadian jeeps were replaced by heavily armoured LAV III troop carriers.

When I was here in 2006, I met and interviewed as many Afghans as I could. I heard that ministers received death threats, clinics were burned to the ground, and local farmers were starving because western aid wasn't

getting through.

The police seemed incapable of defending themselves, with convoys of officers frequently blown up.

I saw the injured and dying as they lay in an unsanitary hospital ward. There were no nurses or doctors, only grieving family members.

By the time I left Kandahar, I was deeply skeptical any kind of progress could happen.

Yet it seems to me there has been progress — hard, measurable progress in the face of extraordinary odds.

The insurgency is still raging and rocket attacks are common. But development work goes doggedly on.

In early 2006, there were two RCMP officers here helping train the Afghan National Police. Now there are 11.

Over the past year, three police stations have been built in the city, with two more under construction. Wells and bridges are also being built.

The Afghan National Army is gaining strength. The new police stations are not being bombed or burnt down, and local businessmen are planning for the future and making investments.

Signs of life are returning, and all that is largely thanks to this extremely stubborn PRT.

It's an extraordinary, even inspiring story. Critics of the mission should visit here before they speak.

KEYWORDS=NATIONAL

Dion calls on Harper to get to work Liberal leader says most Canadians don't want election

SOURCETAG: 0710100751
PUBLICATION: The Calgary Sun
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: 18
ILLUSTRATION: photo of STEPHANE DION Doesn't want fall vote
BYLINE: ALAN FINDLAY, NATIONAL BUREAU
DATELINE: OTTAWA
WORD COUNT: 216

Beleaguered Liberal Leader Stephane Dion called on Prime Minister Stephen Harper to focus more on governing and less on brinksmanship yesterday in a bid to ward off a fall federal election.

"Most Canadians do not want a federal election," Dion told reporters. "The current Parliament needs to get to work."

Dion's comments were his first public remarks since Harper warned Dion and other opposition leaders last week to "fish or cut bait" by backing government bills or forcing an election.

Harper fuelled speculation of an autumn vote last week by stating that substantive government bills will be treated as confidence matters in order to push opposition parties into supporting them or bringing down the government.

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If there is an election, however, it will be Harper's doing, he said.

"The Liberals will give them a fight that they will regret having started," he said.

The NDP and Bloc Quebecois have already laid out specific demands for next Tuesday's Throne Speech that will almost certainly end with their members voting against the speech.

That eventuality leaves the fate of the confidence vote in the hands of the Liberal party.

Asked about his specific expectations for the Throne Speech, Dion remained vague on issues of the environment and Afghanistan and what it will take to support the government's new legislative plan.

All options will be kept open, he said.

"We'll only be able to decide once we have the speech in hand," said Dion.

He said each subsequent government bill will have to be viewed individually before the party will take a position on it, he said.

Dion has been faced with a number of internal party problems in recent weeks, including criticism over dismal showings in three Quebec byelections last month.

An apparent legal dispute with outgoing party national director Jamie Carroll continued to drag on yesterday.
KEYWORDS=NATIONAL

Local boy's name joins wall of honour

SOURCETAG 0710100738
PUBLICATION: The Calgary Sun
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: 13
ILLUSTRATION: photo of NATHAN HORNBERG Killed
BYLINE: KATIE SCHNEIDER
WORD COUNT: 161

The name of the country's latest war casualty, Calgary's own Cpl. Nathan Hornburg, will join the list of 186 Canadians killed in peace-keeping missions on the Wall of Honour in Garrison Woods today.

Members of the King's Own Calgary Regiment will be among those celebrating the soldier with the engraving of his name into the wall at Peacekeepers Park in Garrison Green, at 1 p.m.

Don Ethell, committee chair of the Canadian Association of Veterans in United Nations Peacekeeping (CAVUNP), said the engraving will coincide with the launch of the CAVUNP Wall Fund-Raising campaign, aimed at raising \$270,000 for the construction of a second wall.

At the time the wall was constructed, it was anticipated it had room for additional names for the next 60 years, Ethell said.

"Then Afghanistan came and lo and behold we ran out of room," he said.

"We must look ahead. That will give us room for additional names, heaven forbid." Cheques in the name of Canadian Association of Veterans in United Nations Peacekeeping Park Account can be dropped off in person or may be mailed to 5708 Layzell Rd. S.W. KEYWORDS=ALBERTA

Arar's lawyers unfazed by U.S. court decision; Al-Masri rendition case rejected, but it differs from Arar's, they say

IDNUMBER 200710100163
PUBLICATION: Edmonton Journal
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: World
PAGE: G8
KEYWORDS: INQUIRIES; DEPORTATION; CANADA
DATELINE: NEW YORK
BYLINE: Steven Edwards
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 479

NEW YORK – Lawyers for Syrian-born Canadian Maher Arar say his bid to sue the U.S. government for secretly shipping him to Syria for torture is unaffected by a U.S. Supreme Court decision Tuesday to reject another high-profile "extraordinary rendition" case.

In a statement, they outline differences between Arar's case and that of Khaled al-Masri, a Lebanese-born German citizen who has also seen lower courts cite national security concerns for refusing to consider his accusation the CIA kidnapped and tortured him.

"The (government's) state secrets assertion in (Arar's) case seeks to protect the reasons U.S. officials sent him to Syria instead of Canada, not whether they were even involved in his rendition, as in Mr. al-Masri's case," says the statement from the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York.

The difference is significant, says the centre's executive director Vincent Warren, because its lawyers don't believe they need to know why the U.S. government deported Arar to Syria in order to win the case — only that they did so.

Secrets no more

On the deportation itself, says Warren, exposing new government secrets is unnecessary because the long-running Canadian judicial inquiry into Arar's case exposed a "significant amount" of what had been secret about the U.S. involvement in his deportation.

"In the al-Masri case the U.S. government would never admit it was even involved in his rendition, whereas in Maher Arar's case it is quite clear that it was involved," said Warren. "We've got the goods on the U.S. government and the court doesn't need to rely on secret government information in order to determine what happened."

U.S. officials arrested Arar in 2002 as he returned to his Ottawa home via New York's John F. Kennedy Airport, claiming he had links to al-Qaida, based on information provided by the RCMP.

Canada paid \$11.5M

Arar's lawyers unfazed by U.S. court decision; Al-Masri rendition case rejected, but it differs from Arar's, they say

They later deported him to Syria under its then-secret "extraordinary rendition" practice, whereby terrorist suspects were sent to regimes with poor human rights records for interrogation.

The Canadian government has agreed to pay Arar and his family \$11.5 million in compensation after the Canadian judicial inquiry cleared him of having any terrorism links.

But in the U.S., a federal trial court judge threw out Arar's lawsuit claiming U.S. compensation in February 2006, on grounds that going ahead could damage national security relations with Canada.

His lawyers seek to have the ruling overturned in an appeal scheduled for Nov. 9 in New York.

Al-Masri says the CIA abducted him in Macedonia in 2003 and flew him to Afghanistan for interrogation.

The Supreme Court decision in his appeal means a lower court's ruling that his case can't be heard on national security grounds will stand.

"More than any government in our history, (the administration of George W. Bush) has hidden behind the state secrets privilege to avoid being held accountable for breaking the law," Warren said.

"Khaled al-Masri has been denied justice. Soon we will see if this truly is a country that sends innocent men to be tortured and then sweeps its mess under the carpet, or whether we will at least grant Maher Arar some small measure of justice for what he endured."

Two soldiers face Dutch jail time for alleged 'gay bashing'; On bail since July, one Canadian could spend months more in custody

IDNUMBER 200710100024
PUBLICATION: Edmonton Journal
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A6
KEYWORDS: OIL INDUSTRY; MANSLAUGHTER; CRIME
DATELINE: OTTAWA
BYLINE: David Pugliese
SOURCE: Ottawa Citizen; CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 192

OTTAWA – Two Canadian soldiers charged in what Dutch media are describing as a 'gay-bashing' incident are expected to be sentenced in the next several weeks.

The two soldiers, on leave from the mission in Afghanistan, were arrested on May 26 by Dutch police after an altercation in Amsterdam, a Canadian Defence department official confirmed.

The men were originally charged with attempted manslaughter, attempted criminal negligence causing bodily harm and public violence. There have been ongoing discussions to reduce those charges.

The charges are under the Dutch criminal code and do not have an equivalent under the Canadian legal system, military officials said.

The Dutch news media reported that the two men were involved in beating up a gay man, and prosecutors are asking for an eight-month sentence for one of the soldiers, who is 22 years old.

A second soldier, also 22, should be sentenced to six weeks in jail, according to prosecutors.

The men were given bail in July but are required to stay in the Netherlands, said Canadian Defence department official Jillian Van Acker.

The men spent at least 60 days in a Dutch jail.

Van Acker said the two soldiers have been assigned to a Canadian Forces installation in the Netherlands until their legal situation has been resolved.

Military officials are not releasing the names of the men, citing Canadian privacy regulations.

Van Acker said that at this point the two are paying their own legal expenses.

"They were provided with Dutch lawyers and have been receiving assistance from Dutch and Canadian authorities," she added.

Two soldiers face Dutch jail time for alleged 'gay bashing'; On bail since July, one Canadian could spend months more in custody

Iran opens air base near border

IDNUMBER 200710100015
PUBLICATION: Edmonton Journal
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A4
COLUMN: World Digest
KEYWORDS: NUCLEAR POWER; TERRORISM; NUCLEAR REACTORS; URANIUM
DATELINE: TEHRAN
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 104

TEHRAN – Iran has built an air base not far from its border with Afghanistan, Iranian television reported Tuesday.

"The base is designed to enhance the combat readiness of our armed forces in standing up to possible aggression against our country," Gen. Ahmad Migani, air force commander, said at the base's opening ceremony.

The new base, named Gayem al–Mohammad, is located near the city of Birjand, the administrative centre of the southern province of South Khorasan. Gen. Migani said Iranian fighters and a modern radar system will be deployed at the base.

"Our enemies must know that if they attempt to attack our country, we will teach them a lesson they will never forget," he said.

Khadr appeals U.S court ruling

IDNUMBER 200710100014
PUBLICATION: Edmonton Journal
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A4
COLUMN: World Digest
KEYWORDS: CANADIANS; PRISONERS OF WAR; INTERNATIONAL LAW;
TERRORISM;CRIME
DATELINE: WASHINGTON
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 129

WASHINGTON – Omar Khadr, the sole Canadian held in the Guantanamo "war on terror" prison, has appealed to a U.S. federal court to avoid facing a military tribunal, his lawyers said Tuesday.

Omar Khadr was 15 when he was captured in Afghanistan in 2002 and held on suspicion of belonging to the al-Qaida terror network. He is charged with killing a U.S. soldier with a grenade while he was being arrested.

Khadr's defence attorneys say he is a child soldier and illegally imprisoned.

The military judge handling the case, Colonel Peter Brownback, dismissed all charges against Khadr in June on grounds that his designation as an "enemy combatant" did not meet the standard required for trial by military commission.

But a military review court rejected the ruling on Oct. 2, and Brownback has scheduled a new hearing on the Khadr case on Nov. 8.

Al-Qaeda getting more dangerous, White House warns

IDNUMBER 200710100038
PUBLICATION: The Hamilton Spectator
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Canada/World
PAGE: A11
DATELINE: WASHINGTON
BYLINE: Beth Gorham
SOURCE: The Canadian Press
COPYRIGHT: © 2007 Torstar Corporation
WORD COUNT: 604

Al-Qaeda is expected to increase attempts to infiltrate the United States from its secure base in Pakistan, the White House said yesterday, and there's growing concern they'd use makeshift bombs in an attack.

The terrorist group responsible for the 2001 plots is seeking more co-operation with regional extremist groups, particularly "al-Qaeda in Iraq," now the "most visible and capable affiliate and the only one known to have expressed a desire to attack us here," said a new report.

"Moreover, although we have discovered only a handful of individuals in the United States with ties to al-Qaeda senior leadership, the group likely will intensify its efforts to place operatives here in the homeland."

The National Strategy for Homeland Security, an update of one hurriedly issued in July 2002, also said it's clear al-Qaeda wants to use improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and liquid explosives that are easy to make.

"We also must never lose sight of al-Qaeda's persistent desire for weapons of mass destruction, as the group continues to try to acquire and use chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear material."

Some questioned the timing of the dire warnings in the strategy, which has information already available from several sources, including a July national intelligence estimate and a February presidential directive.

It was released just as Democrats began debate on President George W. Bush's push to make permanent a law allowing warrantless eavesdropping on phone calls and e-mails between people in the United States and suspected terrorists abroad.

And it came out the same day as a complaint from a private security firm that an administration leak ruined efforts to monitor al-Qaeda activities.

The White House report, which also addresses response to natural disasters, said the war on terror has succeeded in capturing or killing most of those responsible for Sept. 11 after U.S.-backed forces toppled the Taliban regime that gave the terrorists refuge in Afghanistan.

But it acknowledged that al-Qaeda "protected its top leadership, replenished operational lieutenants, and regenerated a safe haven in Pakistan's (tribal areas)."

Bush, in a letter accompanying the report, said the United States is safer today, "but we are not yet safe.

"Working with our partners and allies, we have broken up terrorist cells, disrupted attacks and saved American lives," he said.

"Although our enemies have not been idle, they have not succeeded in launching another attack on our soil in over six years due to the bravery and diligence of many."

Critics argue Bush handed al-Qaeda what it needed to regain its strength by invading Iraq in 2003, leaving terror mastermind Osama bin Laden to plot another major attack and creating new adherents to the cause.

While the report calls al-Qaeda the biggest threat to the United States, it said the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah "may increasingly consider attacking the homeland if it perceives the United States as posing a direct threat to the group or Iran, its principal sponsor."

And it warned of homegrown radicals and violent extremists within U.S. borders, as well as "single-issue" groups like white supremacists, calling on authorities to go after them.

"One place where we have already witnessed radicalization is in our prison system," the report said, "but we must continue to identify other places violent propagators exploit within the United States, overseas and on the Internet."

Fran Townsend, the White House homeland security adviser, blamed al-Qaeda's strength on the failure of a peace agreement between the government of Pakistan and tribal leaders in the northwest region where bin Laden is thought to be hiding.

But Townsend credited co-operation with Pakistan for "some of our biggest successes" in capturing top terrorists.

"Homeland security, both as a policy matter and a concept, didn't exist prior to 9-11 and prior to this president, President Bush, assuming office."

The report mentions the importance of tight border screening, saying more agents will be trained and deployed while technology will be increased. It notes that requiring passports from people crossing the border will cut the risk of fraudulent documents.

U.S. Supreme Court rejects CIA torture suit

IDNUMBER 200710100034
PUBLICATION: The Hamilton Spectator
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Canada/World
PAGE: A8
DATELINE: WASHINGTON
SOURCE: Hamilton Spectator wire services
COPYRIGHT: © 2007 Torstar Corporation
WORD COUNT: 140

The U.S. Supreme Court has refused to hear the appeal of a German man who says he was tortured as part of Washington's practice of "extraordinary rendition," a move which could derail Maher Arar's quest for justice in the United States.

The court upheld the Bush administration's argument that "state secrets" would be endangered if the lawsuit against the CIA was allowed to proceed. El-Masri was picked up by CIA agents in Macedonia on New Year's Eve 2003, beaten, shackled, drugged and chained to the floor of a so-called "ghost flight" and sent to a "black site" prison in Afghanistan. He says he was tortured and abused for five months before being dumped on a hillside in Albania and told to find his way home.

Ottawa backs off criticism of prisoners' execution

IDNUMBER 200710100028
PUBLICATION: The Hamilton Spectator
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Canada/World
PAGE: A7
DATELINE: OTTAWA
SOURCE: The Canadian Press
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WORD COUNT: 153

Canada's Foreign Affairs Department offered a muted response yesterday to the execution of 15 prisoners in Afghanistan.

It refused to criticize the government of President Hamid Karzai, but noted that NATO–captured prisoners must be spared the death penalty and that human rights in general must be respected.

A senior Conservative, who spoke off the record, suggested that the Harper government is reluctant to "interfere" in what is an internal matter for the Afghans. Canadian military officials in Kandahar said the same thing.

But several organizations, including the United Nations, have expressed concern about the state of Afghanistan's justice system.

Paul Champ, a lawyer for Amnesty International and the B.C. Civil Liberties Association, said: "When it comes to the detainees Canada and other NATO countries are handing over, we have to be seriously concerned."

Karzai's government says it will continue to execute prisoners, but not those captured by NATO forces – a guarantee Champ says no one can rely on because detainees in Afghan jails routinely go missing.

Law professionals unite to help Afghan women

IDNUMBER 200710100108
PUBLICATION: Calgary Herald
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Calgary Business
PAGE: D2
COLUMN: Around Town
ILLUSTRATION: Photo: Ted Jacobs, Calgary Herald / Pat Blocksom, left, and Ronnalee McMahon will welcome Flora MacDonald to a benefit evening on Oct. 15. ;
KEYWORDS: SMALL BUSINESS; CALGARY
BYLINE: David Parker
SOURCE: Calgary Herald
NOTE: Inside Business: Commentary – People Business News in Brief
WORD COUNT: 743

Enthusiasm and commitment are qualities evident in many go-getters I've had the pleasure of talking to, but the added passion of two Calgary businesswomen in their efforts to help the people of Afghanistan left me joyfully fatigued after a two-hour discussion.

Pat Blocksom, who put herself through law school as a single parent, was articling with the former Walsh Young practice when she first met Ronnalee McMahon, a legal assistant. They met again when McMahon took a mediation course Blocksom was teaching, and stayed in touch.

In 1990, Blocksom became a partner of Dunphy Best Blocksom and today she is a Queen's counsellor with a highly respected reputation as a mediator and family lawyer.

A woman with a heart for children and the vulnerable, Blocksom was invited to attend the 80th birthday dinner for Flora MacDonald, who had served Canada as Secretary of State, been awarded the Pearson Medal for Peace and is a staunch advocate of the poor, particularly those in India and Afghanistan.

As chair of Future Generations Canada, MacDonald introduced Blocksom to the organization. Blocksom quickly accepted a role as a board member in Calgary and it didn't take long for her to recruit McMahon as another director. McMahon had graduated from Leadership Calgary in 2004 with a strong desire to empower recent immigrant women.

The founder and president of Action Circle Consulting, which develops and enhances mentorship programs for corporate Calgary, McMahon also leads a mentorship program for internationally educated women.

The Canadian arm of Future Generations has taken on the responsibility of helping engage 72 shuras (councils) in Bamyán province, Afghanistan, in a process of reconstruction that emphasizes community and government partnerships, strengthens local capacity and builds resourcefulness.

Village women have been trained as community health workers using new empowerment-based methods that mobilize community support through women's action groups. Data shows rapid improvement in health indicators. The next step is to establish a learning centre to teach practical skills lost as a result of 30 years of conflict in the region.

A Calgary fundraiser is being held Oct. 15 at the Jubilee Auditorium, where Beatles tribute band Rain will stage a special show.

Calgary philanthropist and promoter Jeff Perry has donated time, staff and resources for the evening, which will feature an marketplace with fair-trade Afghan clothing, jewelry and art.

Purchasers of VIP tickets will meet MacDonald and David Suzuki McMahon tells me that, with some trepidation, she is prepared to go to Afghanistan to see the benefits of Future Generations and to meet some brave women. Seven of 40 female Afghan journalists who participated in a photo exhibition have been murdered.

Blocksom plans to return to Ethiopia; she is also a board member of Partners in the Horns of Africa and has a deep love for the people of that continent. On a previous visit she caught up with six other women — five from Calgary — who went to Uganda to learn more about a refugee resettlement program.

It's wonderful to see successful businesswomen here supporting those with so little hope elsewhere.

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A couple of good guys in our tourism community have been selected as finalists for the 2007 Tourism Industry Association of Canada Awards. Both winners of Calgary White Hat Awards, Al Bailey and Herb Spear are among 35 finalists who will be feted at a gala dinner at the Fairmont Empress Hotel in Victoria on Nov. 7.

A longtime employee of Tourism Calgary, Bailey is in the Volunteer of the Year category while Spear, who still enjoys a busy work life at WestJet, is a finalist for Employee of the Year. Good luck to them both.

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The local chapter of AMCHAM Canada, the American Chamber of Commerce in Canada, is holding a breakfast seminar at the Telus Convention Centre on Oct. 18 to discuss relocating executives and workers from the U.S. to Calgary.

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I had to miss the official opening of Customspace, the new home of Cohos Evamy Integratedesign, located in the historic Customs House building at the corner of 11th Avenue and 1st Street S.E. But I got a private tour that reflected the firm's belief in green design, so I was not surprised to learn it has achieved LEED Silver certification.

Established in Calgary in 1960, Cohos Evamy now also works out of studios in Edmonton and Toronto with 300 staff delivering an integrated approach to architecture, interior design, and structural, mechanical and electrical engineering. Of the staff, 45 are LEED-accredited professionals.

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David Parker appears Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. He can be reached at 830-4622 or e-mail info@davidparker.ca

Top U.S. court rejects CIA kidnap case

IDNUMBER 200710100045
PUBLICATION: Calgary Herald
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A17
KEYWORDS: CONSTITUTION; UNITED STATES
DATELINE: WASHINGTON
SOURCE: Agence France–Presse
WORD COUNT: 171

The U.S. Supreme Court on Tuesday threw out a case against the U.S. government brought by a Lebanese-born German, alleging he was kidnapped by the CIA and tortured for months before being freed without charge.

The court did not give any reason for rejecting the case brought by Khaled el-Masri, an unemployed former car salesman and father of six, who says he was abducted by U.S. agents in the Macedonian capital Skopje on Dec. 31, 2003.

He was demanding an apology from the U.S. administration and \$75,000 in compensation, alleging he was flown to a prison in Afghanistan for questioning before being released five months later in Albania, without any explanation.

"This is a sad day, not only for Khaled el-Masri, but for all Americans who care about the rule of law and our country's reputation around the world," his lawyer Ben Wizner told AFP.

"When we deny justice to an innocent victim of our anti-terror policies, we make America less safe and we provide the government with the most complete immunity for even the most shameful human rights abuses."

Al-Qaeda tops U.S. threat list: report; White House calls for redoubling of anti-terror efforts

IDNUMBER 200710100039
PUBLICATION: Calgary Herald
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Early
SECTION: News
PAGE: A12
ILLUSTRATION: Colour Photo: Osama bin Laden;
KEYWORDS: TERRORISM; REPORTS; BOMBS; INVESTIGATIONS; WAR;
ORGANIZATIONS; CANADIANS
DATELINE: WASHINGTON
SOURCE: Agence France-Presse
WORD COUNT: 451

Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda network remains bent on getting nuclear and biological weapons to unleash apocalyptic destruction, a new White House report on national security warned Tuesday.

The report, which called for redoubled anti-terror co-ordination at all levels of government, said al-Qaeda remains "the most serious and dangerous manifestation" of extremist threats against the United States.

"We also must never lose sight of al-Qaeda's persistent desire for weapons of mass destruction, as the group continues to try to acquire and use chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear material," it said.

The White House called anew on the Democratic-led Congress to expand the power of U.S. intelligence agencies to eavesdrop on suspected terrorists "while protecting the civil liberties of Americans."

And following the administration's failure to push immigration reform through Congress, the report called for improved capacity to find and expel illegal aliens, "including criminals and potential terrorists."

The appraisal followed a "National Intelligence Estimate" in July that warned that al-Qaeda is back in business, sparking Democratic complaints that the war in Iraq has proven a dangerous distraction.

The NIE, which prefigured much of Tuesday's report, said al-Qaeda had regrouped in Pakistan "and would not hesitate" to use weapons of mass destruction on the United States.

During a testy media conference call, White House homeland security adviser Fran Townsend rebuffed suggestions that the Iraq war had only served to revive al-Qaeda in the years since the Sept. 11 attacks of 2001.

"Every time I walk into the press briefing room we go through this, and what I will say to you is there should be no question that there were like-minded Islamic extremists inside Iraq and throughout the region," she said.

"And certainly that there is extremism inside Iraq and throughout the region is not a result of the war in Iraq, it is a fundamental front in the continuing war on terror."

Also Tuesday, the White House denied being the source of a leak involving a recent bin Laden video that a private intelligence firm said had sabotaged its secret ability to intercept al-Qaeda messages.

"Techniques that took years to develop are now ineffective and worthless," SITE Intelligence Group founder Rita Katz told the Washington Post.

According to the White House evaluation, the U.S.-led "war on terror" has deprived al-Qaeda of its sanctuary in Afghanistan and eliminated many of those responsible for planning 9/11.

Nevertheless, bin Laden's group has protected its top leadership, found new lieutenants, and "regenerated a safe haven" in a lawless tribal area of Pakistan on the Afghan border.

In a letter accompanying the report, entitled "National Strategy for Homeland Security," President George W. Bush said: "Today, our nation is safer, but we are not yet safe."

He stressed that "our efforts also must involve offence at home and abroad," vowing to "disrupt the enemy's plans" and lessen the impact of future disasters through measures to bolster the U.S. economy and its critical infrastructure.

Neither is the United States immune to homegrown radicals, it cautioned.

Dion cool to fighting election this fall; Grit leader shuffles shadow cabinet in wake of infighting

IDNUMBER 200710100029
PUBLICATION: Calgary Herald
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A9
ILLUSTRATION: Colour Photo: Stephane Dion;
KEYWORDS: POLITICIANS; POLITICAL PARTIES; GOVERNMENT; CANADA
DATELINE: OTTAWA
BYLINE: Juliet O'Neill
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 479

Liberal Leader Stephane Dion says his party does not want a fall election and if there is one, it will be because an intransigent Prime Minister Stephen Harper "will have set up his own defeat" in Parliament.

At a news conference Tuesday, Dion readily admitted that the Liberals have been damaged by three weeks of infighting. But he defiantly maintained that the official Opposition will be ready to campaign and the minority Conservatives would regret triggering a vote "Canadians do not want."

Dion said a new national poll showing a decline in Liberal support was no surprise in light of recent internal troubles.

And he referred to one of those difficulties — attacks by some Liberals on Liberal party national director Jamie Carroll — as "a sad affair" that now is in the hands of lawyers.

A Canadian Press–Decima Harris poll said Liberal support had dropped to 28 per cent from 32 per cent in June, while the Conservatives had risen to 35 per cent from 29 per cent. The Conservatives won a minority government in January 2006 with 36 per cent of the vote.

The margin of error in the poll is plus or minus 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Dion, who has stayed out of the public light since Harper told the opposition a week ago to "fish or cut bait" — to support the Oct. 16 throne speech and the legislative policies that will flow from it, or risk taking Canada into its third federal election in four years — sought to signal his readiness for action by shuffling his shadow cabinet of party critics.

The most significant change was the appointment of the unelected Bob Rae as foreign affairs critic. A seasoned politician and lawyer, Rae is one of Dion's former rivals for the party leadership who is waiting for a Toronto byelection to contest a seat in Parliament.

Dion also booted Quebec MP Raymonde Folco from her post as critic on La Francophonie and official languages, giving the job instead to longtime Ottawa MP Mauril Belanger. Folco was widely quoted during a recent dust-up over Dion's leadership as saying that her party leader "doesn't go down well, we know, in particular with Quebecers."

Since Rae has no seat in the Commons, the MP entrusted with lobbying foreign affairs questions across the aisle is Dion confidant Bryon Wilfert, a Toronto-area MP who has headed a committee on the party's policy on Canada's role in Afghanistan.

Wilfert, appointed associate foreign affairs critic, said recently that there is no advantage to the Liberals of an election now. He advocates partial abstentions by the 96-member Liberal caucus in the Commons, in order to keep the government in power until the time is right for Liberal victory.

All parties would need to unite to topple the government, which has 126 seats in the 308-member Commons. If the Bloc Quebecois and the New Democratic Party vote against the throne speech, as they have signalled, the Liberals would have the deciding vote.

Canadian soldiers charged by Dutch in 'gay-bashing'

IDNUMBER 200710100024
PUBLICATION: Calgary Herald
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A7
KEYWORDS: OIL INDUSTRY; MANSLAUGHTER; CRIME
DATELINE: OTTAWA
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 172

Two Canadian soldiers charged in what Dutch media are describing as a "gay-bashing" incident are expected to be sentenced in the next several weeks.

The two soldiers, on leave from the mission in Afghanistan, were arrested May 26 by Dutch police after an altercation in Amsterdam, a Canadian Defence department official confirmed.

The men were originally charged with attempted manslaughter, attempted criminal negligence causing bodily harm and public violence, but there have been ongoing discussions to reduce those charges, which are under the Dutch criminal code and have no equivalent under the Canadian legal system, military officials said.

Dutch news media reported the two men were involved in beating up a gay man and prosecutors are asking for an eight-month sentence for one of the soldiers, who is 22-years-old.

A second soldier, also 22, should be sentenced to six weeks in jail, according to prosecutors.

The men were given bail in July but are required to stay in the Netherlands, said Canadian Defence department official Jillian Van Acker.

The men spent at least 60 days in a Dutch jail and have been assigned to a Canadian Forces installation until the issue is resolved.

Military officials are not releasing names of the men, citing Canadian privacy regulations.

THE AFGHAN MISSION: 15 SENT TO FIRING SQUAD

Kabul executions spark fresh concern over fate of detainees Move ends moratorium on death penalty

PUBLICATION: GLOBE AND MAIL

IDN: 072830229

DATE: 2007.10.10

PAGE: A1 (ILLUS)

BYLINE: ALAN FREEMAN

SECTION: International News

EDITION: Metro

DATELINE: Ottawa ONT

WORDS: 736

WORD COUNT: 782

ALAN FREEMAN OTTAWA Canada is seeking assurances from the Afghan government that none of the 15 prisoners executed Sunday had been transferred by Canadian forces, as human-rights advocates expressed outrage over the decision to end a three-year moratorium on the death penalty.

Fifteen men, convicted of crimes including murder, rape and kidnapping, were shot to death by firing squad in only the second execution since the collapse of the Taliban in 2001.

"The government of Afghanistan has been asked through diplomatic channels to confirm that none of the executed prisoners were transferees from the Canadian forces," a spokesman for the Foreign Affairs Department said. The spokesman noted that under the detainee agreement between the two countries, Kabul has promised the death penalty will not be applied to any prisoners transferred from Canadian hands.

Amir Attaran, a University of Ottawa law professor who helped unleash the controversy last winter over the possible abuse of detainees that contributed to the replacement of then-defence-minister Gordon O'Connor, said the Afghan promise was "meaningless and unbelievable." "Canada has said repeatedly that they consider the agreement not legally binding," he said, noting Canadian authorities appear to have lost track of an estimated 50 detainees after they fell into Afghan hands.

"If we've transferred people and lost 50 of them," Prof. Attaran said, "how do you know that some of the guys executed are not some of those 50?" A spokesman for Afghan President Hamid Karzai, Humayun Hamidzada, said yesterday that the executions will continue as a lesson for those who commit a range of crimes, from murder to adultery. Last week, Mr. Hamidzada said that the President does not like executions but added that "Afghan law asks for it, and he will obey the laws." The UN mission in Afghanistan led the reaction, saying it had been a "staunch supporter" of the moratorium, which had been in effect, with a single exception, for the past six years. The Netherlands, whose troops are fighting with Canadians in southern Afghanistan as part of the NATO coalition, called the executions "extremely unwelcome." The Canadian reaction was much more nebulous. The Foreign Affairs Department said only that it "expects the government of Afghanistan to live up to its international human rights obligations." The government added that the agreement between Ottawa and Kabul signed in December of 2005 stipulates that "no Canadian transferred detainees may receive the death penalty." NDP MP Paul Dewar said the decision to resume executions raises questions about the Harper government's justification for Canada's presence in Afghanistan.

"What happens to the idea that the Afghan government is supposedly supporting human rights and the rule of law?" he said in an interview.

Liberal defence critic Denis Coderre, in Kandahar on a fact-finding mission, said he wondered whether the Afghan legal system was independent enough to allow such harsh treatment, recalling that the Taliban held public executions in soccer stadiums. "I'm against capital punishment so I'm very, very concerned," he said. "The Taliban were doing that. It's the same thing." Mohammad Farid Hamidi of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission said courts that order the death penalty should be legitimate and independent and should allow defendants an opportunity to defend themselves. But he said that Afghan courts do not fit those standards.

"This is a setback," said Alex Neve, secretary-general of Amnesty International's Canadian chapter, adding that it was disappointing because of the global momentum in favour of abolition of the death penalty.

Afghan officials insisted that no Taliban or al-Qaeda fighters were among those killed. Among those executed was Reza Khan, who was convicted of murdering three foreign journalists and their Afghan colleague on a roadside near Jalalabad six days after the collapse of the Taliban in 2001. Mr. Khan was also convicted of adultery.

Also executed was an Afghan involved in the 2005 kidnapping of Italian aid worker Clementina Cantoni, who was freed after three weeks of captivity.

Tom Koenigs, the UN special representative in Afghanistan, said the UN had expressed concern over the death penalty several times in the past.

"The United Nations in Afghanistan has been a staunch supporter of the moratorium on executions in Afghanistan in recent years," he said. "I expect Afghanistan to continue working toward attaining the highest human rights standards and ensuring the due process of law and the rights of all citizens are respected."

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Afghanistan; Canada

SUBJECT TERM: strife; capital punishment; human rights; defence; foreign policy

ORGANIZATION NAME: Armed Forces; Taliban

GREATER TRANSPARENCY Tightening the leash on the 'dogs of war' Governments, including Canada's, must improve oversight of private security companies

PUBLICATION: GLOBE AND MAIL
IDN: 072830188
DATE: 2007.10.10
PAGE: A21 (ILLUS)
BYLINE: BENJAMIN PERRIN
SECTION: Comment
EDITION: Metro
DATELINE:
WORDS: 806
WORD COUNT: 763

BENJAMIN PERRIN Assistant professor at the University of British Columbia's Faculty of Law The debate on legal oversight of private military companies continues to rage in the United States, in the wake of allegations that Blackwater USA personnel killed 17 Iraqis and wounded 24 others in a Baghdad incident last month.

The private security and military industry is expected to grow from \$55.6-billion (U.S.) in 1990 to more than \$210-billion by 2010.

However, there is no international consensus on how to deal with the industry. Some countries ban these companies, while others regulate them. The vast majority, including Canada, have simply ignored them.

Many of these companies welcome regulation as a way of gaining some legal certainty. Others want to operate below the radar and lobby for excluding their contactors from any form of scrutiny.

Blackwater, along with 42 other companies, is a member of an industry association called the International Peace Operations Association.

Members have agreed to a form of self-monitoring, in the absence of significant governmental oversight.

IPOA members are bound by a code of conduct that has been drafted by human-rights groups and members themselves. It is a concept that could quickly be dismissed by cynics. However, it has the potential to promote responsible conduct by these companies, if improved and implemented alongside clearer rules enforced by public authorities.

Last Friday, IPOA announced it was launching its "compliance process" investigating allegations against Blackwater under the code of conduct.

This will be a difficult test for this infant self-monitoring process.

Fortunately, IPOA has responded to some of the criticism about the effectiveness of its enforcement mechanism. In a May, 2006, article in the International Review of the Red Cross , I recommended that IPOA expand available sanctions for violations of its code of conduct to include a graduated range of corrective measures.

Several months later, IPOA substantially adopted such a recommendation.

Previously, the only option was expulsion of a member – a strong step that IPOA was unlikely to take.

As a result of these changes, depending on the seriousness of the violation, IPOA can require additional training for employees and corporate directors; call for the dismissal of employees involved; require payment of compensation to victims or their families; direct a donation to a humanitarian organization; mandate monitoring of ongoing activities; temporarily suspend membership; or expel the member.

While these nongovernmental corrective measures are no substitute for criminal and civil penalties for serious offences, they nevertheless have the potential to enhance accountability and positively affect the future behaviour of these companies.

One major problem that remains unaddressed is the composition of IPOA's compliance and monitoring committee. It is made up entirely of insiders – representatives of other member private military and security companies. For the IPOA compliance mechanism to have credibility and work, its committee must include at least some independent individuals with experience in humanitarian law and complex security environments.

At the same time, the United States is continuing to develop its legal framework for the regulation of U.S. private military companies.

All of these companies must register with the State Department.

A licence must be obtained for every contract, and contracts over \$50-million require presidential approval. The U.S. has also barred its private military companies from working for certain clients, such as various armed groups in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s and for Robert Mugabe's government in Zimbabwe.

It will surprise many Canadians to learn that there are private military and security companies based in our country that operate in Iraq and other countries with little, if any, national regulations governing their activities. The most recent evidence of Canadian firms operating abroad involved the abduction in May of four British bodyguards in Iraq who were employed by Montreal-based Garda World Security Corp.

An untold number of private military and security contractors are working alongside our armed forces in Afghanistan. No doubt, they play vital roles in contributing to this important mission.

But greater transparency is required for Canadians to be assured that these private contractors abide by the same high standards of our own soldiers, and are working only in appropriate roles.

Canada's antiquated Foreign Enlistment Act is an outdated and ill-suited statute to regulate our own private military and security companies: It shows its vintage by still referring to "hard labour" as a possible penalty, and does not reflect the realities of modern asymmetric warfare. It is not an exaggeration to say there are more extensive laws governing how to run a Tim Hortons coffee shop in Canada, than a Canadian firm running a private security operation overseas.

It is time for Canada to start looking at the activities of its own private security and military companies – as Britain and South Africa have done in recent years – rather than waiting for an incident, like the Blackwater allegations, to grab our attention.

GREATER TRANSPARENCY Tightening the leash on the 'dogs of war' Governments, including Canada's, n

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Iraq; United States

SUBJECT TERM: strife; defence; foreign policy; private security contractors; deaths; human rights

ORGANIZATION NAME: Blackwater USA; International Peace Operations Association

GREATER TRANSPARENCY Tightening the leash on the 'dogs of war' Governments, including Canada's, n

CYNICAL LIBERALS How about a little opposition?

PUBLICATION: GLOBE AND
MAIL
IDN: 072830186
DATE: 2007.10.10
PAGE: A21
BYLINE: NORMAN
SPECTOR
SECTION: Comment
EDITION: Metro
DATELINE:
WORDS: 628
WORD COUNT: 636

NORMAN SPECTOR No one can say for certain – perhaps not even Stephen Harper himself – whether the PM will be hitting the hustings later this month.

However, if that were his preference, there's no way the opposition could thwart him: Mr. Harper need only instruct all but a handful of Conservative MPs to skip the vote on the Throne Speech.

Too cynical? No doubt. But no more so than reports of Liberals hoping to avoid an election by voting in sufficient numbers for the Throne Speech, a confidence matter, while awaiting an opportune time to defeat the government. Judging from the reaction to what would be Parliament Hill's first "absent opposition," perhaps this degree of cynicism no longer falls below acceptable standards in federal politics.

The greater problem with the mooted strategy of putting party interests ahead of the national interest is that it's plain dumb.

The role of the Official Opposition is to oppose and, as the government-in-waiting, to present an alternative. While some federal Liberals cite as a precedent the Charest government's most recent inaugural address, the Parti Quebecois – a chunk of whose caucus absented themselves from the vote – is not the Official Opposition in the National Assembly.

For months, Stephane Dion has been telling Canadians climate change is virtually an existential threat; is it conceivable that he would now stand in his place and sustain a government that has abandoned Kyoto? And after drawing a line in the sand on terminating the current Kandahar mission in 2009, can the Liberal Leader rationalize supporting a Prime Minister who has no intention of notifying our allies that we are packing it in? One can almost see the Conservative television ads in the next election, superimposing his vote on the Throne Speech with earlier clips of Mr. Dion referring to himself as a man of principle and integrity.

If that isn't enough for Mr. Dion to nix the reported Liberal strategy, he should look over his shoulder at the NDP. Jack Layton is probably already practising the line about Mr. Dion, whom he once praised as having too much integrity to be chosen Liberal leader, having at last become a true Grit. And, in the wake of the Quebec by-elections, the New Democrats are itching to present themselves as the true opposition to the Conservatives – particularly in Ontario and B.C.

Perhaps Mr. Dion has not endorsed this too clever-by-half Liberal strategy, which would explain his low profile in the days following Mr. Harper's recent press conference. However, if he does embark on it, how

should the Conservatives respond? First, the Government House Leader should give early notice that not all Conservative MPs will be in the House for the Throne Speech vote. And that, if Mr. Dion truly intends to pursue this inadvisable strategy, he had better ensure that all his MPs, including the most prominent spokespersons, are in their places to support the government's program in a recorded vote.

Second, the government should not paint itself into a corner by specifying in the Throne Speech which of the measures flowing from it will be introduced as confidence measures in future legislation.

Finally, the Throne Speech text should clearly distinguish Conservative and Liberal policies on key priorities.

On Afghanistan, for example, the Conservatives should stress that we cannot persuade our allies to do more in that country by ourselves doing less, and that it would be immoral simply to abandon the Afghan people to the Taliban. On climate change, the government should affirm that any effective international agreement that respects Canada's national interests must cover the emissions of world-leader China, and of our No. 1 trading partner, the United States.

nspector@globeandmail.com

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Canada

SUBJECT TERM: government; political; throne speech

PERSONAL NAME: Stephen Harper

Canada's Afghan strategy

PUBLICATION: GLOBE AND MAIL

IDN: 072830131

DATE: 2007.10.10

PAGE: A20

BYLINE: TOM BRYDGES

SECTION: Letter to the Edit

EDITION: Metro

DATELINE: Brampton, Ont.

WORDS: 50

WORD COUNT: 65

Tom Brydges Brampton, Ont.

Finally, some sense in conducting the Afghan mission (Troops Pay Police To Bolster Security – front page, Oct. 9). Our soldiers will be equipped with our country's most powerful and effective weapon: cash. Well done, Brigadier-General Guy Laroche. Canadians can now look forward to real reconstruction progress in Afghanistan.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Canada; Afghanistan

SUBJECT TERM: strife; defence; foreign policy

ORGANIZATION NAME: Armed Forces; Taliban

Canada's Afghan strategy

PUBLICATION: GLOBE AND MAIL

IDN: 072830130

DATE: 2007.10.10

PAGE: A20

BYLINE: MAXIME BERNIER

SECTION: Letter to the Edit

EDITION: Metro

DATELINE: Ottawa ONT

WORDS: 166

WORD COUNT: 204

Maxime Bernier Minister of Foreign Affairs Ottawa I wish to take issue with your article Upbeat Bernier Contradicts UN Reports (Oct. 8) about my observations regarding security improvements in Kandahar. As the United Nations report cited in the article notes, the Taliban are shifting "from large-scale armed clashes in the field to asymmetric or terror-style attacks." One of the reasons for the shift, the report says, is that "the Afghan National Army has been improving throughout 2007." Another is the significant degradation of the Taliban command structure, partly in response to the success of international and Afghan security operations, including last year's Operation Medusa.

By dislodging as many Taliban as possible, we have helped to reduce the security threat posed by massed Taliban formations to Kandahar city, as well as in the western part of the province. Despite persistent danger, the changing nature of insurgency attacks points toward a situation that is improving. This is the point I made in my remarks at the close of my visit to Afghanistan.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Canada; Afghanistan

SUBJECT TERM: strife; foreign policy

ORGANIZATION NAME: Taliban

ARMED CLASHES Hundreds killed in tribal regions of Pakistan Thousands flee violence as troops hammer militant positions, leaving the mutilated bodies of soldiers and civilians in their wake

PUBLICATION: GLOBE AND MAIL

IDN: 072830089

DATE: 2007.10.10

PAGE: A17 (ILLUS)

BYLINE: SAEED SHAH

SECTION: International News

SOURCE: SPCL

EDITION: Metro

DATELINE: Islamabad PAKISTAN

WORDS: 667

WORD COUNT: 646

SAEED SHAH Special to The Globe and Mail ISLAMABAD The fiercest fighting in Pakistan's wild tribal region since the country joined the U.S.-led war on terrorism has left thousands of civilians fleeing in fear and at least 250 dead.

Pakistani troops have been pounding militant positions for days around the town of Mir Ali, in North Waziristan, known to be a stronghold of al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters. At least 45 soldiers, some with their throats slit, and dozens of civilians, are believed to be among the dead.

Yesterday, Pakistani aircraft bombed a village close to Mir Ali, killing more than 50 suspected militants and civilians and wounding many others. The village, Epi, was rocked by a dozen explosions yesterday afternoon that destroyed homes and shops, followed by an intense gun battle, residents said. Abdul Sattar, a local shop owner, said he had counted more than 60 dead and 150 wounded. He said many victims were mutilated.

"Some did not have heads, hands or legs. Some people were searching for their children and women," Mr. Sattar told The Associated Press.

The bazaar had been crowded with people from surrounding villages buying food to break their day-long Ramadan fast.

Violence has surged in Pakistan since July, when security forces stormed a radical mosque in central Islamabad, resulting in a bloodbath and sending the army back into the lawless tribal region that borders Afghanistan.

The continuing clashes come as the authority of Pakistan's military-led government is weakened. President Pervez Musharraf is set to relinquish his post as army leader and plans to hold general elections in the next three months.

The fighting will further harden feelings in the region against the Musharraf government and its alliance with the United States.

ARMED CLASHES Hundreds killed in tribal regions of Pakistan Thousands flee violence as troops hammer militant positions, leaving the mutilated bodies of soldiers and civilians in their wake 105

Thousands of families have poured out of Mir Ali and outlying villages, making their way on foot, in tractor-trailers and cars. Desperate locals used mosque loudspeakers to urge the army not to target civilian districts.

Separately, a powerful bomb ripped through a CD and video shop in Peshawar, the capital of the North West Frontier Province, which borders the tribal zone. Police said they suspect Islamic militants planted the bomb, which wounded at least 12.

The Pakistani army offensive in North Waziristan was launched after an army convoy was ambushed late on Saturday. About 90,000 troops are deployed in the tribal belt, a part of Pakistan traditionally governed only by local custom. It is widely believed that Osama bin Laden is hidden in the area, where the mountainous terrain provides the ideal environment for guerrilla warfare.

Last year, the Pakistani government negotiated a ceasefire with chiefs in the tribal area, which Washington said had given free rein to the militants. That agreement broke down in July, but Pakistan had been trying to exercise restraint until events over the weekend ignited an all-out battle.

Yesterday, a White House report stated that al-Qaeda has "regenerated a safe haven" in Pakistan's tribal areas.

Although a jirga, or meeting of tribal elders, has again been called in a bid for peace, the Pakistan army seems prepared to fight it out. The army said in a statement it had rejected a ceasefire proposed by the militants and will "continue punitive action till complete peace is restored." In an interview earlier this week, Major-General Waheed Arshad, the army spokesman, said that Pakistan would seek a new peace accord with the tribal leaders, despite the unpopularity of the last such deal with the Bush administration.

"What has it got to do with America? It is not their business," Gen. Arshad said.

The U.S. and British governments have provided strong backing to exiled former prime minister Benazir Bhutto, who says that she would be better able to negotiate with the tribal forces.

A senior member of her Pakistan People's Party, Senator Enver Baig, said: "This government has tried a peace agreement through the generals. But you cannot dictate to these people. If you show them your guns, they will pick up theirs."

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Pakistan

SUBJECT TERM: strife; terrorism; bombs; deaths

PERSONAL NAME: Pervez Musharraf

ORGANIZATION NAME: al-Qaeda; Taliban

ARMED CLASHES Hundreds killed in tribal regions of Pakistan Thousands flee violence as troops hammer

TERRORISM Al-Qaeda to intensify its efforts, U.S. report says

PUBLICATION: GLOBE AND MAIL

IDN: 072830019

DATE: 2007.10.10

PAGE: A19

BYLINE: BETH GORHAM

SECTION: International News

SOURCE: CP

EDITION: Metro

DATELINE: Washington DC

WORDS: 521

WORD COUNT: 563

BETH GORHAM The Canadian Press WASHINGTON Al-Qaeda is expected to increase attempts to infiltrate the United States from its secure base in Pakistan, the White House said yesterday, and there is growing concern they would use makeshift bombs in an attack.

The terrorist group responsible for the 2001 plots is seeking more co-operation with regional extremist groups, particularly "al-Qaeda in Iraq," now the "most visible and capable affiliate and the only one known to have expressed a desire to attack us here," said the new report.

"Moreover, although we have discovered only a handful of individuals in the United States with ties to al-Qaeda senior leadership, the group likely will intensify its efforts to place operatives here in the homeland." The National Strategy for Homeland Security, an update of one hurriedly issued in July of 2002, also said it's clear al-Qaeda wants to use improvised explosive devices and liquid explosives that are easy to make.

"We also must never lose sight of al-Qaeda's persistent desire for weapons of mass destruction, as the group continues to try to acquire and use chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear material." The White House report, which also addresses responding to natural disasters, said the war on terror has succeeded in capturing or killing most of those responsible for the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks after U.S.-backed forces toppled the Taliban regime that gave the terrorists refuge in Afghanistan.

But it acknowledged that al-Qaeda "protected its top leadership, replenished operational lieutenants and regenerated a safe haven in Pakistan's [tribal areas]." Mr. Bush, in a letter accompanying the report, said the United States is safer today, "but we are not yet safe." "Working with our partners and allies, we have broken up terrorist cells, disrupted attacks and saved American lives," he said in the letter.

"Although our enemies have not been idle, they have not succeeded in launching another attack on our soil in over six years due to the bravery and diligence of many." Critics argue that Mr. Bush handed al-Qaeda what it needed to regain its strength by invading Iraq in 2003, leaving terror mastermind Osama bin Laden to plot another major attack and creating new adherents to the cause.

While the report calls al-Qaeda the biggest threat to the United States, it said the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah "may increasingly consider attacking the homeland if it perceives the United States as posing a direct threat to the group or Iran, its principal sponsor." And it warned of homegrown radicals and violent

extremists within U.S. borders, as well as "single-issue" groups such as white supremacists, calling on authorities to go after them.

"One place where we have already witnessed radicalization is in our prison system," the report says, "but we must continue to identify other places violent propagators exploit within the United States, overseas and on the Internet." The report mentions the importance of tight border screening, saying more agents will be trained and deployed while technology will be increased. It notes that requiring passports from people crossing the border will cut the risk of fraudulent documents.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Iraq; Pakistan; United States

SUBJECT TERM:terrorism; foreign policy; iraq war

ORGANIZATION NAME: al-Qaeda

Soldiers accused in 'gay-bashing' incident

IDNUMBER 200710100105
PUBLICATION: The Windsor Star
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: C8
BYLINE: David Pugliese
SOURCE: CanWest New Service
WORD COUNT: 164

Two Canadian soldiers charged in what Dutch media are describing as a 'gay-bashing' incident are expected to be sentenced in the next several weeks.

The two soldiers, on leave from the mission in Afghanistan, were arrested on May 26 by Dutch police after an altercation in Amsterdam, a Canadian Defence department official confirmed.

The men were originally charged with attempted manslaughter, attempted criminal negligence causing bodily harm and public violence but there have been ongoing discussions to reduce those charges. The charges are under the Dutch criminal code and do not have an equivalent under the Canadian legal system, military officials said.

The Dutch news media reported that the two men were involved in beating up a gay man and prosecutors are asking for an eight-month sentence for one of the soldiers, who is 22-years-old. A second soldier, also 22, should be sentenced to six weeks in jail.

The men were given bail in July but are required to stay in the Netherlands, said Canadian Defence department official Jillian Van Acker.

A Call To Arms; The Canadian mission in Afghanistan represents the largest combat campaign our military has waged since the Korean War. A new book explains how it came to be

IDNUMBER	200710100078
PUBLICATION:	National Post
DATE:	2007.10.10
EDITION:	National
SECTION:	Issues & Ideas
PAGE:	A26
ILLUSTRATION:	Color Photo: Master—Corporal Brian Walsh, Canadian ForcesCombat Camera / Members of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Battle Group embark for Kandahar in July, 2002. ; Color Photo: / (See hardcopy for Photo Description) ;
BYLINE:	Janice Gross Stein And Eugene Lang
SOURCE:	Special to the National Post
NOTE:	First Of Four.
WORD COUNT:	1440

Within days of 9/11, Canada's leaders made a series of fundamental and far-reaching decisions. On Sept. 13, 2001, the prime minister quickly established an informal Cabinet committee to deal with the immediate crisis. Another ad hoc Cabinet committee on anti-terrorism was created on Oct. 2. The government moved with unprecedented speed to draft anti-terrorism legislation and bring it before Parliament. The new legislation was rushed through Parliament and it received royal assent before Christmas of 2001. Government ministries and agencies that had long been on the margins of power — the Department of the Solicitor General, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, the RCMP and Transport Canada — were suddenly central to the federal agenda.

The government was also getting ready to present its budget. Its theme was to be post-secondary education, and a great deal of work had already been done before 9/11. Now, at least as far as some ministers were concerned, all bets were off. The world had changed and Canada needed to respond to the new security challenges. The debate was intense. John Manley, then the foreign affairs minister, recalls disagreements in Cabinet about whether or not this budget should be changed to recognize the post-9/11 reality. "I was saying, 'Excuse me, it has to be a security budget, have you been reading the papers lately?' while some other ministers were saying 'Let's not be sucked in by the Americans, let's show we're still on our agenda.' I thought these people were nuts and I still do."

Manley's view carried the day. The 2001 budget, Paul Martin's last as finance minister, was fast-tracked, its focus shifted almost exclusively to national security. Delivered three months early, in December, it allocated nearly \$8-billion dollars to departments and agencies responsible for Canada's national security. Canadians had not seen a budget like this from their federal government in generations.

In Parliament, much of the conversation centred on how to keep goods and people moving freely across the border with the United States. Manley recalls telling his Cabinet colleagues at the time, "The #1 priority for Canada at this moment is to keep the border open." The foreign minister felt that the most effective way to deal with the challenge of the border was to allay American worries about continental security. In Question

A Call To Arms; The Canadian mission in Afghanistan represents the largest combat campaign of our military

Period in the House of Commons, ministers were asked again and again about the need for a common security perimeter with the United States. There were very few questions about Canada's military response to 9/11. Attention was focused at home, not abroad. Stockwell Day, then the leader of the opposition, asked Jean Chretien on Sept. 17 whether or not the government was considering anti-terror legislation. He followed up within a few minutes with a broader question: "Will the prime minister assure the House today that if the United States correctly identifies the sponsors of terrorism and engages in armed conflict, Canada will stand with the United States and our NATO allies and provide, if necessary, Canadian military forces?" This was one of only a handful of questions in the House of Commons about a potential deployment of the Canadian Forces that fall.

Meanwhile in the United States, Congress was appropriating billions of dollars to the Defence Department and the U.S. military for the invasion of Afghanistan. Yet by contrast, Canada's military was virtually shut out of the "security budget" of 2001. Manley reflected on this: "The priority in December, 2001, was how do we make sure we are not seen as the source of weakness and threat to the Americans." That meant focusing on the border. It was not the Canadian Forces that would secure the border and so they got very little attention as officials juggled financial priorities.

Although there were good reasons in the wake of 9/11 to increase spending on intelligence and border security, the neglect of the Canadian Forces was not unusual. The deputy minister of finance at the time, Kevin Lynch, a powerful Ottawa mandarin who enjoyed the respect of the Prime Minister's Office, was a well-known opponent of the Defence Department. In the mid-1990s under the Liberals, finance minister Paul Martin had cut the budget of the Canadian Forces by nearly a third to help eliminate the deficit. Now that there were urgent priorities in the aftermath of 9/11, priorities directly related to Canada's economy, Lynch and Martin were not about to put scarce dollars into the black hole of defence.

Although not all ministers shared this almost instinctive opposition to an increase in defence spending, many believed that the Canadian Forces were not particularly important or relevant to Canada's response to 9/11. "We were not anticipating long-term troop engagements on foreign shores," Manley explained. To be sure, the prime minister would be sending Canada's military to the Afghanistan region in some configuration for some period of time, but judging by the financial outlays to the forces in the wake of 9/11, any mission was to be modest, low cost, and short term. Early in, early out.

One of the blights on the landscape of down-town Ottawa is the grey, drab, 1970s-era twin-tower structure at 101 Colonel By Drive on the Rideau Canal. This is National Defence Headquarters—or NDHQ, as the several thousand military and civilian officials who work there know it.

NDHQ has North and South towers. The North Tower is filled almost entirely with civilian public servants. The South Tower is exclusively the domain of the Canadian Forces leadership. In the concourse between the two towers lies the National Defence Command Centre, locked behind vault-like doors. The Centre itself is on two floors and resembles, in its dramatic lighting, computer terminals and coloured phones with direct links to other decision-makers, the operations rooms that the movies have made familiar. This is the room where big operational decisions are made.

Personnel in the Department of National Defence (DND) and its associated agencies, a small fraction of whom actually work at NDHQ, make up the largest organization, public or private, in Canada — roughly 100,000 people spread throughout the country and around the world. It is the ultimate organizational paradox. DND is highly centralized, with all major strategic issues handled by an extraordinarily complex and labyrinthine civilian and military bureaucracy in Ottawa. At the same time, it is remarkably decentralized; commanders at military bases spread across the country and on missions abroad make many seemingly less-important decisions that ultimately have great impact on individual Canadians and communities.

A Call To Arms; The Canadian mission in Afghanistan represents the largest combat campaign of our military

National Defence is the only department of the federal government that has two "deputy heads" — a civilian deputy minister, who is the chief policy adviser to the minister and financial manager of the department, as well as a chief of the defence staff (CDS), who is the head of the Canadian Forces — both of whom report to the minister of national defence. The separation of the civilian and military in this organization is pronounced and often acrimonious. This is a place where military and civilian perspectives clash, where disagreements can be as vicious and protracted as any military campaign, stifling and often grinding decision-making to a halt. The comments of one former senior DND official to an incoming minister reflected the deep internal divisions: "Civilians can never trust the military leadership, not because they are not trustworthy, but because they have a fundamentally different world view." What is important to military leaders is often irrelevant to civilians, and what is vital to civilians is frequently of no importance whatsoever to the military.

This divergence in world views would play out many times, in many ways, over Canada's ongoing involvement in Afghanistan. — Excerpted with permission from *The Unexpected War*, by Janice Gross Stein and Eugene Lang. ©Janice Gross Stein and Eugene Lang, 2007. Reprinted with permission of Penguin Group (Canada).

TOMORROW

John McCallum goes to Afghanistan

KEYWORDS: POLITICIANS; POLITICAL PARTIES; GOVERNMENT; CANADA

Pakistani air strike pounds Islamists; Almost 200 Dead

IDNUMBER 200710100048
PUBLICATION: National Post
DATE: 2007.10.10
EDITION: National
SECTION: World
PAGE: A22
ILLUSTRATION: Map: Steve Murray, National Post / Pakistan Fighting.;
DATELINE: MIRANSHAH, Pakistan
BYLINE: Haji Mujtaba
SOURCE: Reuters, with files from Agence France–Presse
WORD COUNT: 348

MIRANSHAH, Pakistan – Pakistani warplanes yesterday pounded Islamist positions in North Waziristan as fighting raged for a fourth day in a tribal region known as an al-Qaeda and Taliban stronghold.

There has been intense fighting since Saturday night around the town of Mir Ali, and nearly 200 people had been killed before yesterday's air strike.

"Aircraft were used to attack Islamists positions near Mir Ali this afternoon," military spokesman Major General Waheed Arshad said.

Thousands of families were fleeing the town of 50,000 and outlying villages, making their way on foot, in tractor-trailers and cars.

Gen. Arshad had no details on casualties from yesterday's air strike, though residents and a security official in North Waziristan put the number of people killed at close to 50.

Air strikes earlier destroyed most houses around Essori, a village near Mir Ali where most of the fighting was concentrated.

"We don't have any place to live," said villager Mohammad Anwar. "We have sent our children to other areas because children are scared that the bombing could start again."

The military had put the death toll from the three days of fighting at 150 Islamists, and 45 soldiers.

Whereas the army has often used missile-firing helicopter gunships to attack Islamist targets in the past, the use of warplanes in the past few days is a new development.

The latest clashes began after Islamists ambushed a military convoy near Mir Ali, and casualties mounted as the army struck back using ground troops, artillery, helicopter gunships and fighter jets.

Sher Khan, a resident of Mir Ali, said nearly 90% of families in the town had fled, leaving behind a few men to guard their belongings.

"The main bazaar of Mir Ali is sealed by the army," Mr. Khan said. "All shops are closed. We have nothing to eat."

Violence has surged in the lawless Waziristan region since Islamists scrapped a peace deal with authorities in July.

Attacks by suicide bombers have become commonplace, especially after the army stormed a mosque in Islamabad in July to crush an armed student movement. Yesterday, a bomb wounded 17 people in a bazaar in Peshawar, the capital of the volatile North West Frontier Province.

The Islamists fled to the region after U.S.-led forces drove them out of Afghanistan in late 2001.

There have been growing fears in the West that al-Qaeda has regrouped in Waziristan and is organizing conspiracies in Western countries from there, while Islamist sources say Osama bin Laden's son and possible successor, Hamza, has recently arrived there.

KEYWORDS: TERRORISM

Liberals set to fight if necessary, Dion says; Blame Harper if election called: Liberal leader

IDNUMBER 200710100013

PUBLICATION: National Post

DATE: 2007.10.10

EDITION: National

SECTION: Canada

PAGE: A5

ILLUSTRATION: Color Photo: Chris Wattie, Reuters / The Harper Conservatives would regret triggering an election "Canadians do not want," Liberal leader Stephane Dion said in Ottawa yesterday. ;

DATELINE: OTTAWA

BYLINE: Juliet O'Neill

SOURCE: CanWest News Service

WORD COUNT: 685

OTTAWA – Liberal Leader Stephane Dion says his party does not want a fall election and if there is one, it will be because an intransigent Prime Minister Stephen Harper "will have set up his own defeat" in Parliament.

At a news conference yesterday, Mr. Dion readily admitted the Liberals have been damaged by three weeks of infighting. But he defiantly maintained the official Opposition will be ready to campaign and the minority Conservatives would regret triggering a vote "Canadians do not want."

Mr. Dion said a new national poll showing a decline in Liberal support was no surprise in light of recent internal troubles. And he referred to one of those difficulties — attacks by some Liberals on Liberal party national director Jamie Carroll — as "a sad affair" that now is in the hands of lawyers.

A Canadian Press–Decima Harris poll said Liberal support had dropped to 28% from 32% in June, while the Conservatives had risen to 35% from 29%. The Conservatives won a minority government in January, 2006, with 36% of the vote. The margin of error in the poll is plus or minus 3.1%, 19 times out of 20.

Mr. Dion, who has stayed out of public view since Mr. Harper told the opposition a week ago to "fish or cut bait" — to support the Oct. 16 Throne Speech and the legislative policies that will flow from it, or risk taking Canada into its third federal election in four years — sought to signal his readiness for action by shuffling his shadow cabinet of party critics.

The most significant change was the appointment of Bob Rae as foreign affairs critic. A seasoned politician and lawyer, Mr. Rae is one of Mr. Dion's former rivals for the party leadership who is waiting for a Toronto byelection to contest a seat in Parliament.

Mr. Dion also removed Quebec MP Raymonde Folco from her post as critic on La Francophonie and official languages, giving the job to long-time Ottawa MP Mauril Belanger. Ms. Folco was widely quoted during a recent dust-up over Mr. Dion's leadership as saying that her party leader "doesn't go down well, we know, in particular with Quebecers."

London, Ont., MP Sue Barnes was also removed from the shadow cabinet. Her post as public safety critic, going toe-to-toe with Stockwell Day on terrorism and the RCMP, was transferred to Vancouver MP Ujjal Dosanjh, whose job as foreign affairs critic went to Mr. Rae.

Ms. Barnes will chair a new caucus committee on justice issues.

Mr. Dion also gave a post to former Conservative MP Garth Turner, who will become "a special advisor for riding and constituency outreach."

Since Mr. Rae has no seat in the Commons, the MP entrusted with lobbying foreign affairs questions across the aisle is Dion confidant Bryon Wilfert, a Toronto-area MP who has headed a committee on the party's policy on Canada's role in Afghanistan. Mr. Wilfert said recently that there is no advantage to the Liberals of an election now. He advocates partial abstentions by the 96-member Liberal caucus in the Commons, in order to keep the government in power until the time is right for Liberal victory.

Mr. Dion said the Liberals "will keep all our options open" on the throne speech, in which the government will lay out its broad intentions and legislative agenda for the new session of Parliament.

"If through this Throne Speech we see that the Prime Minister wishes to reduce Parliament's role to that of a rubber stamp, he alone will be responsible for bringing Canada into an election," Mr. Dion asserted.

Mr. Harper said last week that he had spoken to Bloc leader Gilles Duceppe and NDP leader Jack Layton about the Throne Speech, pointedly leaving Mr. Dion out of the discussions.

LIBERAL CRITICS:

Stephane Dion shuffles his shadow cabinet.

Bob Rae becomes foreign affairs critic. Former Ontario NDP leader will need to quickly win a seat in the House of Commons.

Bernard Patry will chair the caucus committee on Canada and the World.

Dominic LeBlanc becomes Intergovernmental Affairs Critic, charged with "explaining how a Liberal Government led by Mr. Dion would improve the federal government's relations with the provinces."

Sue Barnes will chair the new caucus committee on justice. Garth Turner, former Tory MP, becomes special advisor for riding and constituency outreach, a "key political and fundraising role."

Paul Szabo becomes chairman of the Standing Committee on Access to Information and Privacy.

Source: National Post

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Arar suit unaffected by ruling

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Lawyers for Syrian-born Canadian Maher Arar say his bid to sue the U.S. government for secretly shipping him to Syria for torture is unaffected by a U.S. Supreme Court decision yesterday to reject another high-profile "extraordinary rendition" case.

They outlined differences between Arar's case and that of Khaled al-Masri, a Lebanese-born German citizen who has also seen lower courts cite national security concerns for refusing to consider his accusation the CIA kidnapped and tortured him.

"The state secrets assertion in (Arar's) case seeks to protect the reasons U.S. officials sent him to Syria instead of Canada, not whether they were even involved in his rendition, as in Mr. al-Masri's case," said the Centre for Constitutional Rights in New York.

The centre's executive director, Vincent Warren, said exposing new U.S. secrets is unnecessary because the long-running Canadian judicial inquiry into Arar's case exposed a "significant amount" of what had been secret about the U.S. involvement in his deportation.

"In the al-Masri case the U.S. government would never admit it was even involved in his rendition, whereas in Maher Arar's case it is quite clear that it was involved," Warren said. "We've got the goods on the U.S. government and the court doesn't need to rely on secret government information in order to determine what happened."

Al-Masri says the CIA abducted him in Macedonia in 2003 and flew him to Afghanistan for interrogation.

The Supreme Court decision in his appeal means a lower court's ruling that his case can't be heard on national security grounds will stand.