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AFGHANISTAN Escape by the slimmest of margins Afghan policeman narrowly survives disastrous attempt to save remote district from falling into Taliban control

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BYLINE: GRAEME SMITH

SECTION: International News

EDITION: Metro

DATELINE: KANDAHAR, AFGHANISTAN

WORDS: 1227

WORD COUNT: 1147

GRAEME SMITH KANDAHAR, AFGHANISTAN A grim smile breaks the hardened skin of Nazar Mohammed's face as his relatives place yet another garland of fake flowers around his neck.

The policeman, about 35 years old, says his family members think it's a miracle that he has arrived home alive, and they're celebrating it like the birth of a new son.

"They believed I was dead this week," he said, reclining on a cushion, patting the barrel of his machine gun with a thoughtful gesture.

"Now I'm back, and they say it's like I am born again." Only three men from Mr. Mohammed's unit of about 70 police have returned to Kandahar city after a disastrous attempt to save a remote district from falling into Taliban control, his superiors say.

Officially, the Afghan government says five police officers died in the rescue mission for the besieged village of Ghorak, about 85 kilometres northwest of Kandahar city, but officers from the unit that fought the battles say the toll was far higher.

Zabit Abdul Jalil, provincial commander of the 05 Police Standby Battalion, says a group of 70 officers went north toward Ghorak on Saturday, but 35 were killed and most others deserted.

Mr. Mohammed said he personally watched about 20 men die in the frantic rout. Another five were injured, he said, but he last saw them lying in the back of abandoned pickup trucks as the Taliban chased their colleagues into the mountains. He now believes the injured men are captured or dead.

"The government is lying," he said. "It was worse than they told everybody." Mr. Mohammed's story can't be independently confirmed, but his account was supported by his superior officers. As a proud member of the pro-government Alokzai tribe who lives in a neighbourhood of Kandahar reserved for civil servants, police and soldiers, Mr.

Mohammed seemed reluctant to admit how badly the operation had fared.

It started on Friday, when 50 officers from the 05 Battalion joined about 20 from the local Maywand district force and responded to calls for help from the northern police outpost. The Ghorak officers were calling for assistance, he said, because they were surrounded by Taliban and 18 injured police in the district centre had no way to get medical treatment.

The convoy hit a roadside bomb along the way, injuring several officers and forcing them to turn back. Eight police pickup trucks set out again at dawn on Saturday, roaring out from among the tall evergreens at the Maywand District Centre.

They stayed off the main roads to avoid Taliban bombs, the trucks jouncing across the dusty flatlands with their beds full of heavily armed police. The convoy halted when an officer accidentally shot himself in the foot and had to be ferried back, but then the trucks resumed their journey.

Two or three hours later, driving up a lush valley between mountains, the terrain forced them back onto a road that passed through a village known as Shina. They were passing between mud-walled houses, interspersed with orchards of almond and apricot trees, when, Mr. Mohammed said, the Taliban opened fire from several directions.

The first volley of rocket-propelled grenades and machine-gun bullets destroyed one police vehicle, he said, but the others drove off the road and the police retreated east across an open plain toward the mountains. Insurgents on motorbikes and driving hatchback sedans gave close chase, he said, and followed them into the foothills.

"We were very afraid," Mr. Mohammed said. "This was an unfamiliar place, and we didn't know where to run." Officers bailed out of their vehicles, leaving the dead and wounded behind, and climbed into the mountains. Looking back, they could see columns of smoke as the Taliban apparently torched their trucks.

The insurgents appeared to know the mountains better than the police; they drove their vehicles onto lookout points and fired at the officers, who scattered into small groups.

Mr. Mohammed's band of eight men continued running through the mountain passes from mid-afternoon until dawn the next morning, he said.

Exhausted and thirsty, they stopped at a mountain spring. They had no containers for water but they soaked their clothes and stopped to rest. One of the officers was cleaning his Kalashnikov rifle when he inadvertently triggered the weapon, Mr. Mohammed said. Soon after the gunshot had stopped echoing through the mountains, he said, the Taliban descended on their hiding place.

Two of them were killed and four surrendered, but Mr. Mohammed said he ran away with another colleague, clambering among the rocky outcrops.

Telling the story, the policeman held out his hands and showed the fresh cuts on his fingers and palms, saying he was desperate to escape as he scrambled his way into the mountains.

The pair of officers eventually found a nook to shelter through the hottest daylight hours of Sunday, he said, then trekked through the night toward friendly villages to the southeast.

They walked across a desert and reached the home of a distant relative on Monday morning, he said.

By that point, a convoy of Canadian vehicles was rolling north to help the beleaguered police. Mr. Mohammed said he heard of the Canadians' assistance after the fact, but he wishes it had arrived sooner.

"We called for help, but the foreigners didn't send any planes or helicopters to fight the Taliban," he said. "Why don't they want to fight? If you don't have bravery, you can't live in Afghanistan." gsmith@globeandmail.com ***** 'I wish we had not sent 05 Battalion into Panjwai' A police unit blamed for causing instability in the districts west of Kandahar city has withdrawn its men from the region.

The 05 Police Standby Battalion became notorious for corruption, desertions and infighting with other security forces during its short-lived stint this spring in Panjwai and Zhari districts.

Kandahar's police chief has now acknowledged that sending the 05 Battalion into the dangerous river valley southwest of the city was a mistake, and the unit's commander confirmed in an interview that all his officers have pulled out.

Zabit Abdul Jalil, provincial commander of the 05 Police Standby Battalion, said the remnants of his force returned to the city over the past several days. He commanded 300 men when he took control seven months ago, he said, but the force has largely fallen apart.

"I've lost so many," the commander said. "I don't even know how many remain." In a meeting this week with Lieutenant-Colonel Rob Walker, the Canadian battle group commander, the new provincial police chief sounded apologetic about the episode.

"The 05 was once a very disciplined and powerful force," Sayed Agha Saqib said. "Unfortunately, at the moment they're just a militia." Lt-Col. Walker said "I wish we had not sent 05 Battalion into western Panjwai district." The police chief continued: "In 05, most of the personnel are not the right people. They don't support the government, they're just there to support themselves. Almost every one of them, you could say, has been involved in killing and raping and who knows what." "It upset the security situation in Panjwai district," the Canadian commander said.

The policeman nodded.

"I don't see any benefit to them being there," he said.

Graeme Smith

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Afghanistan; Ghorak

SUBJECT TERM: strife; police; deaths; internal security

ORGANIZATION NAME: Taliban

MILITARY STRATEGY New Afghan rhetoric a ploy to sway Liberals, defence watchers say

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DATELINE: Ottawa ONT

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WORD COUNT: 583

BILL CURRY OTTAWA New plans for Canadian troops in Afghanistan are clearly aimed at pressing divided Liberals to support a mission beyond 2009, defence experts say.

Government and military officials are publicizing a change in focus to the mission that would see Afghan civilians move quickly through military training and onto the front lines. Direct combat by Canadian troops would be reduced as they switch to a supporting role for the emerging Afghan army.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper recently used the phrase "new mission" to describe any Canadian activity in Afghanistan beyond Parliament's commitment to February, 2009. His language expanded on previous comments, in which he said any military activity beyond 2009 would occur only with parliamentary consensus.

"I think he is genuinely reaching out to the Liberal Party," said David Bercuson, director of the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies at the University of Calgary. Dr. Bercuson predicted the Tory argument to the Liberals will be that a leading NATO country like Canada cannot pull out entirely from Afghanistan.

"I also think there are pressures within the military to take the emphasis off what is going on right now because the effort is humongous," he said. "I don't think the military is unhappy with a change in focus in the mission." The executive director of the Conference of Defence Associations offered a similar take on the government's recent comments.

"They won't convince NDP," Alain Pellerin said. "It's mainly for the Liberals. They're sort of split 50-50 to a large extent and I think there is a desire for a party that aspires to be the government again that they can't very well afford to say 'We're leaving in 2009 and whether there's a NATO country that replaces or not, we're leaving.' It wouldn't be honest." If the Prime Minister was in fact reaching out, the Liberals were not in any mood yesterday to entertain the offer.

Liberal defence critic Denis Coderre said he wants Defence Minister Gordon O'Connor fired and a 2009 exit plan in "black and white on paper" before discussing what might happen after 2009.

"We're saying we're getting out of the combat mission. Find another country," Mr. Coderre said.

The Liberal MP said he can't trust the Prime Minister's latest comments about an end to the current mission because Mr. Harper previously said he opposed arbitrary deadlines.

NDP Leader Jack Layton said recent comments on the mission by Chief of the Defence Staff General Rick Hillier are confusing. The NDP will continue to insist on an immediate troop withdrawal, Mr.

Layton said.

"To have the general musing about new approaches makes you wonder what we have a Minister of Defence for. What does he stand for?" he asked.

"I worry about the confusion that we're hearing here. It's looking a little too much like policy on the fly . . . and that should concern all Canadians." Gen. Hillier gave an interview to a Quebec City newspaper this week as soldiers from CFB Valcartier prepare for their first six-month tour to Kandahar beginning on Sunday.

Training Afghan soldiers to take on front-line combat assignments will be the main focus for Quebec troops, the general told Le Soleil.

However, direct combat will remain a part of the Canadian mission until more Afghan troops can be trained.

"Our priority is to move from a situation in which we lead the combats with the support of the Afghans to one where the Afghans lead the offensives with our support," he said, estimating 3,000 Afghan soldiers will be in place by August.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Canada; Afghanistan

SUBJECT TERM:foreign policy; defence; strife; internal security; government; political

ORGANIZATION NAME: Armed Forces; Conservative Party of Canada; Liberal Party

THE AFGHAN MISSION: HOW TO SELL IT AT HOME

Change tune on war, PM told Adopt softer vocabulary to reassure skeptical public, report says

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SECTION: National News

EDITION: Metro

DATELINE: Ottawa ONT

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ALAN FREEMAN OTTAWA The Harper government has been told to stop referring to "fighting terrorism" and the Sept. 11 attacks, and to banish the phrase "cut and run" from its vocabulary if it is to persuade a skeptical public that the military mission in Afghanistan is worth pursuing.

A public-opinion report says only 40 per cent of respondents across Canada, and almost none in Quebec, support the deployment. To change the perceptions, it recommends putting the emphasis on "rebuilding," "enhancing the lives of women and children," and "peacekeeping." The report to Foreign Affairs was prepared last month by The Strategic Counsel. It paints a bleak picture of weak public support for the military mission, for which the firm blames "unbalanced, mostly negative" media coverage of the war and misperceptions about the mission's purpose.

Only 40 per cent of Canadians support the mission, according to Strategic Counsel data. And the firm says the public views information from Ottawa "through a thick lens of cynicism." "They feel that much of what government says is propaganda, intended simply to appeal to the voting public and to spin stories in a positive manner," the report points out.

The report is based on 14 focus-group discussions of two hours each, conducted in seven locations across Canada last November.

Canadians of different age groups from rural, urban and suburban regions of the country participated. Strongest support appeared among participants who were 36 and older. In Quebec – focus groups were conducted in Laval and Drummondville – "support was virtually non-existent." The report warns that the Afghan mission could be "a lightning rod" for the government. And because of "continuously negative" media reports on casualties and lack of results, the legitimacy of Canada's involvement could be questioned. "Suspicion and cynicism are taking hold in the absence of hard facts and positive stories about progress," the report states.

"There is a growing belief that the government is trying to avoid talking about the issue to play down the grim reality that the mission is failing." The firm said the "communications landscape" is dominated by mounting casualties, and a feeling that "things are getting worse." Many Canadians believe that the soldiers are part of a U.S.-led mission, and some even think Canada invaded Afghanistan.

Many respondents believe that the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are a U.S.-led response to the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on New York and Washington.

The report urges the government to promote the fact that Canada has highly professional troops who are "helping the people of Afghanistan" and "getting results even if it's difficult." The consultants say the public is divided into soft supporters, wafflers and strong opponents.

The soft supporters often see the mission as one of peacekeeping, and worry that there is no overall plan or clear markers for success.

Most of those consulted were viewed as wafflers, who are "unclear on exactly why Canadians are in Afghanistan, what they are doing and what we can expect to be accomplished." While they support restoring human rights to Afghans, they are not sure how being in the country can benefit Canadians.

The report said the government needs to give the wafflers more "concrete examples of progress, focusing on the benefits for Afghan women and children." The strong opponents were in Quebec and among those between 18 and 35 years old. They believed that conflict is best resolved through peaceful means and that it is an American fight.

These Canadians believe that Afghanistan is "a hopeless cause," whose economy is dominated by opium and will be reduced to chaos after the Canadians and other NATO forces withdraw. Strategic Counsel said little can be done to change these views, but efforts should be made to "blunt the edges of their opposition." The firm recommends disseminating figures on the number of schools built, jobs created and poppy fields eradicated.

It also says the government should find spokespersons, including prominent Afghan women, the Afghan ambassador to Canada and "key Canadian journalists" committed to in-depth stories, naming The Globe and Mail's Stephanie Nolen and Radio-Canada's Celine Galipeau as examples.

The report did not say how these journalists could be persuaded to take on this role.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Canada; Afghanistan

SUBJECT TERM: foreign policy; foreign aid; defence; strife; government; political; public opinion polls

IN BRIEF TTC asked to consider yellow-ribbon campaign

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SECTION: Toronto News

EDITION: Metro

DATELINE:

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Jennifer Lewington In a move that could rekindle a heated debate on Canada's role in Afghanistan, Bob Kinnear, president of Local 113 of the Amalgamated Transit Union, asked the Toronto Transit Commission to join the "support our troops" yellow-ribbon campaign.

At its meeting this week, the TTC postponed a decision, opting to consult the city on a comprehensive policy on all city-owned vehicles.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Toronto; Afghanistan

SUBJECT TERM:public transit

ORGANIZATION NAME: Armed Forces; Amalgamated Transit Union; Toronto Transit Commission

Convicted torturer sues Associated Press for libel

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WORD COUNT: 143

A U.S. citizen once convicted of running a private jail in Afghanistan for terror suspects and torturing them has sued the Associated Press, alleging it engaged in defamation, libel and slander.

Jack Idema, a former Green Beret from Fayetteville, N.C., filed the lawsuit Tuesday in U.S. District Court in Manhattan seeking at least \$110,000 US and other unspecified damages.

Idema was convicted of charges including torture and operating a private jail and was sentenced to 10 years in prison in Afghanistan in September 2004. He was later pardoned by Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai and left that country in June.

In his lawsuit, Idema accused the Associated Press of ignoring truths about his work in Afghanistan to generate a "hot, salient and torrid story of abuse in Afghanistan" to compete with a CBS story about allegations of torture at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq.

Skepticism running high over war in Afghanistan; Sixty-seven per cent of Canadians believe number of casualties is 'unacceptable'

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PAGE: A8

DATELINE: OTTAWA

SOURCE: Canadian Press

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WORD COUNT: 548

A growing number of Canadians, especially in Quebec, say the rising death toll among troops in Afghanistan is too high a price to pay for helping the troubled country, suggests a new poll.

A Canadian Press-Decima Research survey shows 67 per cent of those asked believe the number of casualties has been unacceptable, a five-percentage-point rise from a poll taken a little over a month ago.

Only 25 per cent of respondents said the number of killed and wounded was acceptable, in a survey taken following the most recent deaths of six soldiers in a roadside bomb attack.

Bruce Anderson, chief executive of Decima Research, said Canadians are clearly becoming more doubtful about whether progress is being made, in light of the deaths of 66 soldiers and one diplomat in Afghanistan.

"In the absence of more evidence of progress, and in the wake of still more deaths of Canadian soldiers, it's clear that discomfort with the mission is growing, and people are questioning whether the lives being lost so honourably are being lost in vain," said Anderson.

Of particular concern to Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government is the result showing skepticism runs highest in Quebec, where 76 per cent said the sacrifice is unacceptable. This comes as the Royal 22nd Regiment — the famed Vandoos — prepare to take over the battle group in Kandahar next month.

"Given the importance of Quebec to the Conservatives in terms of trying to fashion a strong win in the next election campaign, the fact these numbers are deteriorating" should be cause for concern, Anderson said.

Even among the most ardent supporters of the war — people who identify themselves as Conservatives — doubt has crept in. The number of Tories who say the price tag has been too high increased by eight percentage points since the beginning of June, to 48 per cent.

Bloodied by the last 16 months of fighting in the deserts of southern Afghanistan, and with a year and a half left in the country's combat commitment, a respected historian said Canadians are at a crossroads.

"Canadians have to decide whether they want to win," said Desmond Morton, a professor at Montreal's McGill University.

Anderson agreed that the latest deaths could mark a tipping point for involvement in the war-torn region.

"Are we past the point where the confidence level can be restored?" he said.

"If we talk about restoring confidence to the point where Canadians would support an extension of the mission, we may well be past that point. However, circumstances can always change. The problem for Canadians is that they don't believe we can win this conflict."

Harper has repeatedly hinted he may be prepared to end Canada's combat role when the current mission expires in February 2009, but said the question of an extension would be debated by Parliament, likely next year.

Morton says Canada has never lost a war and if Anderson's assessment of the public mind is correct, the country is setting itself up "for its first international humiliation of an unquestioned kind."

Over the last few months, Morton said, he's often wondered whether the public is talking itself into defeat and if Canadians have the stomach to fight the way our parents and grandparents did during two world wars and the Korean conflict.

"It is sad when (casualties) happen," the soldier-turned-historian said in a telephone interview.

"It was sad when it happened in 1944, in 1918 or 1917. In fact, in 1918 we suffered our heaviest casualties of the First World War, by far. Did anybody in Canada notice? No, because we were winning.

"If you pitch this war as hopeless we cannot win and every death is a needless sacrifice."

Drug addiction rate soars in Afghanistan

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SECTION: News

PAGE: 26

BYLINE: CP

DATELINE: KANDAHAR, Afghanistan

WORD COUNT: 117

Seven years ago, 22-year-old Roorstam didn't even know heroin existed.

Five years ago, frustrated by efforts to find a job, he tried a new drug offered by a friend, made from the poppy flowers grown near his parents' home in Uruzgan province.

Today, he sits in a Kandahar rehab centre, one of thousands of Afghans addicted to heroin and fighting for scarce treatment resources even as poppy cultivation booms.

Dr. Sayed Jalal, the program director for the Kandahar Centre, said he thinks there are at least 4,000 heroin smokers in Kandahar city alone.

"Before the war, before the 30 years, there were no heroin addicts," Jalal said.

Under the Taliban, poppy cultivation was close to totally eradicated. With the fall of the Taliban in 2001, scores of farmers returned to poppies as a steady source of income.

According to the UN Office on Drugs, the country is now responsible for 92% of global illicit opium production. KEYWORDS=NATIONAL

Death toll troubling Canadians Poll pans cost of Afghan war

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PUBLICATION: The Calgary Sun

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PAGE: 26

BYLINE: CP

DETELINE: OTTAWA

WORD COUNT: 237

A growing number of Canadians, especially in Quebec, say the rising death toll among troops in Afghanistan is too high a price to pay for helping the troubled country, suggests a new poll.

A Canadian Press–Decima survey shows 67% of those asked believe the number of casualties has been unacceptable, a five–percentage–point rise from a poll taken a little over a month ago.

Only 25% said the number of killed and wounded was acceptable, in a survey taken following the most recent deaths of six soldiers in a roadside bomb attack.

Bruce Anderson, CEO of Decima Research, said Canadians are clearly becoming more doubtful about whether progress is being made, in light of the deaths of 66 soldiers and one diplomat in Afghanistan.

"In the absence of more evidence of progress, and in the wake of still more deaths of Canadian soldiers, it's clear that discomfort with the mission is growing, and people are questioning whether the lives being lost so honourably are being lost in vain," said Anderson.

Of particular concern to Prime Minister Stephen Harper is the result showing skepticism runs highest in Quebec, where 76% said the sacrifice is unacceptable.

This comes as the Royal 22nd Regiment — the famed Vandoos — prepare to take over the battle group in Kandahar next month.

"Given the importance of Quebec to the Conservatives in terms of trying to fashion a strong win in the next election campaign, the fact these numbers are deteriorating" should be cause for concern, said Anderson.

Even among the most ardent supporters of the war — people who identify themselves as Conservatives — doubt has crept in.

The number of Tories who say the price tag has been too high increased 8% since the beginning of June, to 48%. **KEYWORDS=NATIONAL**

Burqa-wearing cleric predicting Islamic revolution

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EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 22

ILLUSTRATION: photo by Khalid Tanveer, AP Mourners gather around an ambulance carrying the coffin of pro-Taliban Pakistani cleric Abdul Rashid Ghazi, who was killed in the siege of the Red Mosque, during a funeral in his village.

BYLINE: KHALID TANVEER, AP

DATELINE: BASTI ABDULLAH, Pakistan

WORD COUNT: 213

A week after being caught fleeing in a woman's burqa, a radical cleric gave a fiery funeral oration for his slain brother yesterday.

Chief cleric Maulana Abdul Aziz predicted the bloody siege at Islamabad's Red Mosque will bring "Islamic revolution" to Pakistan.

Hours later, President Pervez Musharraf went on TV to vow his government will crush extremists and move against religious schools like those at the Red Mosque that breed them.

Musharraf also said security forces along the border with Afghanistan will get tanks and other modern weapons to bolster the campaign against militants.

The frontier is a haven for al-Qaida and Taliban, and the U.S. has been pushing Pakistan to root them out.

"Terrorism and extremism has not ended in Pakistan," Musharraf said. "But it is our resolve that we will eliminate extremism and terrorism wherever it exists. Extremism and terrorism will be defeated."

In an apparent response to the eight-day siege at the Red Mosque that left 108 people dead, a suicide bomber attacked the office of a top government official near the Afghan border yesterday.

Thousands of angry tribesmen mourned three of the militants killed at the mosque. The army's assault on the Red Mosque militants has given hardliners a new rallying cry and sparked calls from al-Qaida and Taliban leaders for revenge attacks.

But the crackdown also has raised Musharraf's standing among moderate Pakistanis worried about extremism.

Musharraf urged those in charge of madrassas, or Islamic religious schools, to eradicate hatred and violence from the minds of their students.

"We will never allow any madrasa or mosque to be misused like the Red Mosque or the Jamia Hafsa," he said. KEYWORDS=WORLD

Afghan justice on the defensive

SOURCETAG 0707130958
PUBLICATION: The Calgary Sun
DATE: 2007.07.13
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Editorial/Opinion
PAGE: 15
BYLINE: MINDELLE JACOBS
WORD COUNT: 430

Working as a criminal lawyer in Vancouver's squalid Downtown Eastside can be depressing, but at least you don't get thrown out of the courtroom just for daring to show up.

So it was quite shock for lawyer Roxane Vachon, who went to Afghanistan to help local lawyers defend poor citizens, to discover that defence lawyers were practically considered vermin.

When she first went to the troubled country in 2005, she and the Afghan lawyers she was mentoring were routinely tossed out of courtrooms and barred from prisons.

NOVELTY

Defence lawyers were viewed at best as "a cute little novelty" or, at worst, with downright hostility, recalls Vachon, 40, who spent two three-month stints in Afghanistan.

Ordering Vachon and a local lawyer, out of the courtroom one day, one judge declared: "We don't need westerners here and we don't need lawyers."

Vachon left the courtroom, but only long enough to change tactics. During a break in the proceedings, she knocked on the door of the judge's office, invited herself for tea and explained she was training Afghan lawyers to help Afghans using local laws.

After hearing her out, the judge said he'd welcome her into his court anytime.

"You've got to win them over one person at a time," says Vachon.

It seems to be working. The Taliban may still be trying to terrorize Afghanistan back into a barbarous theocracy but, thanks to Vachon and other international lawyers, the rule of law is slowly taking shape.

Yesterday, Ottawa announced almost \$3 million in new funding for the initiative, which has been extended until 2010. The project, started in 2003, is run by the Montreal-based International Criminal Defence Attorneys Association (ICDAA).

The ultimate goal is to create an Afghan-run legal aid service that operates independently.

The expectation is that by 2009, Afghanistan's legal aid system will be virtually autonomous, says Neil Burron, the ICDAA's Afghanistan project manager.

The organization runs legal aid offices in five Afghan cities and a sixth branch is scheduled to open by the end of the year. As of last month, international and local lawyers had helped more than 3,000 indigent Afghans.

Two more Canadian lawyers will go to Afghanistan over the next year to train their Afghan counterparts. After that, says Burron, the Afghans will be expected to run the offices with continued financial support from the Canadian government.

"We've created an industry of criminal defence lawyers in a country that didn't know the first thing about representing an accused," says Vachon

Sometimes, though, the defence lawyers don't find out about cases until it's too late. She recalls a woman who was charged with murdering her missing husband, although it was suspected he simply moved to Iran and remarried.

The woman's teen daughter was also charged with murder.

All Vachon and her colleagues could do was get the daughter a shorter sentence in a juvenile jail. The mother, however, got life in prison.

DIRT HOLE

"It's just heartbreaking," says Vachon. "Can you imagine spending the rest of your life in a dirt hole?"

Over the years, she has learned to be hyper-aware to stay safe. In 2005, a suicide bomber blew up her guest house, killing three people. She escaped unharmed.

Bombs exploded regularly in Kabul while she was there, but Vachon remained remarkably unrattled. Some of her fondest memories are of having tea on rooftop terraces. "It's not all sand and guns and death."

Quitting Afghanistan won't save us from terrorists

IDNUMBER 200707130053

PUBLICATION: Times & Transcript (Moncton)

DATE: 2007.07.13

SECTION: Opinion

PAGE: D7

BYLINE: Charles W. Moore For The Times & Transcript

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WORD COUNT: 815

The tragic and horrible deaths of another six Canadian soldiers and their Afghan interpreter in a mammoth roadside bomb attack last week has predictably cranked up the volume and increased the stridency of calls from the peacenik crowd and fellow-traveling Opposition politicians to bail out of Afghanistan, either immediately, as the NDP's Jack Layton would have it, or when Canada's current commitment expires in 2009.

The thing is that if the NATO coalition, including Canada, doesn't have the intestinal fortitude to carry on in Afghanistan until the job there is finished, which it will emphatically not be by 2009, then we really have sent our troops on a futile fool's errand (no slight intended to the soldiers' noble, courageous, and honourable effort) and will all but guarantee that the sacrifices of those who have died and who will yet die there are in vain.

Even Prime Minister Stephen Harper is wavering, with his politically pragmatic affirmation that unless a "consensus" to carry on after 2009 can be arrived at, Canada will be pulling out.

Now, it's true that Canada (along with the U.S., the UK and a handful of others) cannot be expected to shoulder the combat heavy lifting indefinitely with little or no help from the other 30-odd countries nominally involved with the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), most of whose troops are under orders to keep away from the pointy end of the fighting, leaving it up to Canadian, British, and U.S. soldiers to take the risks and the casualties.

This is not right, and I agree with Canadian General (Ret.) Lewis MacKenzie who allowed last week that if other nations don't step up, he won't be at the front of the line demanding that Canada's combat commitment be extended past 2009.

That's a sensible, but profoundly disheartening view. The central point that the "cut and run" enthusiasts are either incapable of grasping or unwilling to acknowledge is that we're now in the sixth year of what is essentially the Third World War, and our participation is not optional. As U.S. Ambassador to Canada David Wilkins observed last week, if we pull out of Afghanistan, the Taliban and Al Qaeda will likely just follow us home, a point underscored by recent events in the UK, and the major terrorist bomb plot intercepted and thwarted here in Canada last year.

These people are not going to just leave us alone, as 9/11 spectacularly illustrated.

Former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger recently noted to the Atlantic Monthly's David Samuels that "I'm of the view that (President Bush), vilified as he is, ridiculed as he is by many people, is basically right about the nature of the danger. Not necessarily about all the steps that he has taken. But this is a global danger. It is implacable. It needs to be defeated."

What is truly ridiculous and deserving of vilification is the assertion by Jack Layton and other lefty peacenik activists that we should be "negotiating" for peace with the Taliban. "Negotiate" with who, exactly?

The Taliban has no centralized leadership or command structure — it's a loosely-organized terrorist movement, and in any case hasn't the slightest interest in "negotiating" anything other than unconditional Western withdrawal. They are doctrinaire jihadists, as such only interested in perpetual war, not peace.

Secondly, it is immoral and irresponsible to make deals with the devil, and the Taliban are evil. It is pertinent to recall what Afghanistan was like when they were in power there prior to 2001.

Beatings and arbitrary public executions were routine including torture of children. Females were prohibited from attending school, and women subjected to routine, systematic oppression. Anyone who objected was killed.

Consequently, any bargaining with the Taliban would amount to a farce more risible than Neville Chamberlain's negotiations with Adolf Hitler in 1938, and his pathetic "peace our time" declaration. The Taliban can be safely assumed to be liars without honour or good faith, and anything they might nominally agree to at a bargaining table would be reneged upon as soon as the last NATO plane went wheels-up.

The Taliban and Al Queda want nothing less than to "destroy our entire way of life," as Britain's new security chief Admiral Sir Alan West observed last weekend.

They are waging, as I noted, the Third World War, and it will not be conveniently over by February, 2009. West projected the fight against terror could take upwards of 15 years.

Others have suggested 30 years is a more realistic time frame, and I suspect that's optimistic unless the Western democracies' voting public can get it through their skulls that we're going to have to fight these factions to the death: 9/11 should have demonstrated that, but obviously it didn't.

How many more 9/11s will it take?

— Charles W. Moore is a Nova Scotia based freelance writer and editor. His articles, features, and commentaries have appeared in more than 40 magazines and newspapers in Canada, the U.S., the U.K., and Australia.

Canadians believe Afghan casualties unacceptable: poll; Discomfort with the mission growing, says poll researcher

IDNUMBER 200707130009

PUBLICATION: Times & Transcript (Moncton)

DATE: 2007.07.13

SECTION: News

PAGE: C9

COPYRIGHT: © 2007 Times & Transcript (Moncton)

WORD COUNT: 587

A growing number of Canadians, especially in Quebec, say the rising death toll among troops in Afghanistan is too high a price to pay for helping the troubled country, suggests a new poll.

A Canadian Press–Decima Research survey shows 67 per cent of those asked believe the number of casualties has been unacceptable, a five–percentage–point rise from a poll taken a little over a month ago. Only 25 per cent of respondents said the number of killed and wounded was acceptable, in a survey taken following the most recent deaths of six soldiers in a roadside bomb attack.

Bruce Anderson, CEO of Decima Research, said Canadians are clearly becoming more doubtful about whether progress is being made, in light of the deaths of 66 soldiers and one diplomat in Afghanistan.

"In the absence of more evidence of progress, and in the wake of still more deaths of Canadian soldiers, it's clear that discomfort with the mission is growing, and people are questioning whether the lives being lost so honourably are being lost in vain," said Anderson.

Of particular concern to the government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper is the result showing skepticism runs highest in Quebec, where 76 per cent said the sacrifice is unacceptable. This comes as the Royal 22nd Regiment — the famed Vandoos — prepare to take over the battle group in Kandahar next month.

"Given the importance of Quebec to the Conservatives in terms of trying to fashion a strong win in the next election campaign, the fact these numbers are deteriorating" should be cause for concern, said Anderson.

Even among the most ardent supporters of the war — people who identify themselves as Conservatives — doubt has crept in. The number of Tories who say the price tag has been too high increased by eight percentage points since the beginning of June, to 48 per cent.

Bloodied by the last 16 months of fighting in the deserts of southern Afghanistan, and with a year and a half left in the country's combat commitment, a respected historian said Canadians are at a crossroads.

"Canadians have to decide whether they want to win," said Desmond Morton, a professor at Montreal's McGill University.

Anderson agreed that the latest deaths could mark a tipping point for Canadian involvement in war–torn region.

"Are we past the point where the confidence level can be restored?" he said.

"If we talk about restoring confidence to the point where Canadians would support an extension of the mission, we may well be past that point. However, circumstances can always change. The problem for Canadians is that they don't believe we can win this conflict."

Harper has repeatedly hinted he may be prepared to end Canada's combat role when the current mission expires in February 2009, but said the question of an extension would be debated by Parliament, likely next year.

Morton says Canada has never lost a war and if Anderson's assessment of the public mind is correct, the country is setting itself up "for its first international humiliation of an unquestioned kind."

Over the last few months, Morton said, he's often wondered whether the public is talking itself into defeat and if Canadians have the stomach to fight the way our parents and grandparents did during two world wars and the Korean conflict.

"It is sad when (casualties) happen," the soldier-turned-historian said in a telephone interview.

"It was sad when it happened in 1944, in 1918 or 1917. In fact, in 1918 we suffered our heaviest casualties of the First World War, by far. Did anybody in Canada notice? No, because we were winning. If you pitch this war as a hopeless war we cannot win and every death is a needless sacrifice."

The telephone poll of just over 1,000 people was conducted between July 5 and July 9 — after the most recent Canadian deaths in Afghanistan.

U.S. fears about al-Qaida attacks could damage trade: exporters; Homeland security czar warns of Canada border security issues

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PUBLICATION: Times & Transcript (Moncton)

DATE: 2007.07.13

SECTION: News

PAGE: C10

COPYRIGHT: © 2007 Times & Transcript (Moncton)

WORD COUNT: 301

A pointed warning from the czar of homeland security in the United States about the threat of a revitalized al-Qaida launching an attack from Canada fosters uncertainty which could damage cross-border trade, Canadian business leaders said yesterday.

Brian McCready, vice-president of Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters in Alberta and Saskatchewan, took U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff to task for saying Americans will have to sacrifice economic interests in favour of increased security at the border.

McCready said the oil and gas industry in Alberta is investing significantly in security, and that Chertoff's comments are being used "as a political play rather than looking at the facts."

The comments won't be "well-received" in Alberta, because the U.S. and Canada already have a specifically designed joint-border facility in that province, he added.

"There's been definite co-operation to create a very good border crossing," he said.

A new report from American terror analysts suggests al-Qaida has been taking advantage of a safe haven in Pakistan near the Afghanistan border to restore its operational strength to levels not seen since the months since Sept. 11, 2001, the Associated Press reported yesterday.

Earlier this week, Chertoff told the Chicago Tribune that terrorists using phony documents could hit targets in Buffalo and Detroit.

Stockwell Day, Minister of Public Safety, said in a statement that "no two countries work more closely than Canada and the U.S. to ensure the safety of citizens on both sides of the border."

He added that Canadian and U.S. officials have worked together in Integrated Border Enforcement Teams and that the U.S. administration has actually lauded Canada for its anti-terror track record.

Len Crispino, president of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, also took issue with Chertoff's claim that Americans will have to sacrifice economic stability for national security.

"It leads to some uncertainty, and I think the worst thing for business is uncertainty," Crispino said. "It doesn't have to be one or the other. And framing the choice that way is unbalanced."

Put a ribbon on it: Royals uniform that is, before they go to Quebec

IDNUMBER 200707130063
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DATE: 2007.07.13
SECTION: Sports
PAGE: B3
BYLINE: Bill Hunt EXTRA! EXTRA!
COPYRIGHT: © 2007 The Daily Gleaner (Fredericton)
WORD COUNT: 977

Thoughts and shots and stuff beneath the dots in a July that really hasn't been so hot:

I see the big yellow ribbon on the fence at Royals Field, which is the nationwide symbol to Support Our Troops. It's a nice touch, out there on the fence with the retired numbers and such.

I think it would look nice as a shoulder patch on the Royals' uniform as they head to Quebec City to participate in the national championship tournament in August, particularly given the fact that one of their own, Steve McCarty, will be returning from Afghanistan the following week; and that CFB Gagetown is the largest military training base in Canada and part of our community.

*** **

Caught the last couple of innings of the Rogers broadcast of Sunday's New Brunswick Senior Baseball League game between the Moncton Mets and Fredericton Peterbilt DQ Royals from Kiwanis Park — you know, the near perfect game by Fredericton pitcher Dan Murphy?

I must say, I could not believe my ears.

OK, OK, it's community television. They're volunteers. I get that. The broadcasters aren't always going to be polished and professional.

They should, however, stop short of being offensive.

Come back to the play Fredericton's Jody Peterson made to end the fifth inning, an over the shoulder catch in right field.

Buzz Betts, who managed the Mets once upon a time, and the other fellow — former Moncton executive John Hunter — felt he embellished the play.

I disagree — Murphy had a no-hitter and a perfect game going and I doubt Peterson was trying to be fancy at that stage of the proceedings — but that's OK. Call it as you see it.

But where the guy gets it wrong is in the next breath, when he said something to the effect that "Peterson is a good player, but he's got a bad attitude."

I think, out of respect for friends and family who might be listening to the broadcast, the commentator ought to confine his comment to what he knows or what he can see.

Peterson doesn't need me to pump his tires, but I know from dealing with him over the past several years that he is a fierce competitor. He chirps a bit, but he has a pretty good perspective on amateur baseball, and where it fits in the grand scheme of things.

He's a tireless worker on behalf of the Peterbilt DQ Royals, in on the ground floor of promotions such as last year's fund-raising baseball/softball game to raise money for KidSport; the planning and execution of the Royals Baseball Camp; and the recent Support Our Troops Night at Royals Field.

He's as accommodating and pleasant a young man as you will find in this league, sincere in his attempts to promote the team and the league; and willing to wear the black hat when he goes into a place like Moncton because, if it puts more fans in the seats, he believes it's good for the game.

So I don't think amateur commentators should be commenting on his attitude or his character without at least shaking his hand and getting a sense of what he's all about.

If you haven't guessed already, yes, Jody Peterson is a friend of mine. But I'm also keenly aware of what kind of responsibility we in the media have, and what kind of impact we have and damage we can do.

It's one I take seriously.

*** **

Happened to be strolling through Henry Park the other night and saw Brent Grant's T-ball team – the Athletics – in action. His own son Max is an A. One of the parents told me Grant – who also coaches the Leo Hayes men's hockey team in the winter – also coaches his oldest son's baseball team, which keeps him going four days a week.

I guess the person I marvel at even more would be Grant's wife, Kelly.

T-ball game over; handshakes done, Brent gathers all the kids around – and sends them streaking across three or four back yards to his house for a Popsicle.

Imagine 15 or so little boys and girls showing up unannounced at your back door, all of them demanding a Popsicle...

*** **

I note the name of young Trevor Drisdelle popping up regularly in the golf reports, and I would like to, ahem, take some credit for his excellence.

Trevor was on my t-ball team 13 or so years ago. And obviously, the coaching was of such high calibre and he had such fun that he...took up golf instead.

*** **

Note with interest that St. Thomas Tommies coach Mike Eagles finished 13th overall — and third in his age group — in the Olympic distance competition at the Duncan Hadley Triathlon Sunday. He was 31st overall in the 1500 meter swim in 27 minutes, 22 seconds, but finished 10th in the 40 kilometer bike ride in 1:14:28 and ninth in the 10 kilometer run in 39:21, for a combined time of 2:22. 34 — at age 44. Note to all prospective Tommies: best show up at training camp in shape.

*** **

Put a ribbon on it: Royals uniform that is, before they go to Quebec

The Leafs are seeking a "senior advisor" to oversee general manager John Ferguson Jr? Wasn't that kind of what Pat Quinn did?

And how old do you have to be to be eligible for the job? They spoke to Scotty Bowman, who will be 74 in September. When Bowman respectfully declined, they set their sights on somebody younger: John Muckler, who won't be 74 until next April.

*** **

At the other end of the spectrum is teenage millionaire Sidney Crosby, who signed a five-year-deal with the Penguins the other day which will pay him an average of \$8.7 million per year beginning next season -- more than 10 times his \$850,000 entry-level stipend this season.

The Penguins are obviously hoping the salary cap keeps escalating so they can accommodate their other young stars: goaltender Marc-Andre Fleury; forwards Jordan Staal and Evgeni Malkin, and by then, even this year's first round pick, Angelo Esposito, to retain the nucleus of a Stanley Cup contender.

Otherwise, Sidney will soak up most of the budget, and the other young stars will scatter while the Pens consist of Sidney and spare parts.

*** **

Poking around the internet and noticed that former UNB assistant coach and UPEI Panthers head coach Doug Currie has come up in the world. He's the Minister of Health and Seniors and Social Services in the newly elected government of Prince Edward Island premier Robert Ghiz. It's his first

Bill Hunt's column appears each Friday. He can be reached by phone at 458- 6443 or via e-mail at hunt.bill@dailyleaner.com

More Canadians oppose war in Afghanistan; New poll | High death toll an issue

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DATE: 2007.07.13

SECTION: News

PAGE: A7

BYLINE: The Canadian Press

COPYRIGHT: © 2007 The Daily Gleaner (Fredericton)

WORD COUNT: 577

A growing number of Canadians, especially in Quebec, say the rising death toll among troops in Afghanistan is too high a price to pay for helping the troubled country, suggests a new poll.

A Canadian Press–Decima Research survey shows 67 per cent of those asked believe the number of casualties has been unacceptable, a five–percentage–point rise from a poll taken a little over a month ago.

Only 25 per cent of respondents said the number of killed and wounded was acceptable, in a survey taken following the most recent deaths of six soldiers in a roadside bomb attack.

Bruce Anderson, CEO of Decima Research, said Canadians are clearly becoming more doubtful about whether progress is being made, in light of the deaths of 66 soldiers and one diplomat in Afghanistan.

"In the absence of more evidence of progress, and in the wake of still more deaths of Canadian soldiers, it's clear that discomfort with the mission is growing, and people are questioning whether the lives being lost so honourably are being lost in vain," said Anderson.

Of particular concern to the government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper is the result showing skepticism runs highest in Quebec, where 76 per cent said the sacrifice is unacceptable.

This comes as the Royal 22nd Regiment — the famed Vandoos — prepare to take over the battle group in Kandahar next month.

"Given the importance of Quebec to the Conservatives in terms of trying to fashion a strong win in the next election campaign, the fact these numbers are deteriorating" should be cause for concern, said Anderson.

Even among the most ardent supporters of the war — people who identify themselves as Conservatives — doubt has crept in.

The number of Tories who say the price tag has been too high increased by eight percentage points since the beginning of June, to 48 per cent.

Bloodied by the last 16 months of fighting in the deserts of southern Afghanistan, and with a year and a half left in the country's combat commitment, a respected historian said Canadians are at a crossroads.

"Canadians have to decide whether they want to win," said Desmond Morton, a professor at Montreal's McGill University.

Anderson agreed that the latest deaths could mark a tipping point for Canadian involvement in war-torn region.

"Are we past the point where the confidence level can be restored?" he said.

"If we talk about restoring confidence to the point where Canadians would support an extension of the mission, we may well be past that point. However, circumstances can always change. The problem for Canadians is that they don't believe we can win this conflict."

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"It was sad when it happened in 1944, in 1918 or 1917. In fact, in 1918 we suffered our heaviest casualties of the First World War, by far. Did anybody in Canada notice?"

"No, because we were winning. If you pitch this war as a hopeless war we cannot win and every death is a needless sacrifice."

The telephone poll of just over 1,000 people was conducted between July 5 and July 9 — after the most recent Canadian deaths in Afghanistan. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Prior to the last Parliamentary debate in April 2006, the Taliban publicly outlined their straightforward strategy for fighting their guerrilla war against Canadians.

Soldiers' deaths are heartbreaking, but shouldn't stifle debate

PUBLICATION: The Telegram (St. John's)

DATE: 2007.07.13

SECTION: Editorial

PAGE: A6

BYLINE: Brian Jones

WORD COUNT: 504

There is a disturbing trend coming out of Afghanistan. As if the kidnappings and bombings and suicide attacks weren't bad enough, the Canadian Forces brass now seems willing to manipulate public opinion by putting grieving family members in front of microphones whenever Canadian soldiers are killed.

It goes without saying that Canadians sympathize with the sorrow and heartbreak felt by the relatives of soldiers killed in Afghanistan. Many family members have, quite courageously, publicly expressed their grief.

Lately, however, there has been an almost uniform habit of their mentioning how much their loved one believed in and supported Canada's mission in Afghanistan.

With all due respect to the family members and their loss, such statements are starting to sound like propaganda. Whether military officials are encouraging this is, of course, impossible to know.

Some people – mostly in commentaries and letters to the editor of various newspapers – have suggested that our country's involvement in Afghanistan should not be debated while Canadian soldiers are fighting and dying there. On the contrary, we should be debating the issue and talking about it – a lot.

Public policy

And one thing that should be made perfectly clear to the military leaders and their personnel is that they do not get to set Canada's foreign policy.

The people who are serving in Afghanistan certainly deserve the public's respect, but they do not have the right to unduly influence the debate at home by manipulating public opinion.

But this is exactly what happens when family members recite a fallen soldier's belief in the mission.

Anyone who thinks Canadians' deaths in Afghanistan are futile – and there is plenty of rational and historical justification for such a view – can only feel crass and heartless while hearing family members talk about their loved one's devotion to the mission.

Obviously, family members of Canadian soldiers have a right to free speech, and can – and should – say whatever they want.

But it is worrisome that we seldom, if ever, hear an opposite view. Open discussion

In contrast, a heated debate is raging in the U.S. about American involvement in Iraq. This debate is being substantially fuelled by relatives of soldiers who were killed in Iraq.

Cindy Sheehan, the mother who gained fame by camping outside U.S. President George W. Bush's Texas ranch, has said much of her heartbreak arises from her belief that her 24-year-old son Casey's death in Iraq was pointless.

Some American soldiers have written books about their tours in Afghanistan and Iraq, describing the folly of trying to change an ingrained culture by military force, even if the intent is honourable.

Surely there must be some Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan who have doubts about – or even secretly oppose – Canada's mission there. Surely there must be some soldiers who think, "I just hope I get out of this hellhole alive."

If so, we don't hear from them. We don't hear from their families. Maybe some day one of them will write a book about our country's misguided military role in Afghanistan.

In the meantime, the one-sidedness of the views emanating from soldiers in Afghanistan and their relatives at home are worrisome for that very reason – there are no opposing views heard.

Obviously, soldiers can't openly question their orders.

So, it falls to Canadians to wonder – loudly and often – whether Canada's mission to Afghanistan is worth Canadians losing their lives for.

Brian Jones is the editor of The Sunday Telegram. He can be reached by e-mail at bjones@thetelegram.com

Afghan mission support wanes; Canadians say rising death toll too high a price to pay: poll

PUBLICATION: Kingston Whig–Standard (ON)

DATE: 2007.07.13

SECTION: National/World

PAGE: B1

SOURCE: CP

BYLINE: Murray Brewster

DATELINE: OTTAWA

WORD COUNT: 369

A growing number of Canadians, especially in Quebec, say the rising death toll among troops in Afghanistan is too high a price to pay for helping the troubled country, suggests a new poll. A Canadian Press–Decima Research survey shows 67 per cent of those asked believe the number of casualties has been unacceptable, a five–percentage–point rise from a poll taken a little over a month ago.

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Of particular concern to the government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper is the result showing skepticism runs highest in Quebec, where 76 per cent said the sacrifice is unacceptable. This comes as the Royal 22nd Regiment – the famed Vandoos – prepare to take over the battle group in Kandahar next month.

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"Canadians have to decide whether they want to win," said Desmond Morton, a professor at Montreal's McGill University.

Use WW II innovation to save lives in Afghanistan

PUBLICATION: Kingston Whig–Standard (ON)

DATE: 2007.07.13

SECTION: Editorial page

PAGE: 4

COLUMN: Letters

WORD COUNT: 241

The tragic loss of most of the Canadian military personnel killed in Afghanistan has been caused by low–tech explosive devices planted under the road surfaces of the primitive roads in that country.

During the Second World War, after the Allied invasion of France, many such mines were encountered and took their toll of vehicles and lives. As a result, a number of Sherman– model tanks were fitted with a front–mounted frame carrying a rotating drum, to which were attached lengths of heavy chain that beat the ground, setting off the mines. Sixty–three years later may be the time to reinvent the flail tank.

Several months ago, Canada shipped 19 Leopard tanks to Afghanistan at a rumoured cost of \$1 million each. Perhaps some of these tanks could be fitted with newer–design mounting brackets to house an expendable lightweight frame approximately 40 to 50 feet long ahead of the tank and running on caster–type wheels to follow uneven road surfaces. The flail drum would be mounted out front and powered by a hydraulic motor supplied by a pump in the tank. An inventory of these units would be necessary to allow speedy replacement after a detonation.

Veterans of the D–Day invasion say the flail tank saved lives. Every life is precious, and this rather low–tech tank conversion could save lives in this conflict.

Alan MacLean

Kingston

Dawe funeral may draw 2,000; St. Mary's Cathedral too small for expected crowd, priest says

PUBLICATION: Kingston Whig–Standard (ON)

DATE: 2007.07.13

SECTION: Local news

PAGE: 3

BYLINE: Rob Tripp

PHOTO: Ian MacAlpine/The Whig–Standard

ILLUSTRATION: Roman Catholic priest Raymond de Souza (left) and Anglican priest Chris Carr will be conducting the funeral service for Capt. Matthew Dawe tomorrow. An audio slide show of Tara Dawe's opening statement at Wednesday's news conference can be found at www.thewhig.com in the left–hand index.

WORD COUNT: 665

A fallen young hero has come home.

Yesterday, the family of a Kingston soldier killed in Afghanistan visited the Robert Reid Funeral Home to identify the body of Capt. Matthew Dawe.

The 27–year–old warrior was returned to Kingston from Toronto on Wednesday afternoon.

The graduate of Royal Military College and a rising star in the Canadian military, an officer in C company, 3rd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, died July 4 when the armoured vehicle in which he was riding was hit by a powerful roadside bomb. Five other Canadian soldiers were killed, bringing the toll of Canadian troops killed in Afghanistan to 66.

Dawe, a member of a prominent Canadian Forces family, will be buried tomorrow after a funeral that could be the largest show of military mourning in Kingston in decades.

Between 1,000 and 2,000 people are expected to attend the funeral, being held in the fieldhouse at the military sports complex on Highway 2, beginning at 11 a.m. It is open to all.

"The fact that this is being held in the fieldhouse is a sign that the family really wanted it to be an open service that everybody felt they could participate in fully and also they were concerned about space," said Chris Carr, an Anglican priest who will be one of two officiants at the funeral.

Raymond de Souza, the Roman Catholic priest at Sacred Heart of Mary Parish on Wolfe Island, will share the responsibility with Carr. Carr is the Anglican priest on Wolfe Island.

"Matthew is a Catholic, baptized and confirmed, and so the family has asked for a funeral in which the Catholic funeral rites are performed for him," de Souza said.

Carr is an RMC graduate and a friend of the young soldier's father, retired lieutenant–colonel Peter Dawe.

"The family had first inquired about having it at St. Mary's Cathedral, but when you're talking about the numbers that may attend such a funeral, the cathedral, even though it seats 1,100, it's not big enough," de Souza said.

The service will not follow the form of a full Catholic funeral mass.

"It's an ecumenical service, but will include the proper prayers for a Catholic funeral," de Souza said. Because it is not a full mass, there will be no eucharist.

De Souza, who has not conducted a military funeral before, said he's still preparing his homily.

"He's being buried as a soldier and a husband and a father and so forth, but he's also being buried as a Christian disciple, so it falls to both the Rev. Carr and myself to somehow interpret in the midst of this rather solemn occasion that dimension as well," he said.

The funeral will begin with a procession that originates at the Memorial Arch on the northern edge of the RMC campus.

The procession will be led by a military guard, composed of soldiers from across Canada in dress uniform. They will be followed by the two clergymen and the hearse carrying Dawe's body.

Sixteen pallbearers, including eight honorary bearers, members of the 3rd Princess Patricia's, will walk around the hearse.

The Dawe family will walk at the rear of the procession as it marches out from the RMC campus through the arch and across Highway 2. The highway is expected to be completely closed to traffic for about 10 minutes, at roughly 11 a.m., to allow the procession to cross.

The procession will make its way to a rear door of the fieldhouse. At that point, eight bearers will lift the flag-draped casket from the hearse and carry it into the building. Once positioned, it will be adorned with Dawe's maroon beret, which signifies that he was a qualified paratrooper and part of a unit involved in parachute operations.

His medal, the Afghanistan campaign star, awarded posthumously, and a Patricia sword, signifying his position as an officer and a member of the PPCLI, also will be set atop the casket.

The service will begin with singing of O Canada and end with the playing of the Last Post.

Four people are expected to speak about Dawe, including a close friend, one of his brothers, his parents and his widow, Tara.

"The family and friends will talk about what he meant to them," Carr said.

The officiants will conclude the ceremony with the last commendation, a rite in which the soul of the deceased is being commended to God for the final time.

"There will be prayers for Matthew and his casket will be blessed with holy water and incense," said de Souza.

The service is expected to conclude at 12:15 p.m.

Immediately after the funeral, the body will be taken for a private burial, where the flag will be folded and presented to Tara Dawe. She also will be presented with his beret and his medal.

rtripp@thewhig.com

Colonel a 'soldier,' not a peacekeeper; Nature of Afghan mission changing, says Hazleton

PUBLICATION: Kingston Whig–Standard (ON)
DATE: 2007.07.13
SECTION: Front
PAGE: 1
BYLINE: Paul Schliesmann
ILLUSTRATION: HAZLETON: "This is not a peacekeeping mission."
WORD COUNT: 758

Col. Spike Hazleton is an imposing figure in his green army fatigues, a congenial man with a crushing handshake.

The CFB Kingston base commander can talk at length about how important reconstruction work, cultural awareness and the Geneva Conventions are to the NATO force that he will help lead in Afghanistan starting in February.

But don't call him a peacekeeper. Or an administrator.

And don't try to pin him down on whether he and 79 soldiers of the Joint Signal Regiment in Kingston are venturing into a war, a conflict or a mission bearing some other label.

"I'm not here to debate what the government or the public is saying," said Hazleton in an interview Wednesday, just a few hours after the family of slain Canadian soldier Capt. Matthew Dawe held an emotional news conference on the base.

"I have my own views which I don't wish to disclose right now. Sixty-six soldiers and one diplomat have paid the ultimate sacrifice. This is not a peacekeeping mission."

Afghanistan will be Hazleton's fourth mission abroad. He said that from Cyprus – where "it was supposed to be fun in the sun" – to Bosnia – where it was "at all times a very stressful situation" – and now Afghanistan, most Canadians can't fully appreciate the dangers faced by their troops.

"Personally, I never enjoyed being called a peacekeeper," he said. "I'm a soldier."

Hazleton said the nature of the Afghanistan mission, its dangers evidenced in the mounting Canadian death toll, is evolving, a fact confirmed on Wednesday by chief of defence staff Gen. Rick Hillier. Most of the front-line fighting is now being done by the Afghanistan National Army. Hazleton said NATO troops are providing support as they allow the national troops to gradually take over the operations in all regions of the country.

And that's where the Kingston contingent comes in.

Starting after Labour Day, the 79 staff of the signal regiment will be joined in Kingston by an equal number of soldiers from across the country, all under the command of Maj.-Gen. Marc Lessard.

The Canadians will train at CFB Kingston, hook up with the international forces for two weeks of additional training in Norway in November, then return home to await deployment in the new year. Lessard will assume

command of the multinational divisional headquarters, based in Kandahar, in February. He will oversee the Canadian, Dutch and British troops, as well as the Afghanistan soldiers.

"This is no small task," said Hazleton of the signal regiment's assignment. "This is huge."

Hazleton, who will be Lessard's officer in charge of operations, described his role as being on "the kinetic side."

"That will involve the conflict – the combat environment," he clarified. "If there is an IED [improvised explosive device], you have to get medevac in, get security in. That's my job."

Which means he could be presiding over situations like the one in which Dawe, five fellow soldiers and their Afghan guide, found themselves on that ill-fated July 4 patrol. Their vehicle was blasted by a powerful IED that instantly killed the seven men inside.

Hazleton was with another officer at Royal Military College that day they told Peter Dawe Sr. that his son had died. "It's hard. It's never an easy task. I've had to do that before. I wouldn't wish it on anyone," he said. "In this case, Peter Dawe, the man is amazing. The whole family is amazing. Tara Dawe [Matthew's widow] is amazing."

Hazleton said the tragedy is certainly on his mind as he prepares to go overseas.

"I don't believe it's more daunting. It hits closer to home," he said. "This mission, clearly there is higher risk than other missions in the past. But we are all volunteers."

Hazleton was expecting to finish the last two years of his stint as base commander and then move on. The Afghanistan assignment came from out of the blue with a call from Lessard asking him to sign on. He'd been Lessard's officer in charge of operations at CFB Gagetown in New Brunswick.

"We're soldiers first. There was some hesitancy. I'm in my first year here and I love my job," he said.

But Hazleton said that "for the first time in 26 years" he asked a favour in return: that he be allowed to return to CFB Kingston in 2008 and complete his final year as base commander.

Permission was granted. In fact, he and his wife, Katherine, who works with autistic children at Pathways, have decided they're going to retire in Kingston. "I'm pretty passionate about this base. It's the people. It's the city of Kingston."

Hazleton said his wife knew he wanted to go to Afghanistan, though it means leaving her behind once again with daughter Olivia, 12, and son Charlie, 15. "She said she married a soldier," is all he would say of their conversation.

Hazleton believes his troops will leave Kingston knowing the city and the country support them.

"It's a dangerous place that is being made better with the [International Security Assistance Force] mission. Canadians are making a difference," Hazleton said.

"We're back in business doing what we were all trained to do. And we're getting better all the time."

Poll: Doubts rise on Afghan role; Canadian death toll unacceptable, 67 per cent say

PUBLICATION: The Chronicle–Herald

DATE: 2007.07.13

SECTION: Front

PAGE: A1

SOURCE: The Canadian Press

BYLINE: Murray Brewster

WORD COUNT: 585

OTTAWA – A growing number of Canadians, especially in Quebec, say the rising death toll among troops in Afghanistan is too high a price to pay for helping the troubled country, suggests a new poll.

A Canadian Press–Decima Research survey shows 67 per cent of those asked believe the number of casualties has been unacceptable, a five–percentage–point rise from a poll taken a little over a month ago.

Only 25 per cent of respondents said the number of killed and wounded was acceptable, in a survey taken following the most recent deaths of six soldiers in a roadside bomb attack.

Bruce Anderson, CEO of Decima Research, said Canadians are clearly becoming more doubtful about whether progress is being made, in light of the deaths of 66 soldiers and one diplomat in Afghanistan. "In the absence of more evidence of progress, and in the wake of still more deaths of Canadian soldiers, it's clear that discomfort with the mission is growing, and people are questioning whether the lives being lost so honourably are being lost in vain," said Anderson.

Of particular concern to the government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper is the result showing skepticism runs highest in Quebec, where 76 per cent said the sacrifice is unacceptable. This comes as the Royal 22nd Regiment – the famed Vandoos – prepares to take over the battle group in Kandahar next month.

"Given the importance of Quebec to the Conservatives in terms of trying to fashion a strong win in the next election campaign, the fact these numbers are deteriorating" should be cause for concern, said Anderson. Even among the most ardent supporters of the war – people who identify themselves as Conservatives – doubt has crept in. The number of Tories who say the price tag has been too high increased by eight percentage points since the beginning of June, to 48 per cent.

After 16 months of fighting in the deserts of southern Afghanistan, and with a year and a half left in the country's combat commitment, a respected historian said Canadians are at a crossroads.

"Canadians have to decide whether they want to win," said Desmond Morton, a professor at McGill University in Montreal.

Anderson agreed that the latest deaths could mark a tipping point for Canadian involvement in the war–torn region.

"Are we past the point where the confidence level can be restored?" he said.

"If we talk about restoring confidence to the point where Canadians would support an extension of the mission, we may well be past that point. However, circumstances can always change. The problem for

Canadians is that they don't believe we can win this conflict."

Harper has repeatedly hinted he may be prepared to end Canada's combat role when the current mission expires in February 2009 but has said the question of an extension would be debated by Parliament, likely next year.

Morton says Canada has never lost a war and if Anderson's assessment of the public mind is correct, the country is setting itself up "for its first international humiliation of an unquestioned kind."

Over the last few months, Morton said, he's often wondered whether the public is talking itself into defeat and if Canadians have the stomach to fight the way our parents and grandparents did during two world wars and the Korean conflict.

"It is sad when (casualties) happen," the soldier-turned-historian said in a telephone interview.

"It was sad when it happened in 1944, in 1918 or 1917. In fact, in 1918 we suffered our heaviest casualties of the First World War, by far. Did anybody in Canada notice? No, because we were winning. If you pitch this war as a hopeless war, we cannot win and every death is a needless sacrifice."

Casualties in Afghanistan worry Canadians: poll

PUBLICATION: The Guardian (Charlottetown)

DATE: 2007.07.13

SECTION: Canada

PAGE: B5

COLUMN: Across the country

SOURCE: CP

DATELINE: OTTAWA

WORD COUNT: 66

A new poll suggests Canadians are growing more alarmed about the rising number of soldiers killed and wounded in Afghanistan.

A Canadian Press–Decima Research survey shows 67 per cent of those asked believe the number of casualties suffered by Canadian troops is unacceptably high, even with whatever progress has been made in rebuilding the war–torn country.

That is a five–point rise from a poll taken a little over a month ago.

Pentagon says Omar Khadr wanted to kill U–S troops for bounty money

DATE: 2007.07.12

KEYWORDS: INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE DEFENCE POLITICS

PUBLICATION: cpw

WORD COUNT: 184

TORONTO (CP) _ The Pentagon is attempting to revive its murder case against Canadian Omar Khadr by alleging he confessed to wanting to kill Americans for bounty money, the Globe and Mail reports.

Unites States military officials, appealing last month's dismissal of charges against Khadr, claim he admitted to being motivated by money as he was questioned after a 2002 battle in Afghanistan.

Defence lawyers say the new allegations were not mentioned in any prior proceedings during the last five years.

Military prosecutor Major Jeffrey Groharing submitted the appeal to the newly created Court of Military Commissions Review, the Globe reports.

Defence lawyers say they are angered by the allegations, which they suggest are suspect, superfluous to the appeal motion and designed to undermine public sympathy for Khadr.

Khadr was sent to the U–S prison camp at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, where he has been held for five years.

He has faced the most serious charges ever formally laid against any of the hundreds of detainees housed in the prison camp.

A military judge threw out the charges against Khadr and another suspect, ruling they had been designated only "enemy combatants," as opposed to "unlawful enemy combatants" and the tribunal thus lacked jurisdiction to hear the cases.

Khadr is still in U.S. custody.

Hillier says Canadian changing focus from combat to training Afghan military

DATE: 2007.07.12

KEYWORDS: DEFENCE POLITICS

PUBLICATION: cpw

WORD COUNT: 122

TORONTO (CP) _ The Canadian military in Afghanistan is shifting its emphasis from combat to training Afghan government troops in a move expected to cut casualties.

Canadian military chief Gen. Rick Hillier tells the Toronto Star in an interview the aim is to prepare Afghan troops to shoulder more of the fighting.

By the fall, five battalions of Afghan troops will be operating in Kandahar under Canadian guidance, Hillier says.

Hillier says Canadians have worked with one Afghan battalion for the last six months and the results have been encouraging.

There are two Afghan battalions currently in the southern region and a third one is in training and expects to join the others in August.

The other two battalions would be deployed in the fall, Hillier says.

He praised the Afghan troops, saying: ``They're very professional...They've actually been very successful in most operations against the Taliban."

Canada suffering 'unacceptably' high casualties in Afghanistan: poll

DATE: 2007.07.12

KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL

PUBLICATION: cpw

WORD COUNT: 887

OTTAWA (CP) _ A growing number of Canadians, especially in Quebec, say the rising death toll among troops in Afghanistan is too high a price to pay for helping the troubled country, suggests a new poll.

A Canadian Press-Decima Research survey shows 67 per cent of those asked believe the number of casualties has been unacceptable, a five-percentage-point rise from a poll taken a little over a month ago.

Only 25 per cent of respondents said the number of killed and wounded was acceptable, in a survey taken following the most recent deaths of six soldiers in a roadside bomb attack.

Bruce Anderson, CEO of Decima Research, said Canadians are clearly becoming more doubtful about whether progress is being made, in light of the deaths of 66 soldiers and one diplomat in Afghanistan.

"In the absence of more evidence of progress, and in the wake of still more deaths of Canadian soldiers, it's clear that discomfort with the mission is growing, and people are questioning whether the lives being lost so honourably are being lost in vain," said Anderson.

Of particular concern to the government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper is the result showing skepticism runs highest in Quebec, where 76 per cent said the sacrifice is unacceptable. This comes as the Royal 22nd Regiment _ the famed Vandoos _ prepare to take over the battle group in Kandahar next month.

"Given the importance of Quebec to the Conservatives in terms of trying to fashion a strong win in the next election campaign, the fact these numbers are deteriorating" should be cause for concern, said Anderson.

Even among the most ardent supporters of the war _ people who identify themselves as Conservatives _ doubt has crept in. The number of Tories who say the price tag has been too high increased by eight percentage points since the beginning of June, to 48 per cent.

Bloodied by the last 16 months of fighting in the deserts of southern Afghanistan, and with a year and a half left in the country's combat commitment, a respected historian said Canadians are at a crossroads.

"Canadians have to decide whether they want to win," said Desmond Morton, a professor at Montreal's McGill University.

Anderson agreed that the latest deaths could mark a tipping point for Canadian involvement in war-torn region.

"Are we past the point where the confidence level can be restored?" he said.

"If we talk about restoring confidence to the point where Canadians would support an extension of the mission, we may well be past that point. However, circumstances can always change. The problem for Canadians is that they don't believe we can win this conflict."

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``It was sad when it happened in 1944, in 1918 or 1917. In fact, in 1918 we suffered our heaviest casualties of the First World War, by far. Did anybody in Canada notice? No, because we were winning. If you pitch this war as a hopeless war we cannot win and every death is a needless sacrifice."

The Conservative government and the military have often accused the media of placing more emphasis on casualties than accomplishments in Afghanistan, thereby eroding public confidence at home.

But a region director the Senlis Council, an international research and development group that maintains a presence in the war-ravaged nation, said it's overly simplistic and easy to blame the media.

Canadians have every reason to be asking questions because the Harper government failed at the outset to properly explain the dangerous mission and more importantly to set measurable objectives, said Edward McCormick.

``There are good moral and ethical reasons for the Canadian Armed Forces to be in Afghanistan," said the former Vancouver resident who now lives in Kandahar.

``There are good reasons for NATO to be there, but if they can't get that accountability and it isn't made plain and clear to all Canadians, then I think we're going to see in the near future more and more Canadians becoming very vocal about the unacceptable nature of this mission."

The telephone poll of just over 1,000 people was conducted between July 5 and July 9 _ after the most recent Canadian deaths in Afghanistan. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Prior to the last Parliamentary debate in April 2006, the Taliban publicly outlined their straightforward strategy for fighting their guerrilla war against Canadians.

``We think that when we kill enough Canadians they will quit war and return home," said purported Taliban spokesman Qari Yuosaf Ahmed in an interview with The Canadian Press, conducted through a translator, over a satellite telephone.

Morton said the new poll is a reflection of the insurgent strategy, but doesn't mean they have won.

``They're very media savvy," he said. The Taliban believe ``democracies are frail, feeble organizations that crumble at the first hard knock.

``That's what Hitler believed, that's what Stalin believed. They all had a similar judgment about democracy. They were wrong. It's not surprising the Taliban would take up that judgment. They really do think of us as

contemptible."

3rd Writethru, CP News Budget – Thursday, July 12, 2007

DATE: 2007.07.12

KEYWORDS: ADVISORIES

PUBLICATION: cpw

WORD COUNT: 327

Here are the CP coverage plans as of 23:00 ET. The CP editor handling World news in Toronto can be reached at 416-507-2165.

WASHINGTON _ The Iraqi government is achieving only spotty military and political progress, the Bush administration conceded Thursday in an assessment that war critics quickly seized on as confirmation of their dire warnings. Within hours, the House voted to withdraw U.S. troops by spring. 980 words. By David Espo. BC-US-Iraq, 2nd Writethru. Moved.

See also:

_ BC-Bush. Moved.

_ BC-US-Terror-Threat, 1st Writethru. Moved.

BASTI ABDULLAH, Pakistan _ The captured chief cleric of a militant mosque predicts that the deaths of the mosque's defenders in an army raid bring an "Islamic revolution." President Gen. Pervez Musharraf, meanwhile, vows to crush extremists throughout Pakistan and move against radical religious schools like those at the Red Mosque that breed them. 800 words. BC-Pakistan-Radical-Mosque, 1st Writethru. Moved.

See also:

_ BC-Pakistan-Radical-Mosque-Scene. Moves Datafile only.

PASSCHENDAELE, Belgium _ Soldiers from Britain, Australia, Canada and other allied countries killed 90 years ago in one the First World War's bloodiest battles were honoured Thursday by the Queen, Belgian royals and thousands of onlookers gathered for the memorial. 800 words. By Caitlan Roman. See AP Photos. BC-Passchendaele, 1st Writethru. Moved.

CHICAGO _ Jurors in Conrad Black's fraud trial will resume deliberations Friday after failing for the 11th day to reach unanimous verdicts on all 42 charges against the former media baron and three colleagues. 600 words. By Keith Leslie. BC-Conrad-Black-Trial, 4th Writethru. Moved.

FOR THE WEEKEND

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan _ Seven years ago, 22-year-old Roorstam didn't know heroin existed. Today, he sits in a Kandahar drug rehabilitation centre, one of thousands of Afghans addicted to heroin and fighting for scarce addiction-treatment resources even as poppy cultivation in their country booms. 950 words. By Stephanie Levitz. See CP Photo. For use anytime but intended mainly for weekend editions. BC-Afghan-Addicts. Moved.

36 suspected Taliban killed in clashes; 6 Afghan police die in roadside blasts

DATE: 2007.07.12

KEYWORDS: INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE POLITICS

PUBLICATION: cpw

WORD COUNT: 258

KABUL (AP) _ U.S.-led coalition and Afghan forces killed 36 suspected Taliban rebels in a series of clashes and air strikes Thursday in southern Afghanistan, officials said.

A NATO soldier was killed and two others wounded in another operation.

In the east, roadside blasts left six police officers dead, officials said.

In southern Helmand province, U.S.-led coalition and Afghan troops were attacked by militants in Gereshek district compound, said Maj.-Gen. Muhiddin Ghorl of the Afghan National Army. The joint forces called in an air strike on the compound, leaving 20 suspected Taliban fighters dead.

The militants' dead bodies were left at the compound and there were no casualties among the joint force, Ghorl said.

Also in Helmand, Afghan police clashed with insurgents in Sangin district, leaving five militants dead, a coalition statement said. The police hit a mine during the fire fight, leaving one officer dead and another wounded, it said.

And in neighbouring Uruzgan province, coalition troops called in air strikes on Taliban fighters after a joint U.S.-Afghan patrol was ambushed by militants, the coalition said.

There were no reports of U.S. or Afghan casualties in the Uruzgan clash, which left an estimated 11 Taliban fighters dead.

In eastern Khost province, a roadside bomb targeting a police patrol vehicle left five officers dead and another wounded, said Wazir Pacha, a provincial police spokesman.

The victims were part of a joint U.S.-Afghan patrol, Pacha said. No U.S.-led coalition troops were injured in the morning blast.

NATO did not disclose its dead and wounded soldiers' nationalities or provide details and the exact location of its operation.

Violence has spiked in Afghanistan in the last six weeks. More than 3,200 people, mostly militants, have died in insurgency-related violence this year, The Associated Press estimates, based on numbers from Afghan and western officials.

INDEX:Defence, International

DATE: 2007.07.12

KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL

PUBLICATION: bnw

WORD COUNT: 144

OTTAWA – A new poll suggests Canadians are growing more alarmed about the rising number of soldiers killed and wounded in Afghanistan.

A Canadian Press–Decima Research survey shows 67 per cent of those asked believe the number of casualties suffered by Canadian troops is unacceptably high, even with whatever progress has been made in rebuilding the war–torn country.

That is a five–point rise from a poll taken a little over a month ago.

Only 25 per cent of respondents said the number of killed and wounded was acceptable.

Bruce Anderson, the CEO of Decima Research, says Canadians are clearly becoming more doubtful about whether progress is being made, in light of the deaths of 66 soldiers and one diplomat.

The telephone poll of just over 1,000 people was conducted between July 5 and July 9 – after the most recent Canadian deaths in Afghanistan. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

(BN)

INDEX:Defence, Politics

DATE: 2007.07.12

KEYWORDS: DEFENCE POLITICS

PUBLICATION: bnw

WORD COUNT: 106

TORONTO – The Canadian military in Afghanistan is shifting its emphasis from combat to training Afghan government troops in a move expected to cut casualties.

Canadian military chief Gen. Rick Hillier tells the Toronto Star in an interview the aim is to prepare Afghan troops to shoulder more of the fighting.

By the fall, five battalions of Afghan troops will be operating in Kandahar under Canadian guidance, Hillier says.

Hillier says Canadians have worked with one Afghan battalion for the last six months and the results have been encouraging.

There are two Afghan battalions currently in the southern region and a third one is in training and expects to join the others in August.

The other two battalions would be deployed in the fall, Hillier says.

(BN)

Afghan–Violence–Update (20 suspected Taliban killed)

DATE: 2007.07.12

KEYWORDS: INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE

PUBLICATION: bnw

WORD COUNT: 83

KABUL, Afghanistan — An Afghan army officer says 20 suspected Taliban militants have been killed in clashes and airstrikes in southern Afghanistan.

The officer says the militants were killed today during a U–S led coalition airstrike targeting a compound in Helmand province's Gereshk district.'

The officer says there were no coalition casualties.

Separately, NATO says an alliance soldier has been killed and two others have been wounded today during an operation in southern Afghanistan.

NATO is not releasing the nationalities of the soldiers or the exact location where the operation took place.

A Canadian Forces spokesman in Kandahar says no Canadians were involved.

(BN, AP)

mcw

Dion–Afghanistan

DATE: 2007.07.12

PUBLICATION: bnw

WORD COUNT: 109

INDEX: Defence, Politics, International

HALIFAX — The father of a soldier killed in Afghanistan is trying to change the federal Liberal leader's mind about keeping Canadian troops there past 2009.

Jim Davis took his message straight to Stephane Dion yesterday at a campaign–style town hall meeting in Halifax.

Davis' son was killed in a vehicle accident in Kandahar last year.

He told Dion — and about 200 audience members — that progress is being made in Afghanistan and that the Taliban will come back to power if Canada gives up now.

But the Liberal chief wasn't swayed.

Dion says Canada should tell NATO straight away that it wants to end its combat commitment by the deadline in order to give replacement countries enough time to prepare.

But he says he wants Canada to stay for training, reconstruction and diplomacy.

Dion opposed the original extension of the mission from 2007 to 2009.

(CP)

LAK

Poll–Afghan–Cda–Update (adds comments, reaction)

DATE: 2007.07.12

KEYWORDS: DEFENCE POLITICS INTERNATIONAL

PUBLICATION: bnw

WORD COUNT: 136

OTTAWA — A new poll suggests the tolerance of Canadians for troop casualties in Afghanistan is wearing thin.

Two-thirds of respondents in The Canadian Press–Decima survey said they believe deaths and injuries among our soldiers are unacceptably high — no matter what progress is being made in Afghanistan.

Decima C–E–O Bruce Anderson says Canadians don't believe they've seen enough progress toward stabilizing the war-ravaged country.

He says they seem to believe the war is a lost cause.

Historian Desmond Morton says, if that's true, Canadians are setting themselves up for a humiliating retreat from Afghanistan, much the way the U–S abandoned South Vietnam in the 1970s.

Morton says he doesn't believe the war is lost and Canadians must rally the way they did in the First and Second World Wars.

Sixty-six Canadian soldiers and a diplomat have been killed in the war-torn country since 2001.

The poll comes as Canada's chief of defence staff is suggesting the Afghan mission's focus will shift away from combat this fall.

(BN)

mub

Afghan–Violence

DATE: 2007.07.12

KEYWORDS: INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE POLITICS

PUBLICATION: bnw

WORD COUNT: 49

KABUL — A roadside blast hit a police patrol in eastern Afghanistan today, killing five officers and wounding another.

Wazir Pacha, a spokesman for the provincial police chief, says the attack happened in Yaqoubi district, in Khost province.

The victims were part of a joint U–S–Afghan patrol.

No U–S–led coalition troops were injured in the morning blast.

Police sent additional troops to the area to conduct a search operation.

(AP)

TA

Conservatives should put their shoulders to the policy wheel

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PUBLICATION: Vancouver Sun
DATE: 2007.07.13
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Editorial
PAGE: A11
COLUMN: Barbara Yaffe
KEYWORDS: POLITICIANS; POLITICAL PARTIES; GOVERNMENT; CANADA
BYLINE: Barbara Yaffe
SOURCE: Vancouver Sun
WORD COUNT: 642

Since Canadians aren't fussy about the federal political leaders on offer, the next election will be won based on issues, not personalities.

So, let's spend a couple of columns scrutinizing issues that are, or should be, espoused by the two main political parties, rather than focusing on why we're turned off by Stephen Harper and Stephane Dion.

Conservatives have been managing a well-oiled economy admirably. But that's not difficult during boom times. Shamefully, they've been spending like Liberals and, while talking a great game on tax cuts, reductions have been positively parsimonious.

A high-profile GST cut was modest. And other relief was targeted to the Conservative version of the "ideal family" — mom, dad, plus kids. Too many are out of that particular loop.

Economists hold that a better way to cut taxes is through personal income tax. Budget surpluses have been robust of late and it's time for substantive tax relief — which inevitably would goose the economy. If a Conservative government won't do this, what other governing team would?

Conservatives are promising that, as national debt gets repaid, resulting interest savings will be funnelled to Canadians. Good. It's time to start showing us that bit of beef in the next budget.

The deficit elimination portion of the gas tax must be nixed, pronto. It's fraudulent: Canada no longer has a deficit.

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation noted this week, on Harper's highly touted objective of making government more accountable, results are extremely mixed.

Conservatives haven't reformed MPs' pension benefits that remain far too rich, given that MPs are in the top one or two per cent of income earners.

In a gesture characterized by petulance, Harper shelved a new committee that was to vet federal appointments, this because the opposition appropriately balked at the highly partisan Conservative Harper named to head the group, former Tory fundraiser Gwyn Morgan.

The taxpayers federation notes, in a one-year period after coming to power, Conservatives appointed 410 of their kind, which compares favorably to the 686 appointments made by Liberals the previous year.

But people are sick of patronage and it's time to establish a non-partisan appointments mechanism headed by a former chief justice or someone above reproach, like retired New Democrat Ed Broadbent or Auditor-General Sheila Fraser.

Again, on the accountability front, Conservatives deserve credit for trying to enact provisions to ensure the auditor-general has authority to scrutinize tax dollars — \$8 billion annually — handed to native bands. This is public money and the auditor must be able to oversee spending of all tax dollars. Conservatives have been thwarted by opposition parties on this front and should be screaming bloody murder.

Indeed, the party has adopted a pragmatic and worthy approach with respect to native peoples, refusing to transfer cash willy-nilly. Importantly, Conservatives have agreed to guarantee mortgages for aboriginals and expand human rights laws to reserves. This makes sense.

Conservatives are also getting more serious about the environment while taking a go-slow approach. They should be commended; the goal is to go green without going broke.

Harper is badly out of sync with Canadians when it comes to his military thrust. Canadians want to promote democracy abroad and undertake peacekeeping missions.

In Afghanistan, he most definitely is on the right track in overseeing a shift in our campaign that will see our soldiers concentrate more on building up Afghanistan's own security forces than on fighting the Taliban insurgents.

Canada is rich enough to boost our foreign aid budget to a level prescribed by Lester Pearson, .07 per cent of GDP. It's now about .03 per cent. Conservatives need to show Canadians they have a heart.

Harper has done particularly well in fostering good relations with the U.S., our major trade partner. Conservatives ought to capitalize on the positive relationship by pushing for greater trade liberalization and ensuring smoother border operations. The Security and Prosperity Partnership endeavour is worthy.

Conservatives also deserve credit for managing "the Quebec file" in a way that prevents that province from dominating the national policy agenda. Harper should subtly remind Canadians of this in any future campaign.

Saturday: Liberal policies — do they have any?

byaffe@png.canwest.com

Critic of war in Afghanistan was monitored; Canadian military initially denied existence of report on left-wing defence analyst

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KEYWORDS: RETAIL TRADE; OFFICE EQUIPMENT
DEADLINE: OTTAWA
BYLINE: David Pugliese
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 438

OTTAWA — Military officials kept an eye on an outspoken opponent of the Afghanistan war last year but in a report produced about the Ottawa man's public comments they determined support for the mission was still high and his criticism does "not seem to resonate" with the public and media.

Defence department officials originally denied the documents, requested by the Ottawa Citizen under the Access to Information Act, even existed. But an investigation by the Information Commissioner revealed the e-mails and a report on the activities of left-wing defence analyst Steve Staples had indeed been compiled by the military.

The report was sent to 50 officers including two brigadier generals.

The release comes as the Defence Department finds itself dealing with charges from critics that Gen. Rick Hillier, chief of the defence staff, has ordered a sweeping crackdown to block the release of all files on the Afghanistan mission requested under the access to information law. Defence officials have denied that is the case and Ward Elcock, the department's deputy minister, issued a statement pointing out the organization understands the importance of providing information to the public.

The military report on Staples, of the Ottawa-based Rideau Institute on International Affairs, details his speech to a Halifax peace group last year and his views on Afghanistan and Hillier's plans to move the military away from peacekeeping and into more combat-oriented roles. It stated Staples presentation did not seem to resonate with those attending the speech but pointed out he was expected to give other talks across the country.

It recommended the military be prepared to counter Staples' arguments.

In an interview Staples said the military had overstepped its bounds but that he is not surprised by such actions.

"This is what happens when you have a different viewpoint on Afghanistan than the government and the generals," he said.

Staples said it is not the military's role to sell the mission and challenge those who don't disagree with it. That is the job of elected officials, he added.

Every federal government department has a communications department with a role to monitor relevant public debate.

Army spokesman Lt.-Col. Chris Lemay said officers were simply doing their job. "It was fair game to know what was out there," he said. "Our job is to make sure we are aware of the information that is floating in the public domain."

Lemay said he was not aware if the military followed up on the recommendation to prepare to counter Staples arguments.

Staples, who has criticized the war on TV and in print articles, said such activities set a dangerous precedent. "I don't hide what I have to say, but I wonder what type of message this sends to others who might want to speak out publicly," he said.

Support wanes for Afghan mission: Poll

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SECTION: News
PAGE: A15
BYLINE: Murray Brewster
SOURCE: CANADIAN PRESS
COPYRIGHT: © 2007 Torstar Corporation
WORD COUNT: 389

A growing number of Canadians, especially in Quebec, say the rising death toll among troops in Afghanistan is too high a price to pay for helping the troubled country, suggests a new poll.

A Canadian Press–Decima Research survey shows 67 per cent of those asked believe the number of casualties has been unacceptable, a five–percentage–point rise from a poll taken a little over a month ago.

Only 25 per cent of respondents said the number of killed and wounded was acceptable, in a survey taken following the most recent deaths of six soldiers in a roadside bomb attack.

Bruce Anderson, CEO of Decima Research, said Canadians are clearly becoming more doubtful about whether progress is being made, in light of the deaths of 66 soldiers and one diplomat in Afghanistan.

"It's clear that discomfort with the mission is growing, and people are questioning whether the lives being lost so honourably are being lost in vain," said Anderson.

Of particular concern to the government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper is the result showing skepticism runs highest in Quebec, where 76 per cent said the sacrifice is unacceptable.

This comes as the Royal 22nd Regiment – the famed Van Doos – prepare to take over the battle group in Kandahar next month.

Even among the most ardent supporters of the war – people who identify themselves as Conservatives – doubt has crept in.

The number of Tories who say the price tag in Afghanistan has been too high increased by eight percentage points since the beginning of June, to 48 per cent.

Anderson said the latest deaths could mark a tipping point for Canadian involvement in the war–torn region.

"Are we past the point where the confidence level can be restored?" he said.

"The problem for Canadians is that they don't believe we can win this conflict."

Harper has repeatedly hinted he may be prepared to end Canada's combat role when the current mission expires in February 2009, but said the question of an extension would be debated by Parliament, likely next year.

The Conservative government and the military have often accused the media of placing more emphasis on casualties than accomplishments in Afghanistan, thereby eroding public confidence at home.

But a region director of the Senlis Council, an international research and development group that maintains a presence in the war-ravaged nation, said it's overly simplistic and easy to blame the media.

Canadians have every reason to be asking questions because the federal government failed at the outset to properly explain the dangerous mission and, more importantly, to set measurable objectives, said Edward McCormick.

The telephone poll of just over 1,000 people was conducted between July 5 and July 9. The poll has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

NATO bombings fight terror with terror

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PAGE: AA07
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Layton wants PM to demand

air strikes' end

July 10

Recent counts by the UN and Associated Press found that civilian deaths from NATO bombings outnumber those from Taliban attacks. What is this telling us about our role in Afghanistan? Think about it for just a moment. We (well, our American allies) are killing innocent civilians. We are fighting terror with terror. This may not be how we would like to see it, but put yourself in the shoes of those who see their families blown up by U.S. bombs. Do you think they realize our good intentions?

And what might be the reaction of those who have guns and bombs to these bombings? Do you think the Taliban, or any other armed group, takes the time to distinguish between armed soldiers in American uniforms and those who wear the Canadian flag? Soldiers are not backpackers. Stitching more flags on their uniforms won't save them from attack.

Gerry Patterson, Singapore

Has military mission in Afghanistan enhanced Canada's image in world?

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DATE: 2007.07.13
EDITION: Ont
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PAGE: AA08
COPYRIGHT: © 2007 Torstar Corporation
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Definitely not, quite the contrary. Canadians fighting in Afghanistan have caused the deaths of civilians and fighters who are, for the most part, Afghans trying to evict foreign occupiers. Gen. Rick Hillier points to some reconstruction but the negative aspects of the mission loom larger in the public eye. The military seems to think the presence of hundreds of people on highway overpasses as the bodies of the soldiers are transported to Toronto is indicative of public support for the mission. Wrong; it is about paying respect and grieving for soldiers and support of their families.

Rennette Madill, Whitby

Our military mission in Afghanistan has only enhanced Canada's reputation in the United Kingdom and the United States. The world increasingly sees Canada as a lapdog of the current U.S. administration much like Britain.

Robin Kelly, Toronto

Far from enhancing our image, Canada's focus on combat in Afghanistan has done only harm. The majority of our NATO allies have focused on constructive engagement and have suggested that our campaign only serves to raise more recruits for the Taliban.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai himself has called repeatedly for the Americans and their equally violent Canadian counterparts to show more restraint in order to limit civilian casualties and avoid turning the bulk of the civilian population against the government. If the head of the government we are supposedly there to help is calling for Canadians to change strategy, perhaps we ought to listen.

Jeffrey Welsh, Kingston

No, the mission is wrong for Canada. Prime Minister Stephen Harper isn't building the conditions for a lasting peace.

He's fuelling the conditions for an escalating war. That's not what Canadians want.

Lindsay Mathysen, Ottawa

Under the thick-headed leadership of Rick Hillier and the incompetence of Defence Minister Gordon O'Connor, not to mention Stephen Harper and Minister of Foreign Affairs Peter MacKay, the image of our military has suffered untold damage. It has been remade in the American image largely because Harper is appeasing the Americans.

We need to bring our troops home while their courage and integrity are intact.

John Gilbert, Toronto

No. Our military mission in Afghanistan has exposed us as a country without a true leader, someone who merely mirrors U.S. policy. Any innovation on our part was lost in the last federal election.

Ross Warren, Toronto

Considering that a good portion of Canadians find the occupation criminal, how could it? At the very least, it exposes Canada to division and delusion.

Neil Fiddleton, Toronto

Canada is in Afghanistan principally to release American troops to fight in Iraq. The two missions cannot be separated. I am utterly opposed to everything the U.S. is doing these days and I am revolted by Canada's complicity.

Ruth McVeigh, Union Bay, B.C.

The fact that tribal elders have suggested that Canadian troops should teach U.S. and British troops how to behave is one indication that this mission has been good for our image. Another is that the standard of living has been on the rise in the majority of Afghanistan since NATO forces arrived.

Kyle Kowalenko,

Toronto

An Afghan lesson in the Iraq mess

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EDITION: Ont
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PAGE: AA06
COPYRIGHT: © 2007 Torstar Corporation
WORD COUNT: 571

With every passing day, U.S. President George Bush faces new pressure from Congress to begin pulling troops from Iraq. The gathering storm in Washington, where even Republican support for the war is faltering, should spur Iraq's new government to get its house in order while it still enjoys American protection.

But Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's government has failed miserably to meet critical "benchmarks" Congress set out as a condition of U.S. support, the White House was forced to admit yesterday.

While Bush gamely insists "the battle in Iraq can and must be won," four years after an American invasion that has cost \$450 billion and 3,000 U.S. lives Iraq still does not have a broad-based government that can credibly represent not only Shiites but also Kurds and Sunnis. Sectarian violence rages on. The Iraqi army is slowly rebuilding. And parliament hasn't yet passed needed laws permitting semi-autonomous regions to be set up, and guaranteeing each community a fair share of the country's rich oil and gas revenues.

While Bush's ill-considered rush to war was the cause of these woes, Congress's patience is running out and calls are multiplying for a pullout of U. S. troops. Al-Maliki and his cabinet should see the writing on the wall and stabilize the country while they still have foreign backup.

So, for that matter, should Afghan President Hamid Karzai's equally challenged regime. U.S. impatience with Iraq should prod Afghans.

Moreover, Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government, too, must weigh all this during Parliament's summer recess. When Parliament resumes, so will debate over the success of Canada's \$1.2 billion aid program, and over how our 2,500 troops should be redeployed when their combat mission in Kandahar ends in February 2009.

As the Star's Bruce Campion-Smith reported yesterday, Ottawa plans even before then to have our troops do less fighting and more training of Afghan counterparts.

This shift reflects a growing sense that Canada's losses, 66 troops and a diplomat, are unacceptably high, despite some progress rebuilding the shattered country. A Canadian Press/Decima Research poll released yesterday found 67 per cent feel the toll is too high, a 5-point jump in the past month.

So the pressure on Afghans to pull more weight can only grow.

While the United Nations reports that Afghanistan is meeting its own benchmarks to bolster security, speed development and fight corruption and the drug trade, gaping holes are only too evident.

A fierce Taliban insurgency has posed "unexpected challenges," Karzai's office admits. That leaves American, Canadian and other allies paying a steep price to thwart a Taliban takeover in some regions, and to buy the

government time to get its act together. The Afghan army and police need to play a much more active role, and quickly.

Moreover, even as Kabul promises to disband "all illegal armed groups" by March, 5,500 remain active. That is near-anarchy. And while development is "moving forward," more "tangible outputs and visible action" is needed, the UN says. Many Afghans see little progress. As for tackling corrupt officials and drug traffickers, there is currently "no information" on how many have links to the drug trade.

Like their Iraqi counterparts, Afghan leaders run a serious risk of seeing international support erode, unless they provide more effective, cleaner government, build up their military and police, disarm rogue elements and provide jobs and services to improve lives.

It is a tall order, to be sure. But Afghans need only look to Congress's debate on quitting Iraq to see the consequences of failure.

Canadian military told to counterattack critic's comments

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PUBLICATION: The Leader-Post (Regina)
DATE: 2007.07.13
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A9
DATELINE: OTTAWA
BYLINE: David Pugliese
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 557

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The report was sent to 50 officers including two brigadier generals.

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It recommended the military be prepared to counter Staples' arguments.

"Everyone engaged with communicating on Afghanistan should be made aware of his arguments so that they can be better prepared to deal with them," recommended the report to Lt.-Col. Jacques Poitras at National Defence headquarters.

In an interview Staples said the military had overstepped its bounds but that he is not surprised by such actions.

"This is what happens when you have a different viewpoint on Afghanistan than the government and the

generals," he said.

Staples said it is not the military's role to sell the mission and challenge those who don't disagree with it. That is the job of elected officials, he added.

Every federal government department has a communications department with a role to monitor relevant public debate.

Army spokesman Lt.-Col. Chris Lemay said officers were simply doing their job. "It was fair game to know what was out there," he said. "Our job is to make sure we are aware of the information that is floating in the public domain."

Lemay said he was not aware if the military followed up on the recommendation to prepare to counter Staples' arguments.

Staples, who has criticized the war on TV and in print articles, said such activities set a dangerous precedent. "I don't hide what I have to say, but I wonder what type of message this sends to others who might want to speak out publicly," he said.

But Lemay said there is no regular program to monitor analysts who discuss defence issues and during that period on the East Coast only Staples' presentation was attended by an officer. At the time, East Coast military personnel were getting ready for a mission to Afghanistan, he added.

Defence officials, however, were not keen for the public to know that such documents existed. They at first claimed no such records had been kept but since the Citizen filed its complaint with the Information Commissioner the department has been required to release 19 pages of documents dealing with Staples.

Ottawa Citizen

Casualties: why do we bring them home?

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PUBLICATION: The Leader-Post (Regina)
DATE: 2007.07.13
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Letters
PAGE: B11
BYLINE: Percy Lambert
SOURCE: The Leader-Post
WORD COUNT: 439

It's a touchy subject, but as I view the flag-draped coffins of Canadians who have made the supreme sacrifice in Afghanistan, I reflect back some 65 years and think of my own involvement in the Second World War.

I was never posted to a theatre of war, but was part of the ground crew under the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, stationed for some time at No. 5 Bombing & Gunnery School near Dafoe. During my tenure there, 37 young men lost their lives in training mishaps. Canadian casualties were usually sent home for burial. Trainee casualties from other parts of the Commonwealth were buried at Humboldt; getting detailed to a funeral party was looked forward to, as it meant a day off. Sounds gross, perhaps.

If the deaths of those 37 men got a mention in some local paper, it was about all the recognition that came their way. They didn't make national news, as the media of that era were too busy recording casualties that occurred on a daily basis in combat.

My point? Does anybody believe those laid to rest in Humboldt were not as comfortable as any of the fallen? Or does anyone think the bereaved families felt the loss to any greater extent because their loved one was not in a grave closer to their place of birth? Of course, those coffins will evoke the sympathy of anyone. However, disposing of our mortal remains and preserving treasured memories are two separate issues that do not need to be linked. Is the lost loved one any closer to home because the remains are in a grave on the other side of town rather than the other side of the world? There are many ways to preserve memories: a plaque with a list of achievements or a written journal with a life history (including pictures). Wouldn't there be as much satisfaction in reading wonderful words of valour on a plaque in the town hall as on an inscription in a windswept cemetery? For those who believe there is another world after our life on Earth is over, holding a service without the body should be no problem. Surely God will hear their message anyway. Think of the times when the lives of thousands ended in one stroke, as in the Dieppe raid in 1942 or the 2004 tsunami, when 300,000 died. Did our Savior deny them entry because no funeral took place?

Percy Lambert

Moose Jaw

Canada giving \$8M for Afghan legal aid

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EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A5
COLUMN: Canada Digest
KEYWORDS: WAR; LEGAL AID; FOREIGN AID; CANADA; AFGHANISTAN
DATELINE: OTTAWA
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 102

OTTAWA – Canada is giving \$8 million to projects in Afghanistan that aim to establish a national legal-aid program and promote other justice and rule-of-law initiatives, the federal government said Thursday.

Josee Verner, Canada's minister of international co-operation, said the projects will be implemented by the International Criminal Defence Attorneys Association, Rights & Democracy, and CANADEM.

Getting a functional and effective legal-aid system off the ground will be the focus of one of the projects, which is to receive \$2.9 million. The boost in funding from Canada will help create a national, Afghan-run legal-aid program, the government said.

Defence analyst under surveillance for opposing Afghanistan war; Military officials kept tabs on Steve Staples after Halifax speech in 2006

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PUBLICATION: Edmonton Journal
DATE: 2007.07.13
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ILLUSTRATION: Photo: Ottawa Citizen; CanWest News Service / Steve Staples ;
KEYWORDS: OFFICE EQUIPMENT; RETAIL TRADE; INTERIM STATEMENT
DATELINE: OTTAWA
BYLINE: David Pugliese
SOURCE: Ottawa Citizen; CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 711

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Hillier, chief of the defence staff, has ordered a sweeping crackdown to block the release of all files on the Afghanistan mission requested under the access to information law.

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It recommended the military be prepared to counter Staples' arguments.

"Everyone engaged with communicating on Afghanistan should be made aware of his arguments so that they can be better prepared to deal with them," recommended the report to Lt.-Col. Jacques Poitras at National

Defence headquarters.

In an interview, Staples said the military had overstepped its bounds, but he is not surprised by such actions.

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Lemay did not have any information why military officials at first denied the records existed.

Privately, officers have said that since Canadian troops are at war, Staples's criticisms are not welcome or helpful.

This week has seen other questions raised about the military's policy of openness and transparency.

Critics, including Liberal MP Denis Coderre, have taken the Defence Department to task for its recent creation of the Strategic Joint Staff, a group designed to further review records released under the Access to Information law.

Media reports this week pointed out all files requested under the access law related to Afghanistan, including details about the potential abuse of prisoners, are now being withheld on Hillier's orders.

The access legislation allows Canadians to request government records by paying a \$5 fee per request. Since the government has several dozen reasons it can employ to censor material, users of the law note few real sensitive pieces of information are ever released.

Military spokesman Lt.-Col. Jamie Robertson said no reports are being withheld.

He said the review is only for records which have potential operational security implications and the process follows the provisions of the access law.

Defence analyst under surveillance for opposing Afghanistan war; Military officials kept tabs on Staples

But a source disputed that claim. The joint staff has ordered that even previously released files be reviewed before they can be released again to the public. Files subject to another round of reviews range from records about veterans exposed to nuclear weapons testing in the 1950s to a file on a 1995 court martial in British Columbia.

Canada gives \$8 million for legal–judicial reform

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PUBLICATION: Times Colonist (Victoria)
DATE: 2007.07.13
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A2
DATELINE: OTTAWA
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 192

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Josee Verner, Canada's minister of international co–operation, said the projects will be implemented by the International Criminal Defence Attorneys Association, Rights & Democracy, and CANADEM.

"Canada's funding will help extend the scope of legal–judicial reform in Afghanistan to reach the most disadvantaged, including women and some of the most vulnerable elements of society," Verner said in a statement.

Getting a functional and effective legal–aid system off the ground will be the focus of one of the projects, which is to receive \$2.9 million.

The criminal defence association and the International Legal Foundation–Afghanistan have been giving legal–aid services to some Afghans since 2003. But the boost in funding from Canada will help create a national, Afghan–run legal–aid program, the government said.

The funding will also be used to work with the Afghan ministry of justice to develop a national policy on legal aid.

The group Rights & Democracy will be getting \$5 million of the money for projects to promote legal and policy reforms aimed at improving the status of women in Afghan society.

Military kept tabs on foe of Afghanistan mission

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PUBLICATION: Times Colonist (Victoria)
DATE: 2007.07.13
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A2
ILLUSTRATION: Photo: Staples: Selling isn't their job.;
DATELINE: OTTAWA
BYLINE: David Pugliese
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 397

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War on drugs is already lost

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DATE: 2007.07.13
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Letters
PAGE: A17
ILLUSTRATION: Photo: Bruce Stotesbury, Times Colonist / Victoria PoliceInsp. Les Sylven, guarded by emergency response team members, holds a press conference last year to announce a large drug seizure. A letter-writer says a law-enforcement approach to drug use has failed, and that all drugs should be legalized and controlled. ;
BYLINE: Phil Lyons
SOURCE: Times Colonist
WORD COUNT: 168

Why is the direction of discussion on the problem of drug use always toward increasing the law-and-order approach? The only way to decrease the illegal drug problem is to legalize the use of all drugs, regulate their use and fund services to help those who wish to get off drugs.

If we remove the obscene profits from the pushers, get the police busy dealing with real crimes and increase the education of citizens, we will only be faced with the problems that we face with alcohol and tobacco use, which are minuscule compared with the costs associated with the current legal and medical approach.

It is no accident that the U.S.-driven invasion of Afghanistan has had one major economic outcome: Afghanistan has become the world's largest supplier of illegal drugs. We must bite the bullet and face the bitter truth that the "war against drugs" has been lost and we should make radical changes in our approach.

Phil Lyons,

Victoria.

Afghan justice on the defensive

SOURCETAG 0707130643
PUBLICATION: The Winnipeg Sun
DATE: 2007.07.13
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Editorial/Opinion
PAGE: 11
BYLINE: MINDELLE JACOBS
WORD COUNT: 430

Working as a criminal lawyer in Vancouver's squalid Downtown Eastside can be depressing, but at least you don't get thrown out of the courtroom just for daring to show up.

So it was quite shock for lawyer Roxane Vachon, who went to Afghanistan to help local lawyers defend poor citizens, to discover that defence lawyers were practically considered vermin.

When she first went to the troubled country in 2005, she and the Afghan lawyers she was mentoring were routinely tossed out of courtrooms and barred from prisons.

NOVELTY

Defence lawyers were viewed at best as "a cute little novelty" or, at worst, with downright hostility, recalls Vachon, 40, who spent two three-month stints in Afghanistan.

Ordering Vachon and a local lawyer, out of the courtroom one day, one judge declared: "We don't need westerners here and we don't need lawyers."

Vachon left the courtroom, but only long enough to change tactics. During a break in the proceedings, she knocked on the door of the judge's office, invited herself for tea and explained she was training Afghan lawyers to help Afghans using local laws.

After hearing her out, the judge said he'd welcome her into his court anytime.

"You've got to win them over one person at a time," says Vachon.

It seems to be working. The Taliban may still be trying to terrorize Afghanistan back into a barbarous theocracy but, thanks to Vachon and other international lawyers, the rule of law is slowly taking shape.

Yesterday, Ottawa announced almost \$3 million in new funding for the initiative, which has been extended until 2010. The project, started in 2003, is run by the Montreal-based International Criminal Defence Attorneys Association (ICDAA).

The ultimate goal is to create an Afghan-run legal aid service that operates independently.

The expectation is that by 2009, Afghanistan's legal aid system will be virtually autonomous, says Neil Burron, the ICDAA's Afghanistan project manager.

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Two more Canadian lawyers will go to Afghanistan over the next year to train their Afghan counterparts. After that, says Burron, the Afghans will be expected to run the offices with continued financial support from the Canadian government.

"We've created an industry of criminal defence lawyers in a country that didn't know the first thing about representing an accused," says Vachon

Sometimes, though, the defence lawyers don't find out about cases until it's too late. She recalls a woman who was charged with murdering her missing husband, although it was suspected he simply moved to Iran and remarried.

The woman's teen daughter was also charged with murder.

All Vachon and her colleagues could do was get the daughter a shorter sentence in a juvenile jail. The mother, however, got life in prison.

DIRT HOLE

"It's just heartbreaking," says Vachon. "Can you imagine spending the rest of your life in a dirt hole?"

Over the years, she has learned to be hyper-aware to stay safe. In 2005, a suicide bomber blew up her guest house, killing three people. She escaped unharmed.

Bombs exploded regularly in Kabul while she was there, but Vachon remained remarkably unrattled. Some of her fondest memories are of having tea on rooftop terraces. "It's not all sand and guns and death."

Study reveals increase in soldiers under treatment

SOURCETAG 0707130631

PUBLICATION: The Winnipeg Sun

DATE: 2007.07.13

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 8

ILLUSTRATION: file photo by Les Perraux, CP Soldiers in Afghanistan hear of the death of a comrade.

BYLINE: LOUIS MATHIEU GAGNE, SUN MEDIA

DATELINE: MONTREAL

WORD COUNT: 287

The number of Canadian soldiers battling drug and alcohol problems has more than doubled since Canada became involved in the war on terrorism in 2001.

From 2001 to 2006, the number of soldiers assessed as requiring treatment soared 125%, according to access to information documents obtained by Sun Media.

The number of military personnel evaluated for addiction by a medical officer or a drug counsellor went from 293 to 660 over that period.

The Department of National Defence says it can't make any link between the Canadian mission and the increase, but it can't deny there is one either.

"These are raw numbers that have not yet been analysed to determine whether this increase is significant from a scientific point of view," said Narinder Dhillon, national addictions practice leader at the Defence Department.

REFORMS

Could the increase be linked to the stress, or distress, brought on by dangerous missions past and present?

"It would be speculative to say that's the case," Dhillon said. "I am not saying there is no link. But without proper analysis, we can't really know."

He did say, however, that mental health-care reforms that began in 2000 may have played a role in the increase in numbers.

"It may have made people more aware and got more soldiers to ask for help."

Retired Col. Michel W. Drapeau called the lack of analysis regarding the health of soldiers "disturbing."

"If I were in a family in which someone was a soldier, I would want the Canadian Forces to study this," he said.

Drapeau said he was worried but not surprised by the statistics.

"We demand a lot from our soldiers. Soldiers and their families must put up with constant stress because of

combat or just waiting for the mission to begin."

According to Dhillon, one shouldn't believe that alcohol dependency is any worse among soldiers than among the population in general.

He cited a survey of 8,000 Canadian soldiers from 2002 in which 4.2% of respondents said they had been dependent on alcohol in the previous year. He said that percentage is lower than the general public (5.7%).

ALCOHOL

But 8.5% of the soldiers polled said they had been dependent on alcohol at some point in their life.

"That's comparable to the level in the general public (8.5%)," Dhillon said.

The figures obtained by Sun Media concern soldiers at 19 bases: Bagotville, Cold Lake, Goose Bay, Trenton, Gander, Greenwood, Winnipeg, Comox, North Bay, Ottawa, Halifax, Gagetown, Valcartier, Petawawa, Kingston, Borden, Edmonton, Wainwright and Esquimalt. KEYWORDS=CANADA

Unease with war grows: Poll Rising death toll of Afghan mission too high a price, 67% of Canadians say

SOURCETAG: 0707130513

PUBLICATION: The Toronto Sun

DATE: 2007.07.13

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 8

ILLUSTRATION: photo by Finbarr O'Reilly, Reuters Canadian Warrant Officer Ray Green shaves at Three Tank Hill base above Panjwahi village, Kandahar province, yesterday.

BYLINE: MURRAY BREWSTER, CP

DATELINE: OTTAWA

WORD COUNT: 470

A growing number of Canadians, especially in Quebec, say the rising death toll among troops in Afghanistan is too high a price to pay for helping the troubled country, a new poll suggests.

A Canadian Press–Decima Research survey shows 67% of those asked believe the number of casualties has been unacceptable, a five–percentage–point rise from a poll taken a little over a month ago.

Only 25% of respondents said the number of killed and wounded was acceptable, in a survey taken following the most recent deaths of six soldiers in a roadside bomb attack.

Bruce Anderson, CEO of Decima Research, said Canadians are clearly becoming more doubtful about whether progress is being made, in light of the deaths of 66 soldiers and one diplomat in Afghanistan.

LACK OF PROGRESS

"In the absence of more evidence of progress, and in the wake of still more deaths of Canadian soldiers, it's clear that discomfort with the mission is growing, and people are questioning whether the lives being lost so honourably are being lost in vain," Anderson said.

Of particular concern to the government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper is the result showing scepticism runs highest in Quebec, where 76% said the sacrifice is unacceptable. This comes as the Royal 22nd Regiment — the famed Vandoos — prepare to take over the battle group in Kandahar next month.

"Given the importance of Quebec to the Conservatives in trying to fashion a strong win in the next election ... the fact these numbers are deteriorating" should be cause for concern, Anderson said.

Even among the most ardent supporters of the war — people who identify themselves as Conservatives — doubt has crept in. The number of Tories who say the price tag has been too high increased by eight percentage points since the beginning of June, to 48%.

Bloodied by the past 16 months of fighting in southern Afghanistan, and with a year and a half left in the country's combat commitment, a respected historian said Canadians are at a crossroads. "Canadians have to decide whether they want to win," said Desmond Morton, a professor at Montreal's McGill University.

Unease with war grows: Poll Rising death toll of Afghan mission too high a price, 67% of Canadians say

Anderson agreed the latest deaths could mark a tipping point for Canadian involvement in the war-torn region.

CONFIDENCE LEVEL

"Are we past the point where the confidence level can be restored?" he said. "If we talk about restoring confidence to the point where Canadians would support an extension of the mission, we may well be past that point; however, circumstances can always change. The problem for Canadians is that they don't believe we can win this conflict."

Morton says Canada has never lost a war but over the last few months, he's often wondered whether the public is talking itself into defeat.

"It is sad when (casualties) happen," the soldier-turned-historian said. "It was sad when it happened in 1944, in 1918 or 1917. In fact, in 1918 we suffered our heaviest casualties of World War I, by far. Did anybody in Canada notice? No, because we were winning. If you pitch this war as a hopeless war we cannot win and every death is a needless sacrifice." KEYWORDS=NATIONAL

38 rebels, 6 cops killed in Afghan violence

SOURCETAG 0707130512

PUBLICATION: The Toronto Sun

DATE: 2007.07.13

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 8

BYLINE: AP

DATELINE: KABUL

WORD COUNT: 157

U.S.-led coalition and Afghan forces killed 36 suspected Taliban rebels in a series of clashes and air strikes yesterday in southern Afghanistan, officials said.

A NATO soldier was killed and two others wounded in another operation.

In the east, roadside blasts left six police officers dead, officials said.

In southern Helmand province, U.S.-led coalition and Afghan troops were attacked by militants in Gereshk district compound, said Maj.-Gen. Muhiddin Ghorri of the Afghan National Army. The joint forces called in an air strike on the compound, leaving 20 suspected Taliban fighters dead.

The militants' dead bodies were left at the compound and there were no casualties among the joint force, Ghorri said.

Also in Helmand, Afghan police clashed with insurgents in Sangin district, leaving five militants dead, a coalition statement said. The police hit a mine during the fire fight, leaving one officer dead and another wounded, it said.

And in neighbouring Uruzgan province, coalition troops called in air strikes on Taliban fighters after a joint U.S.-Afghan patrol was ambushed by militants, the coalition said.

There were no reports of U.S. or Afghan casualties in the Uruzgan clash, which left an estimated 11 Taliban fighters dead. KEYWORDS=WORLD

11 rebels, 6 cops killed in Afghan violence

SOURCETAG 0707130511

PUBLICATION: The Toronto Sun

DATE: 2007.07.13

EDITION: Early

SECTION: News

PAGE: 8

BYLINE: AP AND REUTERS

DATELINE: KABUL

WORD COUNT: 193

U.S.-led coalition and Afghan troops clashed with suspected Taliban militants in southern Afghanistan yesterday, killing 11 rebels. In the east, six police officers were killed in a bomb blast.

In another incident, a British soldier was shot dead and two were wounded in the southern province of Helmand, the British defence ministry said.

The U.S.-led troops called in airstrikes on the Taliban fighters after the joint U.S.-Afghan patrol was ambushed by the militants in Uruzgan province, the coalition said in a statement. There were no reports of U.S. or Afghan casualties.

In eastern Khost province, a roadside bomb targeting a police patrol vehicle killed six officers, a spokesman for the provincial police chief said. The victims were part of a joint U.S.-Afghan patrol. No coalition troops were injured in the morning blast.

A Dutch soldier wounded in a suicide bomb attack in the southern town of Deh Rawud earlier this week died from his injuries yesterday after being transported to a hospital in the Netherlands. The Dutch defence ministry said 1st Lieut. Tom Krist was 24.

Violence has surged in the past 18 months, the bloodiest period since U.S.-led troops overthrew the Taliban in 2001. Inspired by militants in Iraq, the Taliban largely rely on roadside bombs and suicide attacks.

KEYWORDS=WORLD

Afghan justice on the defensive

SOURCETAG 0707130272

PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Sun

DATE: 2007.07.13

EDITION: Final

SECTION: Editorial/Opinion

PAGE: 15

BYLINE: MINDELLE JACOBS

WORD COUNT: 430

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NOVELTY

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Sometimes, though, the defence lawyers don't find out about cases until it's too late. She recalls a woman who was charged with murdering her missing husband, although it was suspected he simply moved to Iran and remarried.

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DIRT HOLE

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SOURCETAG 0707130435

PUBLICATION: The London Free Press

DATE: 2007.07.13

EDITION: Final

SECTION: Editorial/Opinion

PAGE: A11

BYLINE: MINDELLE JACOBS

WORD COUNT: 427

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Terrorist war cry issued in Pakistan

SOURCETAG 0707130414

PUBLICATION: The London Free Press

DATE: 2007.07.13

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: A3

ILLUSTRATION: 1. photo by Reuters AFTERMATH: Piled bullet casings are shown yesterday to journalists at the Jamia Hafsa, the female Islamic seminary of the Lal Masjid, or Red Mosque, in Islamabad, where an army siege took place. 2. photo of PERVEZ MUSHARRAF President vows to win the battle against violent religious extremists in Pakistan.

BYLINE: AP

DATELINE: BASTI ABDULLAH, PAKISTAN

WORD COUNT: 263

A week after being caught fleeing in a woman's burqa, a radical cleric gave a fiery funeral oration for his slain brother yesterday, predicting a bloody "Islamic revolution" here.

Hours later, President Pervez Musharraf went on national television to vow that his government will crush extremists across the country and move strongly against the religious schools, like those at Islamabad's Red Mosque, that breed them.

Musharraf also said security forces along the border with Afghanistan will soon get tanks and other modern weapons to bolster the campaign against militants. The frontier region is a haven for al-Qaida and the Taliban and the U.S. has been pushing Pakistan to root them out.

"Terrorism and extremism has not ended in Pakistan," Musharraf said. "But it is our resolve that we will eliminate extremism and terrorism wherever it exists. Extremism and terrorism will be defeated in every corner of the country."

In an apparent backlash to the eight-day army siege at the Red Mosque that left 108 people dead, a suicide bomber attacked the office of a top government official near the Afghan border yesterday. Thousands of angry tribesmen mourned three of the militants killed at the mosque.

The army's assault on the Red Mosque militants has given hardliners a new rallying cry and sparked calls from al-Qaida and Taliban leaders for revenge attacks. But the crackdown also has raised Musharraf's standing among moderate Pakistanis worried about homegrown extremism.

Musharraf urged those in charge of madrassas, or Islamic religious schools, to eradicate hatred and violence from the minds of their students.

"We will never allow any madrassa or mosque to be misused like the Red Mosque or the Jamia Hafsa," he said, referring to the Islamabad mosque's school for women. KEYWORDS=WORLD

War deaths too high, poll says A growing number of Canadians say the price is too high for troops in Afghanistan.

SOURCETAG 0707130412

PUBLICATION: The London Free Press

DATE: 2007.07.13

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: A3

BYLINE: MURRAY BREWSTER, CP

DATELINE: OTTAWA

WORD COUNT: 327

A growing number of Canadians, especially in Quebec, say the rising death toll among troops in Afghanistan is too high a price to pay for helping the troubled country, suggests a new poll.

A CP-Decima Research survey shows 67 per cent of those asked believe the number of casualties has been unacceptable, a five percentage point rise from a poll taken a month ago.

Only 25 per cent of respondents said the number of killed and wounded was acceptable in a survey taken following the most recent deaths of six soldiers.

Bruce Anderson, chief executive of Decima Research, said Canadians are becoming more doubtful about whether progress is being made in light of the deaths of 66 soldiers and one diplomat.

"In the absence of more evidence of progress and in the wake of still more deaths of Canadian soldiers, it's clear that discomfort with the mission is growing and people are questioning whether the lives being lost so honourably are being lost in vain," said Anderson.

Of particular concern to the government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper is the result showing skepticism runs highest in Quebec, where 76 per cent said the sacrifice is unacceptable.

This comes as the Royal 22nd Regiment — the Vandoos — prepares to take over the battle group in Kandahar next month.

"Given the importance of Quebec to the Conservatives in terms of trying to fashion a strong win in the next election campaign, the fact these numbers are deteriorating" should cause concern, said Anderson.

Even among the most ardent supporters of the war doubt has crept in. The number of Tories who say the price has been too high increased eight percentage points to 48 per cent.

Bloodied by fighting in southern Afghanistan and with 18 months left in the country's combat commitment, Canadians are at a crossroads, a respected historian said.

"Canadians have to decide whether they want to win," said Desmond Morton, a professor at Montreal's McGill University.

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Anderson said the latest deaths could mark a tipping point for Canadian involvement in the war.

"Are we past the point where the confidence level can be restored?"

The telephone poll of slightly more than 1,000 people was conducted July 5–9 — after the most recent Canadian deaths in Afghanistan.

It has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Morton says Canada has never lost a war and if Anderson's assessment of the public mind is correct, the country is setting itself up "for its first international humiliation of an unquestioned kind."

Over the last few months, Morton said, he's wondered whether the public is talking itself into defeat.

KEYWORDS=NATIONAL

Canadians alarmed by casualties

SOURCETAG 0707130748

PUBLICATION: The Edmonton Sun

DATE: 2007.07.13

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 32

BYLINE: CP

DATELINE: OTTAWA

WORD COUNT: 127

A new poll suggests Canadians are growing more alarmed about the rising number of soldiers killed and wounded in Afghanistan.

A Canadian Press–Decima Research survey shows 67% of those asked believe the number of casualties suffered by Canadian troops is unacceptably high, even with whatever progress has been made in rebuilding the war–torn country.

That is a five–point rise from a poll taken a little over a month ago.

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Afghan justice on the defensive

SOURCETAG 0707130733
PUBLICATION: The Edmonton Sun
DATE: 2007.07.13
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Editorial/Opinion
PAGE: 11
BYLINE: MINDELLE JACOBS
WORD COUNT: 430

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Military kept eye on activist: report shows

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PUBLICATION: The StarPhoenix (Saskatoon)
DATE: 2007.07.13
EDITION: Final
SECTION: National/World
PAGE: C11
DATELINE: OTTAWA
BYLINE: David Pugliese
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 357

OTTAWA — Military officials kept an eye on an outspoken opponent of the Afghanistan war last year but in a report produced about the Ottawa man's public comments they determined support for the mission was still high and his criticism does "not seem to resonate" with the public and media.

Defence department officials originally denied the documents, requested by the Ottawa Citizen under the Access to Information Act, even existed. But an investigation by the Information Commissioner revealed the e-mails and a report on the activities of left-wing defence analyst Steve Staples had indeed been compiled by the military.

The report was sent to 50 officers including two brigadier generals.

The release comes as the Defence Department finds itself dealing with charges from critics that Gen. Rick Hillier, chief of the defence staff, has ordered a sweeping crackdown to block the release of all files on the Afghanistan mission requested under the access to information law.

Defence officials have denied that is the case and Ward Elcock, the department's deputy minister, issued a statement pointing out the organization understands the importance of providing information to the public.

The military report on Staples, of the Ottawa-based Rideau Institute on International Affairs, details his speech to a Halifax peace group last year and his views on Afghanistan and Hillier's plans to move the military away from peacekeeping and into more combat-oriented roles. It stated Staples presentation did not seem to resonate with those attending the speech but pointed out he was expected to give other talks across the country.

In an interview Staples said the military had overstepped its bounds but that he is not surprised by such actions.

"This is what happens when you have a different viewpoint on Afghanistan than the government and the generals," he said.

Staples said it is not the military's role to sell the mission and challenge those who disagree with it. That is the job of elected officials, he added.

Army spokesperson Lt.-Col. Chris Lemay said officers were simply doing their job. "It was fair game to know what was out there," he said. "Our job is to make sure we are aware of the information that is floating in the public domain."

Trade in jeopardy over U.S. security fears: Chamber boss

IDNUMBER 200707130090
PUBLICATION: The Hamilton Spectator
DATE: 2007.07.13
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Canada/World
PAGE: A5
ILLUSTRATION: Photo: Len Crispino;
DATELINE: TORONTO
BYLINE: Jered Stuffco
SOURCE: The Canadian Press
COPYRIGHT: © 2007 Torstar Corporation
WORD COUNT: 306

A pointed warning from the czar of homeland security in the United States about the threat of a revitalized al-Qaeda launching an attack from Canada fosters uncertainty which could damage cross-border trade, a top Ontario business leader said yesterday.

Len Crispino, president of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, took U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff to task for saying Americans will have to sacrifice economic interests in favour of increased security at the border.

"It leads to some uncertainty, and I think the worst thing for business is uncertainty," said Crispino, who argued that economic stability and national security are not mutually exclusive.

"It doesn't have to be one or the other. And framing the choice that way is unbalanced."

The United States is Canada's biggest trading partner and exports more products to Ontario than it does to all of China, he added.

"If we don't maintain and enhance that trade relationship ... then both of our economies are going to suffer."

A new report from American terror analysts suggests al-Qaeda has been taking advantage of a safe haven in Pakistan near the Afghanistan border to restore its operational strength to levels not seen since Sept. 11, 2001, The Associated Press reported yesterday.

Earlier this week, Chertoff told the Chicago Tribune that terrorists using phoney documents could hit targets in Buffalo and Detroit.

Chris Mathers, a security analyst and former U.S. Customs Service officer, said increased U.S. fears about a terror threat launched from Canada could have serious effects on Canada's manufacturing industry.

In particular, Mathers said "just-in-time inventory," such as auto parts built in Canada that are shipped to U.S. manufacturers on a tight timeline, would especially suffer.

Since the value of "just-in-time" products are based on how quickly they can be delivered, long lines at the border could mean that American companies would turn instead to domestic suppliers rather than Canadian ones.

Mathers also said increased fears could hinder the ability of Canadians born elsewhere to do business in the U.S., especially if they are from countries deemed unstable like Pakistan or Somalia.

Who's watching the generals?

IDNUMBER 200707130066
PUBLICATION: The Hamilton Spectator
DATE: 2007.07.13
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Opinion
PAGE: A14
ILLUSTRATION: Photo: General Rick Hillier;
BYLINE: Kevin Cavanagh
SOURCE: The Hamilton Spectator
COPYRIGHT: © 2007 Torstar Corporation
WORD COUNT: 381

At a time when Canadians are deeply divided over our future role in Afghanistan, it's troubling enough that information laws could be misused to keep the public in the dark over such a crucial national issue. But it's scary when circumstances suggest government policy is being orchestrated by military leaders.

When media reports surfaced this week that Canada's chief of defence staff, General Rick Hillier, has directed senior officers to interfere in the release of documents under Access to Information laws, alarm bells should have sounded across the country.

The Globe and Mail was the first to report that Hillier's inner circle of advisers — a group called the Strategic Joint Staff — has been giving "guidance" to senior civilian officials as to what facts will be made public through Access to Information requests.

Even such information as how many prisoners have been taken by Canadian soldiers — documents that used to be public — is now being withheld, on the claim that such knowledge could endanger Canadian soldiers.

There's nothing new in officials trying to suppress information in times of war, and it is well known that the Stephen Harper government is vehement about maintaining strict control over who says what.

What is alarming is that soldiers are apparently interfering with the freedom of information laws of our democracy, overriding the civilian authorities charged with ensuring the proper execution of such laws. It's a bitter irony that the freedom of information process is being manipulated over events in Afghanistan — the very place where our soldiers are fighting and dying to protect freedoms.

Important questions beg answers. Did Hillier award these new powers to himself? Did someone in the PMO or the Privy Council Office give the go-ahead to start muzzling? Did Hillier end up trying to manage the file because the civilian defence minister, Gordon O'Connor, has performed so poorly? And finally, aren't government MPs concerned enough to publicly demand answers on behalf of the citizens they represent?

Canadians do not want a country where generals tell the civilians how to apply our laws. If in fact such a frightening precedent is being set or tolerated, it's startling that the government is not acting urgently to reassure people that, in Canada, civilian oversight still prevails.

Afghans get Canadian aid; \$8M earmarked for legal, justice programs

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PUBLICATION: The Windsor Star
DATE: 2007.07.13
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A9
DATELINE: OTTAWA
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 273

OTTAWA – Canada is giving \$8 million to projects in Afghanistan that aim to establish a national legal-aid program and promote other justice and rule-of-law initiatives, the federal government said Thursday.

Josee Verner, Canada's minister of international co-operation, said the projects will be implemented by the International Criminal Defence Attorneys Association, Rights & Democracy, and CANADEM, , an organization that dispatches Canadian experts in human rights, democracy, rule-of-law and governance to fill needs around the world.

"Canada's funding will help extend the scope of legal-judicial reform in Afghanistan to reach the most disadvantaged, including women and some of the most vulnerable elements of society," Verner said in a statement.

Getting a functional and effective legal-aid system off the ground will be the focus of one of the projects, which is to receive \$2.9 million. The criminal defence association and the International Legal Foundation-Afghanistan have been giving legal-aid services to some Afghans since 2003.

But the boost in funding from Canada will help create a national, Afghan-run legal-aid program, the government said. The funding will also be used to work with the Afghan ministry of justice to develop a national policy on legal aid.

The group Rights & Democracy will be getting \$5 million of the money for projects to promote legal and policy reforms aimed at improving the status of women in Afghan society. They will seek to build on the efforts of opinion leaders, advocates and public authorities in both urban and rural areas of the war-torn country and to raise awareness about the struggles women face there.

Women are also the target for the \$680,000 being directed to a project by CANADEM.

World Report

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SECTION: News

PAGE: C2

COLUMN: World Report

Colour Photo: Sipiwe Sibeko, Reuters / CAT SCRATCH FEVER:South China tigers called Cathy, left, and 327 are among fewer than 100 in existence. They were introduced to each other in a South African game park, the David Tang Tiger Breeding Center in

ILLUSTRATION: Philippolis outside Bloemfontein, on Thursday. Four tigers have been brought to the 33,000–hectare Laohu Valley reserve in Free State province since 2003. They are encouraged to mix in a wild environment, breed and brush up on their hunting skills before being returned to their native habitat in China. ;

SOURCE: Compiled from Star News Services

WORD COUNT: 1100

MIDEAST

SPIKY ISRAELI INTRUDER CALLED NUCLEAR THREAT

JERUSALEM, Israel – A new type of intruder has been needling authorities at Israel's top secret nuclear research centre — one of the four–legged variety.

Park rangers have been sent to the facility at Dimona, believed by experts to be used to produce atomic weapons, to catch dozens of porcupines that have been chewing through saplings and garden hoses.

Using potatoes and chocolate milk as bait, the prickly animals were being trapped and moved elsewhere.

The site's gardener, David Golan, was quoted as saying a porcupine population explosion posed a security threat.

IRAN FINDS ANOTHER TARGET FOR GUERRILLA ACTION

SULAIMANIYAH, Iraq – Iranian forces bombarded northern Iraq's rugged Bashdar region on Thursday targeting Kurdish guerrillas, local officials told AFP.

"There was fighting between PJAK and Iranian forces and there was steady bombardment by Iranians in the Sardul area in Bashdar region," Bashir Ahmed, district administrator of Bashdar, on the Iranian border.

The Party of Free Life in Kurdistan is an anti–Iranian offshoot of Kurdistan Workers' Party, a Kurdish separatist movement fighting to carve out an independent state in southeastern Turkey.

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EUROPE

GERMANY URGED TO PROBE TORTURE, SECRET DETENTIONS

STRASBOURG, France – A Council of Europe report Thursday called on Germany to investigate alleged secret detentions, the torture of terrorism suspects, and so-called extraordinary renditions.

The report by the human rights commissioner, Sweden's Thomas Hammerberg, cited the case of German national Khaled El Masri, who alleges his U.S. abductors flew him to a prison in Afghanistan for interrogation.

The report cites accusations that a German intelligence officer visited El Masri and accompanied him to Europe.

German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier has denied that Germany played any part in the kidnapping of the Lebanese-born German man, who says he was tortured by the CIA.

PRINCESS GRACE UNVEILED IN GAMBLING ENCLAVE SHOW

MONACO – An exhibition in this Mediterranean enclave delves into the private self of the late Princess Grace, the former Hollywood star.

"I have tried to come out of the fairy tale setting to show she had real grandeur," said Frederic Mitterrand, the curator of the exhibition which runs until Oct. 23 at Monaco's Grimaldi Forum.

Before she was killed in a car crash, the princess was "melancholic, suffered from serious depression but was always profoundly loyal," he said.

The exhibition — 25 years after her tragic death in a car accident — comprises an array of items: letters, photographs, gowns, jewellery and home-made films tracking her life.

U.K., GHANA PORTRAY TEEN GIRLS AS DOPE MULES

LONDON, Eng. – Two 16-year-old girls from London have been arrested in Ghana after being discovered with the equivalent of \$636,969 worth of cocaine, customs officials here said Thursday.

The teenagers were detained at Accra Airport on July 2 by Ghanaian narcotics officers working on a joint British-Ghanaian operation, British customs officials said in a statement.

The girls were alleged to be carrying 6.5 kilos when they attempted to board a British Airways flight to London.

'SACRED' BUT SICK BULL BRIEFLY ESCAPES SLAUGHTER

LONDON, Eng. – A sacred bull threatened with slaughter after testing positive for bovine tuberculosis has been reprieved until at least next week after its Hindu monk owners brought court action Thursday.

After a day-long hearing in Cardiff, Wales, Judge Gary Hickinbottom said he would hand down his judgment on Shambo's fate on Monday.

Five members of the Skanda Vale Temple went to court Thursday to try to prevent the slaughter of the six-year-old Fresian bullock.

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AFRICA

SWELLING NILE FLOODWATERS WASH AWAY SUDAN HOMES

KHARTOUM, Sudan – Massive flooding in Sudan has claimed at least 30 lives, left another 100 people injured and destroyed 25,000 homes, the interior ministry said on Thursday.

The flood waters swamped outlying areas of Khartoum, a day after sweeping through the capital's twin city of Omdurman and Kassala, a town near the Eritrean border in the east of the country.

Caused by rising waters of the Nile and Gash rivers due to the rainy season, the disaster has left the government scrambling to help the thousands of people from their engulfed homes.

Authorities fear the Nile will continue to rise, further submerging the lower areas surrounding the capital.

NEW FRENCH PREZ SENDS WIFE TO PLAY DIPLOMAT

TRIPOLI, Libya – The wife of French President Nicolas Sarkozy on Thursday paid a visit to Bulgarian medics facing the death sentence in Libya after being convicted of infecting children with the AIDS virus, a Libyan official said.

Cecilia Sarkozy also visited families of children infected by the virus. Sarkozysaid his wife would also hold talks with his Libyan counterpart Moamer Kadhafi.

Her visit comes a day after Libya's Supreme Court confirmed the death penalty against five Bulgarian nurses and a Palestinian doctor who were convicted of infecting 438 children with HIV–tainted blood.

TAIWAN EXPANDS ASIAN LINKS TO AFRICAN STATES

OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso – Burkina Faso and Taiwan on Thursday renewed a commitment to boost their diplomatic ties during a visit to the west African nation by Taiwan's Foreign Minister James Huang.

James, on a five–nation African tour, pledged "all my efforts to strengthen the brotherly relations between the people of Burkina Faso and Taiwan."

FORMER DICTATOR OF CHAD TO FACE CRIMINAL CHARGES

DAKAR, Senegal – Former Chadian dictator Hissene Habre, facing charges of crimes against humanity, will stand trial in a criminal court and not a special tribunal as earlier planned, a Senegalese minister said Thursday.

Justice Minister Sheik Tidiane Sy said instead of creating a special court, Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade had considered a modified criminal court to reduce costs.

Sy told a news conference that Wade did not want to spend a huge amount of money to establish a special war crimes tribunal for Habre, exiled in Senegal for 16 years.

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NORTH AMERICA

DEATH DID NOT PART MAN FROM HIS FATHER'S PENSION

NEW YORK – When retired U.S. school teacher Edward Sadlon died in 1993, his son apparently saw no reason to tell anyone, and allegedly continued to cash his father's pension checks for almost 10 years.

Now, prosecutors in Connecticut, where the retired teacher had worked, have charged the son, William Sadlon, 58, with mail fraud, accusing him of paying the monthly cheques into his own account from late 1993 until early 2003.

Connecticut authorities are believed to have paid out more than US\$250,000 in pension payments before realizing that Sadlon was in fact dead.

UN SUSPENDS PEACEKEEPER USE OF RUBBER BULLETS

UNITED NATIONS, New York – The United Nations said Thursday it has imposed a moratorium on the use of rubber bullets by its peacekeepers around the world pending a review following two deaths linked to these ammunitions in Kosovo in February.

Nick Birnback, a spokesman for the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations said the temporary suspension was in effect in six UN missions equipped with such bullets: Kosovo, East Timor, Haiti, Liberia, Ivory Coast and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

TANKER LOADED WITH OIL RUNS AGROUND NEAR NYC

NEW YORK – A 240-metre tanker carrying 455,000 barrels of fuel oil ran aground just south of New York City early Thursday, but there was no danger of a spill, U.S. coast guard officials said.

The tanker, belonging to Singapore-based shipping company Tanker Pacific, ran aground 6.5 kilometres north of Sandy Hook, N.J.

"There are two small breaches in the hull but there is no product leaking into the water. Nothing is coming out of the hull," said coast guard spokeswoman Annie Berlin.

UN LEADER HOLDS TALKS WITH NON-FAN BUSH

UNITED NATIONS, New York – UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon will travel to Washington early next week for wideranging talks with US President George W. Bush and congressional leaders, his press office said Thursday.

UN deputy spokeswoman Marie Okabe told a press briefing that Ban would call on Bush at the White House Tuesday for talks on violence in Sudan's Darfur province, U.S.-UN relations, UN reforms and climate change.

CHRISTIANS DISRUPT HINDU INVITED TO U.S. SENATE

WASHINGTON – Three people were arrested Thursday after staging a noisy protest as a Hindu chaplain read the opening prayer at the U.S. Senate, branding his appearance an "abomination."

Capitol police said the protester, apparently Christian religious activists, were ejected from the chamber and charged with an unlawful disruption of Congress.

Various faith leaders sometimes take over from the chamber's Christian chaplain.

Military tried to cover up file on outspoken critic; Forces' report deemed Ottawa man not a threat

IDNUMBER 200707130145

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PAGE: A1 / FRONT

ILLUSTRATION: Colour Photo: Bruno Schlumberger, The Ottawa Citizen / The Forces initially denied it had documents relating to analyst Steven Staples, but an investigation revealed they had compiled a report on him and circulated it to officers. ;

BYLINE: David Pugliese

SOURCE: The Ottawa Citizen

WORD COUNT: 1060

Military officials kept an eye on an outspoken opponent of the Afghanistan war last year, but in a report produced about the Ottawa man's public comments they determined support for the mission was still high and his criticism does "not seem to resonate" with the public and media.

Defence department officials originally denied the documents, requested by the Citizen under the access to information law, even existed. But an investigation by the information commissioner revealed that e-mails and a report on the activities of left-wing defence analyst Steven Staples had indeed been compiled by the military. The report was sent to 50 officers, including two brigadier generals.

The release comes as the Defence Department finds itself dealing with charges from critics that Gen. Rick Hillier has ordered a sweeping crackdown to block the release of all files on the Afghanistan mission requested under the access to information law.

Defence officials have denied that is the case and Ward Elcock, the department's deputy minister, issued a statement pointing out that the organization understands the importance of providing information to the public.

The military report on Mr. Staples, of the Ottawa-based Rideau Institute on International Affairs, details his speech to a Halifax peace group last year and his views on Afghanistan and Gen. Hillier's plans to move the military away from peacekeeping and into more combat-oriented roles. It stated that Mr. Staples's presentation did not seem to resonate with those attending the speech, but pointed out that he was expected to give other talks across the country.

It recommended the military be prepared to counter Mr. Staples's arguments.

"Everyone engaged with communicating on Afghanistan should be made aware of his arguments so that they can be better prepared to deal with them," recommended the report to Lt.-Col. Jacques Poitras at National Defence headquarters.

In an interview, Mr. Staples said the military had overstepped its bounds, but he is not surprised by such actions. "This is what happens when you have a different viewpoint on Afghanistan than the government and the generals," he said.

Mr. Staples said it is not the military's role to sell the mission and challenge those who don't agree with it. That is the job of elected officials, he added.

But army spokesman Lt.-Col. Chris Lemay said officers were simply doing their job. "It was fair game to know what was out there," he said. "Our job is to make sure we are aware of the information that is floating in the public domain."

Lt.-Col. Lemay said he was not aware if the military followed up on the recommendation to prepare to counter Mr. Staples's arguments.

But Mr. Staples, who has criticized the war on TV and in print articles, said such activities set a dangerous precedent. "I don't hide what I have to say, but I wonder what type of message this sends to others who might want to speak out publicly," he said.

"Does this mean if you don't agree with the war and say so in a public forum the government or military begins compiling a file on you?"

But Lt.-Col. Lemay said there is no regular program to monitor analysts who discuss defence issue and during that period on the East Coast, only Mr. Staples's presentation was attended by an officer. At the time, East Coast military personnel were getting ready for a mission to Afghanistan, he added.

Defence officials, however, were not keen for the public to know that such documents existed. They at first claimed no such records had been kept, but since the Citizen filed its complaint with the information commissioner, the department has been required to release 19 pages of documents dealing with Mr. Staples. Those records only covered a 15-day period last year and consisted of e-mails, the report and details on the media coverage of Mr. Staples's views.

Lt.-Col. Lemay did not have any information why military officials at first denied the records existed. Privately, officers have told the Citizen that since Canadian troops are at war, Mr. Staples's criticisms are not welcome or helpful.

This week has seen other questions raised about the military's policy of openness and transparency. Critics, including Liberal MP Denis Coderre, have taken the Defence Department to task for its recent creation of the Strategic Joint Staff, a group designed to further review records released under the access to information law.

Media reports this week pointed out that all files requested under the access law related to Afghanistan, including details about the potential abuse of prisoners, are now being withheld on Gen. Hillier's orders.

The access legislation allows Canadians to request government records by paying a \$5 fee per request. Since the government has several dozen reasons it can employ to censor material, users of the law note few real sensitive pieces of information are ever released.

On Wednesday, Mr. Elcock said the Strategic Joint Staff is reviewing material in requested records, with the ultimate aim of protecting Canadian troops in the field.

Military spokesman Lt.-Col. Jamie Robertson said no reports are being withheld. He said the review is only for records that have potential operational security implications and the process follows the provisions of the access law.

But a source disputed that claim. The joint staff has ordered that even previously released files be reviewed before they can be released again to the public. Files subject to another round of reviews range from records about veterans exposed to nuclear weapons testing in the 1950s to a file on a 1995 court martial in British

Columbia.

Mr. Elcock's statement also did not deal with his department's ongoing efforts to withhold other previously released public information. His department is still declining to release information on the cost of running various pieces of military machinery, including the Challenger jets used by Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his cabinet. That information had been available up until 2005.

Such records were requested by the Citizen more than a year ago. The newspaper has filed a complaint with the information commissioner to investigate the decision to withhold such data.

The Citizen has also filed a complaint on the Defence Department's decision last year to censor from current records the countries where the famed Devil's Brigade fought during the Second World War. The department censored that information on the grounds it could violate national security.

Last year, in an examination of 23 access requests made to the department over an 18-month period, the Citizen found 87 pieces of information, now censored, which had been previously released to the public or are still on government and Defence department websites.

Canada's \$8M to aid justice in Afghanistan

IDNUMBER 200707130132
PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Citizen
DATE: 2007.07.13
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A5
BYLINE: Meagan Fitzpatrick
SOURCE: The Ottawa Citizen
WORD COUNT: 376

Canada is giving \$8 million to projects in Afghanistan that aim to establish a national legal-aid program and promote other justice and rule-of-law initiatives, the federal government said yesterday.

Josee Verner, Canada's minister of international co-operation, said the projects will be implemented by the International Criminal Defence Attorneys Association, Rights & Democracy, and CANADEM.

"Canada's funding will help extend the scope of legal-judicial reform in Afghanistan to reach the most disadvantaged, including women and some of the most vulnerable elements of society," Ms. Verner said in a statement.

Getting a functional and effective legal-aid system off the ground will be the focus of one of the projects, which is to receive \$2.9 million.

The criminal defence association and the International Legal Foundation-Afghanistan have been giving legal-aid services to some Afghans since 2003. But the boost in funding from Canada will help create a national, Afghan-run legal-aid program, the government said. The funding will also be used to work with the Afghan ministry of justice to develop a national policy on legal aid.

The group Rights & Democracy will be getting \$5 million for projects to promote legal and policy reforms aimed at improving the status of women in Afghan society. They will seek to build on the efforts of opinion leaders, advocates and authorities in both urban and rural areas of the war-torn country, and to raise awareness about the struggles women face there.

Women are also the target for the \$680,000 being directed to a project by CANADEM, an organization that dispatches Canadian experts in human rights, democracy, rule-of-law and governance to fill needs around the world. The money will support an ongoing advisory position to the Afghan ministry of the interior.

The adviser, who will specifically represent female police officers in the ministry and the Afghan National Police, will oversee the development of "family response units" within police stations and the training of female police officers to patrol parks frequented by women.

The \$8 million announced yesterday comes a little more than a week after Canada participated in an international conference in Rome on the rule of law in Afghanistan. Canada announced more than \$30 million in funds devoted to rule-of-law initiatives.

All of the money is derived from Canada's pledge to give \$1 billion in aid to Afghanistan over 10 years.

Warped history?

IDNUMBER 200707130099
PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Citizen
DATE: 2007.07.13
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A11
BYLINE: Greg Soprovich
SOURCE: The Ottawa Citizen
WORD COUNT: 199

Re: We win peace by winning the war, July 6.

I was appalled to hear Jack Layton's comments suggesting a negotiated settlement in Afghanistan and applaud John Robson's column.

Mr. Layton's thesis that conflict is solved by negotiated settlement is facile and shockingly disingenuous for the leader of a major national party. Any reading of world political and military history makes it clear that negotiation works when both parties have interest in a solution and, generally, when one party is largely beaten. This is never more true than when one looks to conflict with authoritarian movements such as the Taliban or al-Qaeda.

One must wonder whether Mr. Layton really believes this thesis or is simply warping history to fit a politically convenient view. Does anyone really believe that a group such as the Taliban whose claims to fame include blowing up world heritage sites, stunning levels of oppression, and believes they may force the West to withdraw in Afghanistan, is interested in anything but an authoritarian state? One wonders whether Mr. Layton would have been offering up similar platitudes at Munich while sacrificing Czechoslovakia to the Nazis.

Greg Soprovich,

Ottawa

DND MONITORED CRITIC OF AFGHAN MISSION; Ordered To Release Surveillance Report It Denied Existed

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PUBLICATION: National Post
DATE: 2007.07.13
EDITION: National
SECTION: Canada
PAGE: A4
ILLUSTRATION: Black & White Photo: / (See hardcopy for Photo Description);
DATELINE: OTTAWA
BYLINE: David Pugliese
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 437

OTTAWA – Military officials kept an eye on an outspoken opponent of the Afghanistan war last year but in a report produced about the Ottawa man's public comments they determined support for the mission was still high and his criticism does "not seem to resonate" with the public and media.

Defence department officials originally denied the documents, requested by the Ottawa Citizen under the Access to Information Act, even existed. But an investigation by the Information Commissioner revealed the e-mails and a report on the activities of left-wing defence analyst Steve Staples had indeed been compiled by the military.

The report was sent to 50 officers including two brigadier generals.

The release comes as the Defence department finds itself dealing with charges from critics that General Rick Hillier, chief of the defence staff, has ordered a crackdown to block the release of all files on the Afghanistan mission requested under the Access to Information law.

Defence officials have denied that is the case and Ward Elcock, the department's deputy minister, issued a statement pointing out the organization understands the importance of providing information to the public.

The military report on Mr. Staples, of the Ottawa-based Rideau Institute on International Affairs, details his speech to a Halifax peace group last year and his views on Afghanistan and Gen. Hillier's plans to move the military away from peacekeeping and into more combat-oriented roles. It stated Mr. Staples' presentation did not seem to resonate with those attending the speech but pointed out he was expected to give other talks across the country.

It recommended the military be prepared to counter Mr. Staples' arguments.

"Everyone engaged with communicating on Afghanistan should be made aware of his arguments so that they can be better prepared to deal with them," recommended the report to Lt.-Col. Jacques Poitras at National Defence headquarters.

In an interview, Mr. Staples said the military had overstepped its bounds but that he is not surprised by such actions.

"This is what happens when you have a different viewpoint on Afghanistan than the government and the generals," he said.

Mr. Staples said it is not the military's role to sell the mission and challenge those who don't disagree with it. That is the job of elected officials, he added.

Every federal government department has a communications department with a role to monitor relevant public debate.

Army spokesman Lt.-Col. Chris Lemay said officers were simply doing their job. "It was fair game to know what was out there," he said. "Our job is to make sure we are aware of the information that is floating in the public domain."

Lt.-Col. Lemay said he was not aware whether the military followed up on the recommendation to prepare to counter Mr. Staples' arguments.

NATIONALPOST.COM

Check out graphics editor Richard Johnson's Afghan Journal under Blogs on our homepage.

KEYWORDS: RETAIL TRADE; OFFICE EQUIPMENT

Canadians should do right by our soldiers

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EDITION: National

SECTION: Editorials

PAGE: A14

ILLUSTRATION: Black & White Photo: Corporal Doug Farmer / A Sperwer Unmanned Aerial Vehicle in Kabul, Afghanistan. ;

SOURCE: National Post

WORD COUNT: 806

Whether the Afghanistan mission makes sense to you or not, you can't deny that our troops are risking their lives in the hope that they can hold off the Taliban long enough to give Afghans a chance to run a decent, democratic government.

Maybe that's a pipe dream, maybe it isn't. One thing is for sure: If Canadian troops are going to have a fighting chance at surviving and succeeding they are going to need every effective piece of military hardware that their government can lay its hands on.

Consider Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), unoccupied aircraft that the military can send up into the sky to conduct reconnaissance, or even — in some armed manifestations — to strike at the enemy.

Canada has been using Sagem Sperwer tactical UAVs to conduct reconnaissance in Afghanistan. Manufactured in France, the Sperwers are outdated, surpassed by the Global Hawk, a high-altitude, long endurance vehicle, and the Predator, a medium-altitude long endurance vehicle. Both are U.S.-made. The Global Hawk is designed for reconnaissance; the armed Predator is designed for both reconnaissance and interdiction.

Comparing the Sperwer to these aircraft is a bit like comparing a Second World War Spitfire to an F-18 fighter jet.

In Afghanistan, the Sperwers have proven themselves somewhat unreliable and difficult to operate in winds and dust and heat. They are also prone to hard landings on return. Repairs aren't always possible.

The Danish government suspended flights of the Sperwers in February, 2005, because of repeated malfunctions. Danish Defence Minister Soren Gade lamented that the performance of the Sperwers had been "worse than expected" and had "failed to operate in Iraq's desert heat and were unable to take off from high-altitude runways in Afghanistan."

The Danes decided to dump all 10 of theirs, offering them up at a 10-for-one price. Canada, short on cash and equipment, bought them. Why, if we value our troops the way our bureaucrats, politicians and journalism say we do, are we satisfied to equip them on the cheap?

Here are three reasons: Canadian bureaucracy, Canadian politics and Canadian journalism.

First, bureaucracy. There are numerous checks and balances on government spending in all departments. Unfortunately the dragged-out purchasing procedure that might make sense in many departments often makes

little or no sense when it comes to making what should be urgent purchases in the Department of National Defence (DND).

If you wish to mire yourself in what the senate committee on national security and defence dubbed "the ponderous pace of procurement" at DND, visit the committee's Web site at www.sen-sec.ca and check out pp. 109–117 of the report *Wounded: Canada's Military and the Legacy of Neglect*. What you will discover is that the purchase of any major piece of military equipment is so bogged down in Byzantine procedure and interfered with by outside interests that, even if the right equipment is purchased, it is often outdated by the time it is finally put to use.

Secondly, government: The "new" Conservative government has on several occasions done what our committee has been recommending for years. It has not, so far, mustered the courage to go out and buy the UAVs that everyone knows are light years ahead of the Sperwers in terms of range, flight time, durability, reliability and capacity to deliver near–real–time intelligence that can help protect our troops from roadside bombs.

And why would a government get cold feet about going out and making quick purchases of equipment that its vulnerable troops are in such dire need of?

Could it be because the Canadian news media (egged on by the Auditor–General of Canada as well as opposition parties in Parliament) has attempted to eviscerate it each and every time it has had the guts to go out and buy the particular piece of equipment that the military urgently needs to protect our troops?

In this case, DND wanted to purchase the aforementioned Predator as one component of a \$500–million program for the surveillance of Canada's coasts down the road, as well as for immediate use in Afghanistan.

It is one of journalism's Ten Commandments that putting contracts up for bid is always in the public interest, so when a sole–sourced contract goes out, morally outraged headlines are sure to follow. No need to stop and think that this means there will be no reliable UAVs for our troops as long as they are in Afghanistan.

Wouldn't it make sense to purchase some modern UAVs now to save lives and limbs on this very dangerous Afghanistan mission, and use more traditional bidding procedures to secure UAVs for the important but less urgent role of coastal protection?

The young Canadians we're sending to Afghanistan need all the help we can give them. Perhaps we could all overcome our moral disgust at sole sourcing and offer them something a little better than 10 surplus Sperwers discarded by the Danes.

–Senator Colin Kenny is chairman of the standing senate committee on national security and defence.

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Sounding clever isn't persuasive

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COLUMN: Colby Cosh

BYLINE: Colby Cosh

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On Wednesday, Marni Soupcoff, our much-missed editorial board colleague who is on maternity leave, popped in at the paper's Full Comment weblog to discuss the fine recently levied by the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal against an Internet goofball who had created a dreck-filled homepage for an imaginary "Canadian Nazi Party." She was there to express the timely if unpopular view, which I share, that even scumbags have sacred free speech rights and that they should, in ordinary discourse, be resisted by argument and not by means of hate laws. An interlocutor in the comment thread disagreed on behalf of "smart people," offering a familiar reminder: that freedom of speech "does not give anyone the right to shout 'fire' in a theatre."

For 20 years I've been arguing with Canadians against our impoverished accepted doctrine of expressive freedom, and in favour of the strong First Amendment-style approach implied in the actual language of the Charter of Rights. Ordinarily I am told that in arguing for near-absolute free speech I am reciting a blind, unreasoning formula that is ill-adapted to contemporary times. It is never more than two minutes before the person arguing against stale old-fashioned ideas is trotting out the 88-year-old "fire in a theatre" cliché. You could set your watch by it.

Few of those who abuse this trope realize that they are parroting Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. (1841–1935), a U.S. Supreme Court justice who once enjoyed a high reputation for oratorical prowess and moral leadership. Today he is more commonly considered an illiberal, self-contradicting boob who upheld compulsory sterilization of the "feeble-minded" on eugenic principles, granted baseball an antitrust exemption now universally regarded as a nonsensical anomaly and happily co-operated with the Wilson administration's imprisonment of anti-war and anti-draft protesters until he sensed that it might help his reputation to stop.

His "fire in a theatre" phrase was delivered in the latter context, in the case of a socialist, Charles Schenck, who had been charged with espionage for handing out flyers opposing conscription on the grounds of the U.S. Constitution. Schenck ended

up serving six months in jail, with the unanimous approval of the Holmes court, for daring to quote Lincoln's 13th Amendment in wartime. If Holmes' theatre-fire doctrine were applied today in Canada, thousands of opponents of the war effort in Afghanistan would be cooling their heels in the pen and working out in the exercise yard alongside the Leader of the Opposition. It almost goes without saying that this excuse for authoritarianism was later discarded, with some embarrassment, by the U.S. Supreme Court. Historically it is the theatre-fire argument, not the principles it was intended to batter down, that lost the argument. It is certainly not a very sensible metaphor in the context of hate law, in any event. Anyone who uses it is openly comparing a mass public contemplating a political argument to a rampaging herd of terror-stricken animals. The view of democracy implied thereby is unspeakable, and would probably be found quite congenial by the

Canadian Nazi Party if one existed. Moreover, what Holmes actually wrote is that "The most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man falsely shouting fire in a theatre and causing a panic." Note that word "falsely," even when people are shouting "fire," truth is considered an absolute defence, something that is not the case in the proceedings of our human rights tribunals or under the anti-hate provisions in our Criminal Code.

Remarkably, this does not begin to exhaust all that is wrong with the Holmesian cliché. In creating it, Holmes was using picturesque language to make a point about the state's supposed right to suppress politically provocative speech. It is fascinating that he did not stop to consider that a theatre goer is a guest on someone else's private property, and thus subject to tacitly prearranged rules of order and etiquette. The analogy dies like a vampire in the sun as soon as any attempt is made to transport it to the public square.

But what I really want to know is this: what do the people who recite the formula think would actually happen if someone stood up to shout "fire" in a present-day theatre? It really would have been dangerous to do so in an enormous, flammable opera house of the 19th century, when gas lighting was ubiquitous, flame-retardant materials unknown and the fire exit not yet dreamed of. Conditions had already changed significantly by 1919, so Holmes' metaphor was already battered at birth. That it survives intact, despite being meaningless today, is a sign of its true function. It's a prefab thought-substitute for people more interested in sounding clever than engaging in real persuasion.

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Justice projects funded in Afghanistan; Ottawa to promote rule of law there

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DATELINE: OTTAWA
BYLINE: MEAGAN FITZPATRICK
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 173

Canada is giving \$8 million to projects in Afghanistan that aim to establish a national legal-aid program and promote other justice and rule-of-law initiatives, the federal government said yesterday.

JosEe Verner, Canada's minister of international co-operation, said the projects will be implemented by the International Criminal Defence Attorneys Association, Rights and Democracy, and CANADEM, Canada's Civilian Reserve agency.

Getting a functional and effective legal-aid system off the ground will be the focus of one of the projects, which is to receive \$2.9 million.

The criminal defence association and the International Legal Foundation-Afghanistan have been giving legal-aid services to some Afghans since 2003. But the boost in funding from Canada will help create a national, Afghan-run legal-aid program, the government said. The funding will also be used to work with the Afghan ministry of justice to develop a national policy on legal aid.

The group Rights & Democracy will be getting \$5 million for projects to promote legal and policy reforms aimed at improving the status of women in Afghan society.

War critic targeted by military; Canadian forces kept eye on man. Defence Department report on analyst obtained through access-to-information law

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BYLINE: DAVID PUGLIESE
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 329

Military officials kept an eye on an outspoken opponent of the Afghanistan war last year, but in a report produced about the Ottawa man's public comments they determined support for the mission was still high and his criticism does "not seem to resonate" with the public and media.

Defence department officials originally denied the documents, requested by the Ottawa Citizen under the Access to Information Act, even existed. But an investigation by the Information Commissioner revealed the emails and a report on the activities of left-wing defence analyst Steve Staples had indeed been compiled by the military.

The report was sent to 50 officers, including two brigadier generals.

The release of the report came as the Defence Department finds itself dealing with charges from critics that Gen. Rick Hillier, chief of the defence staff, has ordered a sweeping crackdown to block the release of all files on the Afghanistan mission requested under access to information.

Defence officials have denied that is the case and Ward Elcock, the department's deputy minister, issued a statement pointing out the organization understands the importance of providing information to the public.

The military report on Staples, of the Rideau Institute on International Affairs, details his speech to a Halifax peace group last year and his views on Afghanistan, and Hillier's plans to move the military away from peacekeeping and into more combat-oriented roles. It stated Staples presentation did not seem to resonate with those attending the speech but pointed out he was expected to give other talks across the country.

It recommended the military be prepared to counter Staples' arguments.

"Everyone engaged with communicating on Afghanistan should be made aware of his arguments so that they can be better prepared to deal with them," recommended the report to Lt.-Col. Jacques Poitras at National Defence headquarters.

In an interview Staples said the military had overstepped its bounds but that he is not surprised by such actions.

"This is what happens when you have a different viewpoint on Afghanistan than the government and the generals," he said.

Terrorists did the attacking

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PAGE: A18
BYLINE: Marilyn Chernack
SOURCE: The Gazette
WORD COUNT: 78

Re: "Comparison is wrong" (Letters, July 10).

Nabil Qureshi writes that "the U.S. war machine" attacked Afghanistan. It did no such thing.

On Sept. 11, 2001, terrorists attacked and killed more than 3,000 people in the U.S., not only Americans but also Canadians and citizens of many other countries. It was a coalition of some of these countries that invaded Afghanistan to oust the Taliban and Al-Qa'ida.

Comparing these terrorists to the Nazis is correct and justified, and they should meet the same fate.

Marilyn Chernack

CUte St. Luc

Pashtuns keep Pakistan on edge; Musharraf can't afford to clamp down on the border tribes

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Photo: INTER SERVICES PUBLIC RELATIONS VIA REUTERS /Pakistani handout photo shows troops storming the Red Mosque and the Jamia Hafsa seminary in

ILLUSTRATION: Islamabad. The Islamist students and clerics who defied Musharraf's government are a symptom of the deep rifts that threaten Pakistan's fragile stability. ; Map: Pashtuns pay little attention to the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. ;

KEYWORDS: TERRORISM; FOREIGN RELATIONS; WAR; PRESIDENTS; TERRITORIALISSUES; NUCLEAR WEAPONS

BYLINE: HARRY STERLING

SOURCE: Freelance

WORD COUNT: 661

It's called Pashtunistan.

But although its millions of inhabitants are fiercely nationalistic, Pashtunistan exists only in the minds of its people.

And those people have found themselves divided ever since the 19th century when Britain unilaterally decided to establish the Durand Line separating Afghanistan from what later became modern Pakistan in 1947.

However, despite the fact Pashtuns of southern Afghanistan and Pashtuns of Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas theoretically have different nationalities, they continue to regard themselves as one people. For them, the Durand Line is irrelevant.

This historical anomaly is becoming a major factor in NATO's attempts to defeat the predominantly Pashtun Taliban in Afghanistan. The increasing strength of Islamic radicals in the northwest could also be crucial in deciding the future of democracy in Pakistan.

Until recently, the major preoccupation of the Afghan government and the international coalition forces was to persuade President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan to be more active in preventing the Taliban from using his frontier region as a sanctuary and staging area for infiltration into Afghanistan.

President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan went so far as to accuse Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Agency of aiding the Taliban. Musharraf denounced such accusations, even implying in an interview that Karzai was a liar. Pakistan, he pointed out, had deployed more than 80,000 troops in its frontier region, purportedly losing more than 700 in clashes with militants.

Musharraf insists the cause of the escalation of fighting by the Taliban lies solely within Afghanistan, Karzai's own policies being at the root of the problem. But it's become clear Musharraf's own continued rule is now

also at risk.

Not only does he have to contend with the fractious Pashtuns, he also has to now confront dangers posed by non-Pashtun Islamic fundamentalists whom he originally courted after overthrowing the democratically elected civilian government in 1999.

This week's bloody showdown between Pakistani troops and radical Islamists holed up in Islamabad's Lal Masjid mosque is symptomatic of the growing threat posed by Muslim extremists and the "Talibanization" of Pakistan.

Ironically, the Pakistan military itself created what is fast becoming a threat to Pakistan's stability. When General Mohammed Zia Ul-Haq overthrew Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1977, he wooed Pakistan's religious parties by introducing various Islamic practices, inevitably strengthening their overall position. This was particularly true in the conservative border region, an area where the Pakistani authorities historically had little control.

Even when civilian governments returned in the 1980s, Islamic fundamentalists remained influential. And when Musharraf seized power from Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in 1999, he, too, favoured a coalition of fundamentalist-minded parties.

However, Musharraf now finds the emboldened Islamists intent on pursuing their own militant goals regardless of their destabilizing effect. They demand greater obedience to Islamic laws, trashing stores selling music and threatening barbers for cutting men's beards. Extremists have even assassinated moderate village elders or those considered pro-government.

Musharraf also faces growing opposition from non-fundamentalist groups, including massive protests by Pakistan's middle class, over his attempts to oust the country's independent-minded chief justice who has become a rallying figure for opposition groups.

The growing opposition has limited Musharraf's freedom of action, especially in Baluchistan along the Afghan border, controlled by an Islamic coalition, and in North and South Waziristan where the local Pakistani Taliban are a powerful force and in no mood to abandon their Pashtun cousins across the border.

In such a perilous situation, few expect Musharraf to take on the Taliban along the border in any meaningful way. And were he to openly allow U.S. forces to carry out unlimited hot pursuit of Taliban insurgents or Al-Qa'ida forces within Pakistan or permit further bombings on Pakistani territory by U.S. drone aircraft, he risks endangering his own grip on power.

In effect, Musharraf's inability to deal forcefully with the dangers presented by cross-border Pashtun solidarity in Pakistan's frontier region has disturbing implications for other countries, including Canada, whose soldiers are fighting the Taliban and Al-Qa'ida in Afghanistan.

Harry Sterling, a former diplomat, is an Ottawa-based commentator.

Terror fears, tight border seen hurting trade links

Business leaders critical of security czar's remarks

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SECTION: Canada Wire

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CP Wire Jered Stuffco TORONTO — A pointed warning from the czar of homeland security in the United States about the threat of a revitalized al-Qaida launching an attack from Canada fosters uncertainty that could damage cross-border trade, Canadian business leaders said Thursday.

Brian McCready, vice-president of Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters in Alberta and Saskatchewan, took U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff to task for saying Americans will have to sacrifice economic interests in favour of increased security at the border.

McCready said the oil and gas industry in Alberta is investing significantly in security, and that Chertoff's comments are being used "as a political play rather than looking at the facts." The comments won't be "well-received" in Alberta, because the U.S. and Canada already have a specifically designed joint-border facility in Alberta, he added.

"There's been definite co-operation to create a very good border crossing." A new report from American terror analysts suggests al-Qaida has been taking advantage of a safe haven in Pakistan near the Afghanistan border to restore its strength to levels not seen since the months around Sept. 11, 2001.

Earlier this week, Chertoff told the Chicago Tribune that terrorists using phoney documents could hit targets in Buffalo and Detroit.

Len Crispino, president of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, also took issue with Chertoff's claim that Americans will have to sacrifice economic stability for national security.

"It leads to some uncertainty, and I think the worst thing for business is uncertainty," Crispino said. "It doesn't have to be one or the other. And framing the choice that way is unbalanced." The United States is Canada's biggest trading partner and exports more products to Ontario than it does to all of China, he added.

John Winter, president of the British Columbia Chamber of Commerce, said Canadian business is already suffering significant economic setbacks because of regulations resulting from terror fears.

"I think the more he continues to talk in these blunt terms, the more it's going to erode people's confidence in our ability to manage our borders in a safe and secure way." Winter added that tourism numbers from drivers heading north to British Columbia are down about 40 per cent, partially because of regulations that now require Americans to show passports when re-entering the U.S.

Chris Mathers, a security analyst and former U.S. Customs and Border Protection officer, said increased U.S. fears about a terror threat launched from Canada could have serious effects on Canada's manufacturing industry.

In particular, Mathers said "just-in-time inventory," such as auto parts built in Canada that are shipped to U.S. manufacturers on a tight timeline, would especially suffer.

Terror fears, tight border seen hurting trade links Business leaders critical of security czar's remarks 1/17

Rising death toll too high a price, poll says

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SECTION: Canada Wire

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CP Wire Murray Brewster OTTAWA — A growing number of Canadians, especially in Quebec, say the rising death toll among troops in Afghanistan is too high a price to pay for helping the troubled country, suggests a new poll.

A Canadian Press–Decima Research survey shows 67 per cent of those asked believe the number of casualties has been unacceptable, a five–percentage–point rise from a poll taken a little over a month ago.

Only 25 per cent of respondents said the number of killed and wounded was acceptable, in a survey taken following the most recent deaths of six soldiers in a roadside bomb attack.

Bruce Anderson, CEO of Decima Research, said Canadians are clearly becoming more doubtful about whether progress is being made, in light of the deaths of 66 soldiers and one diplomat in Afghanistan.

Of particular concern to the government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper is the result showing skepticism runs highest in Quebec, where 76 per cent said the sacrifice is unacceptable. This comes as the Royal 22nd Regiment — the famed Vandoos — prepare to take over the battle group in Kandahar next month.

"Given the importance of Quebec to the Conservatives in terms of trying to fashion a strong win in the next election campaign, the fact these numbers are deteriorating" should be cause for concern, said Anderson.

Even among the most ardent supporters of the war — people who identify themselves as Conservatives — doubt has crept in. The number of Tories who say the price tag has been too high increased by eight percentage points since the beginning of June, to 48 per cent.

Bloodied by the last 16 months of fighting in the deserts of southern Afghanistan, and with a year and a half left in the country's combat commitment, a respected historian said Canadians are at a crossroads.

"Canadians have to decide whether they want to win," said Desmond Morton, a professor at McGill University.

Anderson agreed that the latest deaths could mark a tipping point for Canadian involvement in war–torn region.

"If we talk about restoring confidence to the point where Canadians would support an extension of the mission, we may well be past that point. However, circumstances can always change. The problem for Canadians is that they don't believe we can win this conflict." Harper has repeatedly hinted he may be prepared to end Canada's combat role when the current mission expires in February 2009, but said the question of an extension would be debated by Parliament, likely next year.

Morton says Canada has never lost a war and if Anderson's assessment of the public mind is correct, the country is setting itself up "for its first international humiliation of an unquestioned kind." Over the last few months, Morton said, he's often wondered whether the public is talking itself into defeat and if Canadians

have the stomach to fight the way our parents and grandparents did during two world wars and the Korean conflict.

"It is sad when (casualties) happen," the soldier-turned-historian said in a telephone interview.

"It was sad when it happened in 1944, in 1918 or 1917. In fact, in 1918 we suffered our heaviest casualties of the First World War, by far. Did anybody in Canada notice? No, because we were winning.

If you pitch this war as a hopeless war we cannot win and every death is a needless sacrifice." — Canadian Press

Reagan's diary spellbinding but spelled badly

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SECTION: Focus

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None The Economist 'I'm alone. Nancy left this morning for Denver, Phoenix and the ranch...Faza Largeau in Chad has fallen to the rebels and Quadafi's forces." This entry in his diary for Aug. 10, 1983, shows that, to Ronald Reagan, his wife Nancy took priority over — and was more spellable than — an interfering Libyan dictator. The White House was a lonesome place without her. "I pray I'll never face a day when she isn't there" (April 11, 1981).

A diary tells you more about a politician than anything else he writes or says; in a diary, he is less inhibited because he knows he probably will not be around when other people get to read it.

Reagan's handwritten summary of almost every day of his 1981–89 presidency shows more clearly than ever before the way his mind worked. He was certainly no intellectual. He reached his conclusions, for the most part, out of the feeling part of his mind ("my gut instinct"). Having done so, he stuck to his guns nonchalantly but implacably. On the whole, it worked pretty well — especially in his Cold War policy.

Of course, this way of doing things can be a bit blurry. Reagan sounds genuinely surprised in his diary about the Iran–contra mess, in which his people sold weapons to Iran and then sent some of the money to the contras, the rebels trying to overthrow the government of Nicaragua. They "didn't tell me about this" (Nov. 24, 1986).

The claim by Oliver North, who ran the operation, that he had talked to Reagan about it at Camp David was "complete fiction...He's never been there while I've been President" (Feb. 11, 1987). At best, Reagan had let big bad things happen behind his back.

There was also some blurriness about the Falklands War. Reagan seems to have started off more or less neutral. "The Royal Navy is sailing toward the Falklands to oust Argentina. Both sides want our help" (April 6, 1982).

Rather shiftily, he denies that America was in fact helping Britain (April 14). Eventually, Margaret Thatcher won him around: "She feels the loss of life so far can only be justified if they win. We'll see...she may be right." (May 31).

But the combination of instinct and willpower worked fine in dealing with Russia, the main issue of his presidency. Reagan sat through the deaths of three Soviet leaders until Mikhail Gorbachev became leader of a crumbling Soviet Union in 1985.

He quite liked Gorbachev, though their first meeting was rough: "He was really belligerent, & d....n it I stood firm. That took us til lunch" (Nov. 20, 1985).

Reagan's stubbornness worked. "Congratulated him for his courage in leaving Afghanistan. Then tried to show him how some of the things we're urging on him would actually help bring about his perestroika" (May 30, 1988). By the end of 1989 the Soviet bloc had collapsed, followed by the Soviet Union itself.

And the entry which tells you most? Just after Reagan's near-assassination in March 1981, when he thought he might be dying: "But I realized I couldn't ask for Gods (sic) help while at the same time I felt hatred for the mixed up young man who had shot me. Isn't that the meaning of the lost sheep? We are all Gods (sic) children and therefore equally beloved by him." From *The Reagan Diaries*, by Ronald Reagan, edited by Douglas Brinkley, HarperCollins.