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# Canadian military hopes for lull in fighting as Muslims mark Eid

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**PAGE:** B12

**SOURCE:** THE CANADIAN PRESS

**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR, Afghanistan

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Muslims will celebrate the end of the holy month of Ramadan this weekend, an occasion that often marks a lull in fighting as insurgents hunker down for the harsh Afghan winter.

If it comes to pass, the lull will be a welcome respite from one of the bloodiest years since the fall of the Taliban six years ago.

"Historically, there has been a lull between, I'd say, the last week of October and the first weeks of spring, where the Taliban would slow down the fighting," said Maj. Eric Landry, chief planning officer for Canadian Forces operations in Afghanistan.

The three-day celebration of Eid al-Fitr is expected to begin this year today, depending on the sighting of the moon.

"Usually, the insurgents would use that holiday to go back to their families and then stay there over the winter. But right now, we have really no indicators that they will not come back," Landry said.

So far, there has been no break in fighting, as Canadians have pushed into Taliban strongholds this fall to reassert control and establish police sub-stations that are being manned by Afghan National Police and Canadian mentoring teams.

From a military standpoint, the plan is to hand over security in the dangerous Zhari and Panjwai districts to Afghan national security forces by the end of the year.

That will free up Canadian soldiers to move into other areas of the province.

"What we expect is when winter kicks in, we can have more permissive areas where we can expand easier," Landry said.

"But right now, we have no sign of that lull, or that reduced fighting season coming from the insurgents."

In fact, the fugitive leader of the Taliban, Mullah Omar, welcomed Eid by calling on neighbouring countries to help Afghan insurgents oust the government of President Hamid Karzai and force foreign troops out of the country.

# Germany extending Afghan mission despite skepticism

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**PUBLICATION:** The Guardian (Charlottetown)

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**SECTION:** World

**PAGE:** B7

**SOURCE:** THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

**DATELINE:** BERLIN

**WORD COUNT:** 211

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Germany's lower house of parliament voted overwhelmingly on Friday to keep 3,000 troops and six reconnaissance jets in Afghanistan for another year despite mounting public skepticism about the mission.

The vote in the 613-seat Bundestag – 454–79 with 48 abstentions – was the final step needed to extend the mission.

It came after Chancellor Angela Merkel pressed hard for renewal of the legislative mandate for participation in NATO's International Security Assistance Force, or ISAF.

The Netherlands and Canada face a similar decision in the coming months.

The Dutch government is expected to decide this fall whether to extend its mission that is currently due to end next summer. About 1,700 Dutch troops are in Afghanistan.

The mandate for Canada's mission expires in February 2009.

The Canadian government has indicated it has until next April to tell NATO whether there will be an extension. Opposition parties in Canada are against an extension; the NDP wants Canadian troops withdrawn even sooner.

On Friday, Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced the establishment of a five-member panel to examine the future role of Canada in Afghanistan.

ISAF has about 37,000 troops in Afghanistan but only Canada, the United States, Britain and the Netherlands have taken on combat roles in the violent southern regions, where the Taliban insurgency is most active and deeply rooted.

Canada has about 2,300 troops in Kandahar province as part of its overall commitment of 2,500 to ISAF. Seventy-one Canadian soldiers and one diplomat have died in Afghanistan since 2002.

# New Brunswick military base welcomes back soldiers from mission

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**PUBLICATION:** The Guardian (Charlottetown)

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**SECTION:** Atlantic

**PAGE:** B6

**SOURCE:** THE CANADIAN PRESS

**DATELINE:** OROMOCTO, N.B.

**ILLUSTRATION:** Peter MacKay, Minister of National Defence, left, pins a medal on Master Corporal William Molloy during the Task Force Afghanistan Rotation 3 Medals Parade at CFB Gagetown, N.B., on Friday. Canadian Press photo

**WORD COUNT:** 355

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More than 600 Canadian soldiers who recently served in Afghanistan were honoured and officially welcomed home to their New Brunswick base Friday, but many of them said their thoughts were still with the soldiers killed during the deployment.

Eighteen members of the battle group were killed during the six-month tour that ended in August, including five from Canadian Forces Base Gagetown, near Fredericton.

Pte. Brennan Leslie of Cole Harbour, N.S., was the driver of a vehicle that hit a roadside bomb on Easter Sunday, killing six soldiers.

He told reporters it was as if his fallen comrades were with him at Friday's ceremony.

"They were indeed," he said. "I was holding back the tears."

Leslie was among more than 400 soldiers who were presented Campaign Star medals by Defence Minister Peter MacKay and Lt.-Gen. Andrew Leslie.

The Second Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment Group was also honoured with their General Campaign Star.

MacKay said the work of the soldiers has resulted in significant improvements for the people of Afghanistan.

"A free country is being reborn because of your contributions," MacKay said in a speech.

The minister thanked all the soldiers and their families, and made specific mention of those who have lost loved ones in Afghanistan.

"And I hope that you will find some comfort in the knowledge that, as in previous struggles in which Canada has been present, that the freedoms and privileges that Canadians enjoy today are a direct result of those who have sacrificed to defend our country," he said. Lt.-Gen. Leslie spent a lot of time speaking individually to the soldiers, and said while the medals are only made of a bit of metal and cloth, they are symbols of their teamwork and sacrifice.

"It doesn't cost a lot to make, but by golly the price to wear it can be high," he said.



The hundreds of soldiers attending the ceremony stood shoulder to shoulder, row on row, filling the perimeter of a huge drill hall on the training base in central New Brunswick.

All stood at attention with eyes forward for the two hour ceremony. Afterwards, as the soldiers relaxed and mingled outside with family and friends, much of the conversation was about their fallen comrades, whose families were presented with medals at funerals, rather than Friday's celebration.

Warrant Officer Brad Rogers of Canning, N.S., said his medal will always be a reminder of the colleagues who were killed.

"There's no way of looking at that medal without being reminded of these soldiers that we lost, and the soldiers that are taking their place," he said.

# Signs dedicted to fallen soldiers stolen from memorial highway

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**PUBLICATION:** The Guardian (Charlottetown)

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**SECTION:** Canada

**PAGE:** B5

**SOURCE:** THE CANADIAN PRESS

**DATELINE:** COBOURG, Ont.

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Police say some signs dedicated to the memory of fallen Canadian soldiers have been stolen from the Highway of Heroes, a renamed stretch of Highway 401 in eastern Ontario.

Provincial police say the missing signs were taken from exit ramps on the highway between Trenton and east-end Toronto.

Police spokesman Doug Orton says he doesn't know how many signs have been stolen, but called the thefts despicable.

The 170-kilometre stretch of highway was officially renamed in August by the Ontario government as a tribute to soldiers who have died in Afghanistan.

Hearses carrying the flag-draped coffins of fallen soldiers travel from CFB Trenton, where the bodies are repatriated to Canadian soil, to a forensics centre in Toronto.

The name change was prompted by an electronic petition to officially rename that stretch of highway.

# Harper names Liberal to head up panel on Afghanistan mission; John Manley put at front of body to see what Canada will do after mission ends in 2009

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**SECTION:** Canada

**PAGE:** A9

**SOURCE:** THE CANADIAN PRESS

**DATELINE:** OTTAWA

**ILLUSTRATION:** Prime Minister Stephen Harper speaks at a news conference in Ottawa Friday where he announced that former Liberal cabinet minister and deputy prime minister John Manley, right, will head a review panel to look at Canada's mission in Afghanistan. Canadian Press photo

**WORD COUNT:** 341

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Stephen Harper says his decision to name a prominent Liberal to lead a panel on the future of Canada's Afghan mission is all about policy – but critics suggest it's more about politics.

The prime minister announced Friday that a five-member group led by former Liberal cabinet minister John Manley will make a recommendation by the end of January on what Canada should do when its commitment to the NATO mission expires in 2009.

With an election possibly looming and the political dispute over Afghanistan intensifying, Harper's opponents suggested the move might be more about political strategy than a sincere desire for a non-partisan opinion.

Manley, like Harper, has said Canada should not abandon its mission in the war-torn country.

But he dismissed suggestions that he is being used as a political pawn by Harper. He said he worried for days about how his decision to serve a Conservative prime minister might be perceived.

Harper noted that he's not forced to follow the panel's advice and that he still plans to let Parliament vote on the future of the Afghan deployment.

The Liberals welcomed the appointment of Manley but warned that the prime minister might now use the panel as an excuse to avoid debate this fall.

All opposition parties want an end to Canada's combat mission in Kandahar by February 2009 and the NDP is calling for a withdrawal immediately.

Harper scoffed at the suggestion he's trying to avoid debate on Afghanistan.

"You know the government can't take the issue off the table," he told a news conference, with Manley by his side.

"Afghanistan is a major public policy issue and it will be addressed in (next week's) throne speech. What I've

Harper names Liberal to head up panel on Afghanistan mission; John Manley put at front of body to see what

said the government wants to do . . . is make sure we have a rational and considered debate." He said the panel will consider four options:

- Continue training the Afghan army and police so Canada can begin withdrawing its forces in February 2009. Harper described this as the status–quo option.
- Focus on reconstruction and have forces from another country take over security in the volatile Kandahar region.
- Shift Canadian security and reconstruction effort to another region in Afghanistan.
- Withdraw all Canadian military except a minimal force to protect aid workers and diplomats.

But Manley appeared unclear on at least one central point of his assignment: the question of whether the status quo remains a viable option beyond 2009.

He said the list of options provided by the prime minister did not include continuing the current mandate.

# P.E.I. soldier to be tried; Robbie Fraser faces manslaughter charge for soldier's death in Afghanistan

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**SECTION:** Front

**PAGE:** A1

**SOURCE:** The Guardian

**BYLINE:** Jim Day

**ILLUSTRATION:** Fraser

**WORD COUNT:** 422

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An Island soldier charged in the shooting death of a fellow soldier in Afghanistan will face a court martial on charges of manslaughter and negligent performance of duty.

Navy Capt. Holly MacDougall, the Canadian Forces director of military prosecutions, said in a brief statement Friday that Master Cpl. Robbie Fraser will face a military trial on charges relating to the death of Master Cpl. Jeff Walsh during a patrol on an Afghan highway on Aug. 9, 2006.

The accused man's father told The Guardian he is bitterly disappointed with the decision.

Kevin Fraser of South Rustico said he has not yet been able to speak with his son, who has been away on a training course at CFB Gagetown in New Brunswick. He said Friday was the last day of a six-week course for his son.

"My son is off on a course now and they couldn't even wait until Monday to break this," he said.

Debbie Fraser of Winsloe said she is eager to talk to her son, who will be flying home this morning to his wife and children in Manitoba.

Debbie said Robbie's wife is "shaken" by the news that the soldier will face a court martial. She, too, is shocked that the charge of manslaughter will proceed.

"It's been hanging over our heads for so long," she said, noting Friday marked exactly seven months to the day that her son was charged.

"I didn't think they would drop the charges but I thought they might reduce the charges."

Debbie Fraser said she is "mad" when she considers all of the friendly fire incidents that have not led to any court martials, yet her son will now stand trial on a charge that carries a maximum sentence of life in prison.

"It was deemed accidental by the investigators on the scene," she said.

Many, including Walsh's family, have urged Ottawa to show compassion and leniency towards Fraser. In May, Malpeque MP Wayne Easter tabled a petition in the House of Commons calling on the military to treat incidents such as Walsh's death as unfortunate accidents that do not warrant such stiff response as a manslaughter charge.

"Of course, we are extremely disappointed that they made this decision'," said Saul Simmonds, the accused soldier's lawyer.

"It was always our view that this was not a manslaughter."

Fraser's gun reportedly discharged while the soldier was travelling in the cramped confines of a military vehicle along a bumpy road during a routine patrol somewhere outside Kandahar. Walsh died of a gunshot wound.

Simmonds said the trial could be long.

"Obviously, this is the kind of case that can be very complicated," he said.

A National Defence spokesman in Ottawa said the trial is expected to be held in Shilo, Man., where Robbie Fraser, 29, is stationed with the 2nd Battalion of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Regiment. The spokesman said a date for the trial likely wouldn't be set for at least a couple of months.

Both Debbie and Kevin Fraser say they plan to attend their son's court martial trial.

(With files from The Canadian Press)

# Germany votes to stay in Afghanistan

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**WORD COUNT:** 355

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Germany's lower house of parliament voted overwhelmingly yesterday to keep 3,000 troops and six reconnaissance jets in Afghanistan for another year despite mounting public skepticism about the mission.

The vote in the 613-seat Bundestag — 454–79 with 48 abstentions — was the final step needed to extend the mission.

It came after Chancellor Angela Merkel pressed hard for renewal of the legislative mandate for participation in NATO's International Security Assistance Force, or ISAF.

The Netherlands and Canada face a similar decision in the coming months.

The Dutch government is expected to decide this fall whether to extend its mission that is currently due to end next summer. About 1,700 Dutch troops are in Afghanistan.

The mandate for Canada's mission expires in February 2009.

The Canadian government has indicated it has until next April to tell NATO whether there will be an extension. Opposition parties in Canada are against an extension; the New Democratic party wants Canadian troops withdrawn even sooner.

Yesterday, Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced the establishment of a five-member panel to examine the future role of Canada in Afghanistan.

The NATO force has about 37,000 troops in Afghanistan but only Canada, the United States, Britain and the Netherlands have taken on combat roles in the violent southern regions, where the Taliban insurgency is most active and deeply rooted.

Canada has about 2,300 troops in Kandahar province as part of its overall commitment of 2,500 to the force. Seventy-one Canadian soldiers and one diplomat have died in Afghanistan since 2002.

In contrast, most of the 2,800 German ground troops are in the quieter north of the country. Germany has resisted any suggestion they should take part in the heavier fighting in the south.

Officials and legislators from Merkel's governing coalition of conservative Christian Democrats and centre-left Social Democrats argued that a pullout would open the door for Taliban and al-Qaida to once again use Afghanistan as a base for terrorism — and endanger years of progress in rebuilding the country.

Social Democratic legislator Gert Weissenkirchen said a German refusal could lead to abandonment of Afghanistan by other western countries.

"Afghanistan would again fall into the hands of the Taliban," he said. "Therefore I ask you to think it over carefully. A No vote would lead to giving terrorism a chance to further establish itself, to insult people, to repress women.

"We want to put an end to that and so we need extension of the ISAF mandate."

Under German law, any foreign deployment must be approved by parliament.



# Canadian troops hope Ramadan's end will bring lull in fighting

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<b>DATE:</b>	2007.10.13
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<b>SECTION:</b>	Front
<b>PAGE:</b>	A18
<b>ILLUSTRATION:</b>	Photo: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS / A young Afghan man offers Eidal-Fitr prayers at Pul-E-Khashti mosque in Kabul yesterday. ;
<b>DATELINE:</b>	KANDAHAR, AFGHANISTAN
<b>SOURCE:</b>	The Canadian Press
<b>COPYRIGHT:</b>	© 2007 Torstar Corporation
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Muslims will celebrate the end of the holy month of Ramadan this weekend, an occasion that often marks a lull in fighting as insurgents hunker down for the harsh Afghan winter.

If it comes to pass, the lull will be a welcome respite from one of the bloodiest years since the fall of the Taliban six years ago.

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So far, there has been no break in fighting, as Canadians have pushed into Taliban strongholds this fall to reassert control and establish police substations that are being manned by Afghan National Police and Canadian mentoring teams.

From a military standpoint, the plan is to hand over security in the dangerous Zhari and Panjwaii districts to Afghan national security forces by the end of the year.

That will free Canadian soldiers to move into other areas of the province.

"What we expect is when winter kicks in, we can have more permissive areas where we can expand easier," Landry said.

"But right now, we have no sign of that lull, or that reduced fighting season coming from the insurgents."

In fact, the fugitive leader of the Taliban, Mullah Omar, welcomed Eid by calling on neighbouring countries to help Afghan insurgents oust the government of President Hamid Karzai and force foreign troops out of the

country.

In a message posted online — one which could not be immediately authenticated — Omar said that Muslims in neighbouring countries should help to drive western forces from Afghanistan as they helped evict the Soviets.

"They should abandon any kind of support and understand that they (western forces) are a danger to the whole region," said the statement.

This has already been the bloodiest years of war since the fall of the Taliban in 2001.

More than 5,100 people — more than 3,000 of them militants — have died in insurgency-related violence so far this year, according to estimates by the United Nations and The Associated Press.

Twenty-seven Canadian soldiers have died since January, 22 of them killed by roadside bombs — the Taliban's latest weapon of choice in its guerrilla war against government and international troops.

A total of 71 soldiers, and one diplomat, have died since Canadian troops deployed to Afghanistan in 2002.

# Afghan panel has vital role

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Afghanistan is as complex a country as any in the world. It has suffered from internal strife as well as external threats. No one should be surprised, therefore, that the federal government wants to seek advice on the course it should take in Afghanistan during the years ahead. In particular, the government needs advice on what to do when the commitment Canada made to deploy troops in Afghanistan ends in February 2009.

To his credit, Prime Minister Stephen Harper has appointed a high-profile panel to make recommendations on Afghanistan to the government. John Manley, a former Liberal cabinet minister, will head the panel. Several other prominent Canadians will be on the panel: Pamela Wallin, a broadcaster and former consul-general in New York; Derek Burney, former ambassador to the United States; Paul Tellier, former clerk of the privy council, and Jake Epp, a former minister in Brian Mulroney's cabinet.

This is a wiser course than the government has followed until now. Recently, the prime minister has stressed only his government's desire to have parliamentary support for extending the mission. The implication was clear: The political process was more important than the decision itself. This position did not do justice to the soldiers who have fought and died in Afghanistan as well as to those whose lives are at risk every day.

The opposition parties have also not fully discussed in public the Afghan mission. The New Democratic Party, for example, has offered instead the rather simplistic position of withdrawing troops now, regardless of the diplomatic or military consequences.

The hope is that the panel will take time to study all aspects of the war. How much progress has been made? How ready are Afghan forces to take over more of their own security? Do the majority of Afghans understand that Canadian troops, and troops from other western countries, are in Afghanistan only to make it more stable? The prime goal of the troops is to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a training ground for anti-Western terrorists.

The prime minister's critics might suggest that he is using Manley, a Liberal, as a pawn in the government's attempt to plan an Afghan strategy that is acceptable to Canadians. But surely Manley was entitled to say he accepted the position because he feels a personal duty to both Canada and Afghanistan. Harper would certainly be criticized much more vigorously if he appointed a panel with only Conservatives on it.

This panel has an important and onerous duty. It should be encouraged to do its job in a thoughtful, vigorous and non-partisan manner.

# Highway signs dedicated to fallen soldiers are stolen

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**DATELINE:** COBOURG, ONT.  
**SOURCE:** Canadian Press  
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Police say some road signs dedicated to the memory of fallen Canadian soldiers have been stolen from the Highway of Heroes, a renamed stretch of Highway 401.

Provincial police say the missing signs were taken from exit ramps along the highway between Trenton and east-end Toronto.

Police spokesperson Doug Orton said he doesn't know how many signs have been stolen, but called the thefts despicable. The 170-kilometre stretch of highway was officially renamed in August by the Ontario government as a tribute to soldiers who have died in Afghanistan.

Hearses carrying the flag-draped coffins of fallen soldiers travel from CFB Trenton, where the bodies are repatriated to Canadian soil, to a forensics centre in Toronto.

# Soldier will face court martial in buddy's death

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A Canadian soldier charged in the shooting death of a fellow soldier in Afghanistan will face a court martial on charges of manslaughter and negligent performance of duty, the Canadian Forces director of military prosecutions confirmed yesterday.

Master Cpl. Robbie Fraser will face a military trial on charges related to the death of Master Cpl. Jeff Walsh during a patrol on an Afghan road on Aug. 9, 2006, said navy Capt. Holly MacDougall.

The decision comes despite the fact members of both the Walsh and Fraser families have expressed doubt about the need for prosecution. The families say that the two men were friends, as well as comrades.

Fraser was charged in March. Under military law, several subsequent stages had to be completed before a decision was made on whether to go ahead with a military trial.

"Military prosecutors consider two main issues when deciding whether to prosecute a charge at court martial: whether the evidence is sufficient to provide a reasonable prospect of conviction and whether the public interest requires a prosecution be pursued," MacDougall said in the statement.

The charges against Fraser were reviewed by his battalion commander and the prosecution service. Both could have halted legal proceedings if it was deemed in the interest of the Canadian Forces and the public.

Kevin Fraser of South Rustico, P.E.I., Robbie Fraser's father, said it is his understanding the shooting was the result of an accidental discharge of a weapon.

"I'm very disappointed with the decision and very disappointed that they (military investigators) dragged it out so long," he said in an interview. "It has been over a year now. My son is off on a course now and they couldn't even wait until Monday to break this."

The Canadian military considers the accidental discharge of a weapon an inexcusable error for a soldier, and charges of this type usually proceed to trial by court martial.

The victim's father, Ben Walsh, relayed his support to the Fraser family yesterday.

"Our sympathy goes out to all of the Fraser family," Walsh said in an interview from his Regina home. "I guess two wrongs don't make a right."

Robbie Fraser, 30, is a member of the 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Regiment, based at Canadian Forces Base Shilo in Manitoba.

Walsh was also based at Shilo. He was married with three children.

Family members say they were told Walsh was seated beside the driver of a cramped, G-wagon armoured vehicle patrolling a bumpy road near Kandahar when another soldier's gun discharged inside the vehicle.

Walsh, 33, died from a single gunshot.

No date for the court martial has been set, but it will be held at CFB Shilo.

It was not immediately known how many soldiers have been convicted of negligence in accidental discharges of their weapons since Canada first sent regular troops to Afghanistan early in 2002.

Some have been fined, others have been sentenced to labour, and a few have received both penalties, usually meted out during summary trials in-theatre.

The Canadian military follows the civilian Criminal Code in defining manslaughter as "culpable homicide" that falls short of murder. The maximum penalty is life imprisonment.

Negligent performance of duty is a violation of the National Defence Act with a maximum penalty of disgraceful dismissal from the Canadian Forces.

# HARPER HIRES A HAWK; Liberal John Manley to lead Afghan mission review panel

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**ILLUSTRATION:** Photo: THE CANADIAN PRESS / Prime Minister Stephen Harpersaid yesterday that the Afghan mission review panel, to be led by former Liberal foreign affairs minister John Manley (left), will consider four options for the mission, ranging from essentially a status quo position to a withdrawal of virtually all Canadian military personnel. ;

**DATELINE:** OTTAWA

**SOURCE:** The Canadian Press

**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation

**WORD COUNT:** 623

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Stephen Harper says his decision to name a prominent Liberal to lead a panel on the future of Canada's Afghan mission is all about policy — but critics suggest it's more about politics.

The prime minister announced yesterday that a five-member group led by former Liberal cabinet minister John Manley will make a recommendation by the end of January on what Canada should do when its commitment to the NATO mission expires in 2009.

With an election possibly looming and the political dispute over Afghanistan intensifying, Harper's opponents suggested the move might be more about political strategy than a sincere desire for a non-partisan opinion.

Manley, like Harper, has said Canada should not abandon its mission in the war-torn country.

But he dismissed suggestions that he is being used as a political pawn by Harper.

He said he worried for days about how his decision to serve a Conservative prime minister might be perceived.

Harper noted that he's not forced to follow the panel's advice and that he still plans to let Parliament vote on the future of the Afghan deployment.

The Liberals welcomed the appointment of Manley but warned that the prime minister might now use the panel as an excuse to avoid debate this fall. All opposition parties want an end to Canada's combat mission in Kandahar by February 2009 and the NDP is calling for a withdrawal immediately.

Harper said the panel will consider four options:

Continue training the Afghan army and police so Canada can begin withdrawing its forces in February 2009. Harper described this option as the status quo.

Focus on reconstruction and have forces from another country take over security in the volatile Kandahar region.

Shift Canadian security and reconstruction effort to another region in Afghanistan.

Withdraw all Canadian military except a minimal force to protect aid workers and diplomats.

Manley appeared unclear on at least one central point of his assignment: the question of whether the status quo remains a viable option beyond 2009. He said the list of options provided by the prime minister did not include continuing the current mandate.

Harper quickly contradicted him and said one of the four options — scaling back fighting to focus more on training Afghans — is essentially the status quo.

Harper's choice of Manley will be seen as shrewd by some.

Just a few raw weeks after the Sept. 11 attacks, Manley, then-foreign affairs minister, was indignant over questions about what the public might think about Canadian soldiers dying in a new Afghan mission.

"Canada does not have a history as a pacifist or neutralist country," Manley said at the time. "Canada has soldiers who are buried all over Europe because we fought in defence of liberty, and we're not about to back away from a challenge now because we think somebody might get hurt."

Manley was often the hawk among the flock of Liberal doves, and Canadian Alliance MPs — who would later merge with the Tories — liked to point out the divisions: "We on this side must compliment the minister of foreign affairs for being more in touch with the views of Canadians on the security issues than many of his colleagues appear to be," MP Brian Pallister said during question period.

Harper told reporters yesterday that, "I'm very confident that we will get a report that the government will be very comfortable with having a public debate on."

If Manley agrees that pulling out of combat in 2009 is premature, his analysis could provoke new divisions within Liberal ranks and hand Harper a valuable weapon should the mission develop into a major election issue.

It wouldn't be the first time Manley turned up on the wrong side of Liberal Leader Stephane Dion. Earlier this year, they publicly disagreed over allowing certain anti-terror provisions to expire from the lawbooks.

The other panel members are: Pamela Wallin, a veteran broadcaster and former consul-general in New York; Derek Burney, former ambassador to Washington and onetime chief of staff to Brian Mulroney; Paul Tellier, former clerk of the privy council; Jake Epp, a former Mulroney cabinet minister.

The panel will report by the end of January and the government has indicated that it will disclose Canada's post-2009 intentions to NATO by next spring — but, in the meantime, there could be an election.



# N.B. soldier honoured

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Governor General Michaëlle Jean holds hands with Jacqueline Girouard as Chief of Defence Staff General Rick Hillier (right) looks on yesterday. Girouard was presented with a Meritorious Service Cross on behalf of her husband, Chief Warrant Officer Robert Michel Girouard, at Rideau Hall in Ottawa yesterday. Robert Michel Girouard, a native of Bathurst, was killed while serving in Afghanistan.

# Invest in the east coast, Rae tells PM; Atlantic economy, Afghan mission among hot buttons for new foreign affairs critic

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**BYLINE:** ALAN COCHRANE TIMES & TRANSCRIPT STAFF  
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The federal Liberal party's new foreign affairs critic says Atlantic Canada is being ignored by Stephen Harper's Tory government, which should be making strong investments in infrastructure and people to help the east coast economy grow.

"The federal government needs to be making investment in infrastructure and people in Atlantic Canada and the rest of the country," Bob Rae said in an interview with the Times & Transcript yesterday. "There are many challenges in the region, with young people trying to find work and wanting to stay at home."

Rae was in Moncton yesterday as guest speaker at a fundraising dinner for Moncton–Riverview–Dieppe MP Brian Murphy. It was one of the first public speaking engagements since his recent surgery to repair an aneurysm developing in his aorta. He said he is recovering well from the surgery and ready to criticize Canada's foreign policy under Harper, which he says is being made in Washington as Harper follows the lead of U.S. President George W. Bush.

"Canada's voice and presence in the world is not as clear as it needs to be and has been under previous Liberal governments."

Rae, who served as premier of Ontario from 1990 to 1995, lost his bid to become leader of the federal Liberal party in 2006.

Earlier this week, Liberal leader Stéphane Dion named Rae as his party's foreign affairs critic, even though the former New Democrat does not have a seat in the House of Commons. Rae is waiting for a byelection in the federal riding of Toronto Centre, which was left vacant by the retirement of Bill Graham, who served as Minister of National Defence and Minister of Foreign Affairs in the cabinets of Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin prior to the election of the Conservative government. No date has been set for a byelection, which must be called by the end of December. That is, if it isn't trumped by a general election.

"We're ready for an election if that's what happens," Rae said.

Either way, Rae is ready to hit the ground running in his new position as the House opens next Tuesday. His first order of business is to attack the Conservative government's stance on Canada's military mission in Afghanistan.

"There are some real issues involved in our role in Afghanistan that need to be discussed and debated more," Rae said. "There's no accountability or indication of what's going on in Afghanistan."

Harper announced yesterday he has appointed former Liberal cabinet minister John Manley to a five-member panel which will look at the future of Canada's Afghanistan mission.

Harper says the group will offer a non-partisan recommendation on what should be done once Canada's present commitment to the NATO mission expires in February 2009.

Opposition parties have all attacked the government on the issue, demanding an end to Canada's combat commitment.

Rae said the panel is akin to a stalling tactic designed to delay firm debate on the issue.

He said the corrupt drug-driven economy in Afghanistan, coupled with an unsecure border to Pakistan which allows terrorists to travel freely between the two countries, makes Canada's mission even more difficult.

Canada's combat-based mission in Afghanistan, which has sparked debate in this country over its continued role there, is expected to be the main subject to be discussed following the federal throne speech next week.

Murphy said Canada's mission in Afghanistan has a direct impact on military families in Metro Moncton and other parts of New Brunswick.

Liberal leader Dion has said Canada should notify NATO that Canada will cease its combat role after February, 2009, which would set the stage for further debate on what will happen next.

"Until we state clearly what our position is, it will continue to be a problem," Rae said, noting that politics and diplomacy can be just as effective as troops and tanks in bringing stability to Afghanistan.

Rae said Canada's position and reputation on the world stage has suffered since Harper took office, blurring the progress Liberals made on the issues of environment, softwood lumber and natural resources.

He says our relationship with the United States should continue to be friendly and open for debate on such issues as agriculture, natural resources, cross-border trade, border security and passports.

"To restrict traffic and travel between our countries doesn't make sense."

The high value of the Canadian dollar reflects the state of our relationship with the U.S. and has both positive and negative implications.

Rae said the value of the Loonie is hurting manufacturers and exporters like Bombardier.

# Gagetown base welcomes home troops; Many who served in Afghanistan remember those who were killed

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More than 600 Canadian soldiers who recently served in Afghanistan were honoured and officially welcomed home to their New Brunswick base yesterday, but many of them said their thoughts were with still with the soldiers killed during the deployment.

Eighteen members of the battle group were killed during the six-month tour that ended in August, including five from Canadian Forces Base Gagetown, near Fredericton.

Pte. Brennan Leslie of Cole Harbour, N.S., was the driver of a vehicle that hit a roadside bomb on Easter Sunday, killing six soldiers.

He told reporters it was as if his fallen comrades were with him at Friday's ceremony.

"They were indeed," he said. "I was holding back the tears."

Leslie was among more than 400 soldiers who were presented Campaign Star medals by Defence Minister Peter MacKay and Lt.-Gen. Andrew Leslie.

The Second Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment Group was also honoured with their General Campaign Star.

MacKay said the work of the soldiers has resulted in significant improvements for the people of Afghanistan.

"A free country is being reborn because of your contributions," MacKay said in a speech.

The minister thanked all the soldiers and their families, and made specific mention of those who have lost loved ones in Afghanistan.

"And I hope that you will find some comfort in the knowledge that, as in previous struggles in which Canada has been present, that the freedoms and privileges that Canadians enjoy today are a direct result of those who have sacrificed to defend our country," he said.

Lt.-Gen. Leslie spent a lot of time speaking individually to the soldiers, and said while the medals are only made of a bit of metal and cloth, they are symbols of their teamwork and sacrifice.

"It doesn't cost a lot to make, but by golly the price to wear it can be high," he said.

The hundreds of soldiers attending the ceremony stood shoulder to shoulder, row on row, filling the perimeter of a huge drill hall on the training base in central New Brunswick.

All stood at attention with eyes forward for the two hour ceremony.

Afterwards, as the soldiers relaxed and mingled outside with family and friends, much of the conversation was about their fallen comrades, whose families were presented with medals at funerals, rather than Friday's celebration.

Warrant Officer Brad Rogers of Canning, N.S., said his medal will always be a reminder of the colleagues who were killed.

"There's no way of looking at that medal without being reminded of these soldiers that we lost, and the soldiers that are taking their place," he said.

# Cdn. military hopes for lull in fighting; Insurgents traditionally hunker down for winter as Ramadan ends

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Muslims will celebrate the end of the holy month of Ramadan this weekend, an occasion that often marks a lull in fighting as insurgents hunker down for the harsh Afghan winter.

If it comes to pass, the lull will be a welcome respite from one of the bloodiest years since the fall of the Taliban six years ago.

"Historically, there has been a lull between, I'd say, the last week of October and the first weeks of spring, where the Taliban would slow down the fighting," said Maj. Eric Landry, chief planning officer for Canadian Forces operations in Afghanistan.

The three-day celebration of Eid al-Fitr is expected to begin this year today, depending on the sighting of the moon.

"Usually, the insurgents would use that holiday to go back to their families and then stay there over the winter. But right now, we have really no indicators that they will not come back," Landry said.

So far, there has been no break in fighting, as Canadians have pushed into Taliban strongholds this fall to reassert control and establish police sub-stations that are being manned by Afghan National Police and Canadian mentoring teams.

From a military standpoint, the plan is to hand over security in the dangerous Zhari and Panjwaii districts to Afghan national security forces by the end of the year.

That will free up Canadian soldiers to move into other areas of the province.

"What we expect is when winter kicks in, we can have more permissive areas where we can expand easier," Landry said.

"But right now, we have no sign of that lull, or that reduced fighting season coming from the insurgents."

In fact, the fugitive leader of the Taliban, Mullah Omar, welcomed Eid by calling on neighbouring countries to help Afghan insurgents oust the government of President Hamid Karzai and force foreign troops out of the country.

In a message posted online — one which could not be immediately authenticated — Omar said Muslims in neighbouring countries should help drive western forces from Afghanistan as they helped evict the Soviets.

"They should abandon any kind of support and understand that they (western forces) are a danger to the whole region," said the statement.

This has already been the bloodiest years of war since the fall of the Taliban in 2001.

More than 5,100 people — more than 3,000 of them militants — have died in insurgency-related violence so far this year, according to estimates by the United Nations and The Associated Press.

Twenty-seven Canadian soldiers have died since January, 22 of them killed by roadside bombs — the Taliban's latest weapon of choice in its guerrilla war against government and international troops.

In 2006, 36 Canadian soldiers and diplomat Glyn Berry were killed.

A total of 71 soldiers, as well as Berry, have died since Canadian troops deployed to Afghanistan in 2002.

A slow down in insurgents activity would be welcome news for humanitarian workers, who are themselves trying to prepare for winter.

"They're going to be wanting to prepare families with the food stocks they need for the cold winter months," said Ron Schatz, director of development for the Canadian Provincial Reconstruction Team in Kandahar province.

Food stores need to be in place by the end of December, before snow and rain make the country's rural roads impassable.

Both the International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations representative for the human rights of internally displaced persons have warned of a potential humanitarian crisis this winter.

Fighting has driven tens of thousands of people from their homes into refugee camps or simply to the streets of cities.

# Panel to study Canada's role in Afghanistan; Former Liberal cabinet minister John Manley appointed to head panel

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Prime Minister Stephen Harper has appointed former Liberal cabinet minister John Manley to head a panel that will look at the future of Canada's Afghanistan mission.

The five-member group will offer a recommendation on what should be done when Canada's commitment to the NATO mission expires in February 2009, Harper said yesterday.

All opposition parties have attacked the government on the issue, demanding an end to Canada's combat commitment in the volatile Kandahar region.

Harper said the panel will consider four options:

- \* Continue training the Afghan army and police so Canada can begin withdrawing its forces in February 2009.
- \* Focus on reconstruction and have forces from another country take over security in Kandahar
- \* Shift Canadian security and reconstruction effort to another region in Afghanistan.
- \* Withdraw all Canadian military except a minimal force to protect aid workers and diplomats.

"Our government wants a full, open and informed debate about our options," Harper said, adding one caveat.

"Whatever future path we choose in Afghanistan, it must respect the sacrifices we have made there . . . we must also be cognizant of the risks of a return to chaos in Afghanistan."

Manley dismissed suggestions that he is being used as a political pawn by Harper, saying he feels a personal duty to both Canada and Afghanistan.

However, like Harper, he has said Canada should not abandon its mission in the war-torn country.

"Afghanistan represents an enormous opportunity for Canada to play a meaningful role in a globally significant arena," Manley said.

"But it also represents an enormous challenge to our resources and our capability and Canadians rightfully ask whether our sacrifices are making a lasting difference for global security and the well-being of Afghan



citizens."

Manley has visited Afghanistan twice, most recently last May as a member of CARE Canada's board of directors. At the time, he said he was frustrated with the character of the political debate surrounding the mission and said Canada should think carefully before pulling out.

The other panel members are: Pamela Wallin, a veteran broadcaster and former consul-general in New York; Derek Burney, former ambassador to Washington and one-time chief of staff to Brian Mulroney; Paul Tellier, former clerk of the privy council; Jake Epp, a former Mulroney cabinet minister.

# P.E.I. soldier will face court martial; Kevin Fraser faces manslaughter charge in shooting death of comrade while on Afghan patrol

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A Canadian soldier charged in the shooting death of a fellow soldier in Afghanistan will face a court martial on charges of manslaughter and negligent performance of duty.

Navy Capt. Holly MacDougall, the Canadian Forces director of military prosecutions, said in a brief statement yesterday that Master Cpl. Robbie Fraser will face a military trial on charges relating to the death of Master Cpl. Jeff Walsh during a patrol on an Afghan highway on Aug. 9, 2006.

Fraser was originally charged in March. Under military law, several subsequent stages had to be completed before a decision was made on whether to go ahead with a military trial.

The accused man's father said he is bitterly disappointed with the decision.

Kevin Fraser of South Rustico, P.E.I., said he has not yet been able to speak with his son, who has been away on a training course.

Robbie Fraser is with the 2nd Battalion of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Regiment, based at Canadian Forces Base Shilo in Manitoba.

"I'm very disappointed with the decision and very disappointed that they (military investigators) dragged it out so long," Kevin Fraser said in an interview.

"It has been over a year now. My son is off on a course now and they couldn't even wait until Monday to break this."

He said the shooting was accidental and neither his family nor the Walsh family wanted charges to be pursued.

# Former NB Power chairman joins panel

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**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
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**BYLINE:** Kate Wright Times & Transcript Staff  
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The former chairman of NB Power has been named by the prime minister to a top federal panel to study Canada's role in Afghanistan.

Derek Burney, who served as NB Power chairman until July, will join former Liberal foreign affairs minister John Manley on an independent panel to provide a review of the country's future in Afghanistan.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper has asked the panel to review a number of options, including the withdrawal of all Canadian military forces after February 2009 except a small contingent to provide security for our remaining aid workers and diplomats.

Canada's mission in Afghanistan is set to expire in February 2009.

Also heading the panel will be former journalist Pamela Wallin, former Bombardier CEO Paul Tellier and former health minister Jake Epp, who served under Brian Mulroney.

Burney served as Canada's ambassador to the United States between 1989 and 1993.

He entered the federal public service and the Canadian diplomatic corps, subsequently serving in Korea and Japan as ambassador.

From 1987 to 1989 he served as chief of staff to Prime Minister Brian Mulroney.

Burney spent time as chairman and CEO of Bell Canada and CAE Inc. He held the NB Power post since 2004.

The five-member panel will receive its terms of reference Friday, then travel to Afghanistan to assess how best to provide aid to the country.

Burney accepted a series of contract extensions as NB Power chairman after the provincial Liberal government made the transition to power last year.

# Former power utility boss answers PM's call of duty

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Derek Burney, who served as NB Power chairman until July, will join former Liberal foreign affairs minister John Manley on the independent panel to provide a review of the country's future in Afghanistan.

He had held the post since 2004.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper has asked the panel to review a number of options, including the withdrawal of all Canadian military forces after February 2009 except for a small contingent to provide security for Canada's remaining aid workers and diplomats.

Canada's mission in Afghanistan is set to expire in February 2009.

# Panel to examine future of Afghanistan mission

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**BYLINE:** MICHAEL STAPLES staples.michael@dailygleaner.com  
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Defence Minister Peter MacKay says a new panel to determine the future of Canada's military mission in Afghanistan hasn't been formed to find an excuse to keep Canadian soldiers in the troubled country.

MacKay was at Canadian Forces Base Gagetown Friday to attend a welcome home ceremony for troops who recently completed a six-month tour of duty in Afghanistan.

MacKay said the panel was set up to provide intelligent and non-partisan advice about the various options the government is examining regarding Afghanistan.

"We are committed to be there until February of '09, so there are a number of options that are available that will be examined, as far as the Canadian Forces's presence there and the work that we are continuing to do in Afghanistan," the minister said.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced the creation of the panel Friday.

Named to the panel were former Liberal deputy prime minister John Manley, Pamela Wallin, a veteran broadcaster and former consul-general in New York; Derek Burney, former ambassador to Washington and one-time chief of staff to Brian Mulroney; Paul Tellier, former clerk of the privy council; and Jake Epp, a former Mulroney cabinet minister.

Opposition parties have repeatedly attacked the government on the issue, demanding an end to Canada's combat commitment.

"What we're trying to do with this panel is to draw upon individuals who bring a unique perspective, who have foreign affairs experience — certainly in the case of Mr. Manley — and political experience. Persons who have in the past demonstrated good judgment (and) demonstrated an ability to put the country first," MacKay said.

He said his department consults regularly with the military, its diplomats and aid workers regarding Afghanistan, and stressed that such input is critical.

But he said having the various issues examined by a panel of distinguished Canadians provides a perspective that will add to the important decisions that have to be taken.

"This panel is demonstrative of the government's desire to consult broadly and in a nonpartisan way, and Parliament itself will be consulted, of course, with a vote, as far as any further extension of this mission," MacKay said.

The minister, who said it was important to ensure the interests of soldiers and the country are brought to bear before any decision is made, didn't hide his thoughts on the subject.

"My feelings are that we are embarking upon, and have been embarked upon for sometime, a critically important mission (not only) for the people of Afghanistan, but also for Canada's reputation and Canada's own interest," MacKay said.

"Our soldiers there, I cannot say enough for the respect I have for the work that they're doing, (and) the role they've been playing."

He said the progress in Afghanistan is visible and tangible and that such successes would not have been possible if Canadian troops weren't helping to provide security in the region.

MacKay said the panel should report back to the prime minister no later than January.

# Soldier to face court martial following death of comrade

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Robbie Fraser is with the 2nd Battalion of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Regiment, based at Canadian Forces Base Shilo in Manitoba.

"I'm very disappointed with the decision and very disappointed that they (military investigators) dragged it out so long," Kevin Fraser said in an interview.

"It has been over a year now. My son is off on a course now and they couldn't even wait until Monday to break this."

He said the shooting was accidental and neither his family nor the Walsh family wanted charges to be pursued.

# CFB Gagetown soldiers honoured with service medals

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Soldiers from Canadian Forces Base Gagetown can take pride in completing one of the toughest tasks in the world — a tour of duty in Afghanistan, the commander of the army said Friday.

Lt.-Gen. Andrew Leslie made the comments as he presented more than 400 soldiers with Task Force Afghanistan Rotation 3 Medals.

Some of the soldiers were also awarded the General Campaign Star during the ceremony.

"It doesn't cost a lot to make but, by golly, the price to wear it can be high," Leslie said.

"The medal is not very big, but it is far bigger than any other because of what you had to do to earn it."

The ceremony, attended by family, friends and soldiers who had earlier received the same medals, was part of a day of celebration that saw troops officially welcomed home by hundreds of people.

Leslie said the medals are a symbol of Canada's gratitude and are given to those who respond to the call of going overseas at the risk of losing everything.

Eighteen soldiers from the CFB Gagetown-based Second Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment (2RCR) battle group, including five from the battalion, died during the six-month tour which concluded in August.

Defence Minister Peter MacKay said the medal presentation marked the completion of a remarkable journey for the soldiers.

The minister said the troops showed courage and determination in battling terrorism, while laying the groundwork for democracy, human rights and development in that country.

He described their contributions as vital to international peace and stability in protecting Canada and its interests, as well as improving life in Afghanistan.

"In simple terms, a free country is being reborn because of your contributions," MacKay said.

Master Cpl. Scott Seeley said he had mixed feelings about receiving the medal.

"To be quite honest, it felt good," Seeley said. "But for most of the ceremony I was thinking about the guys who were left behind."



Sapper Willis Ripley said it was great to be home and satisfying to receive the medal.

"It's a great feeling for all the hard work and the time spent serving and helping others," he said. "It (Afghanistan) was a great experience — a great life experience and I'd do it again."

Master Cpl. Chris Boswell said it was nice to receive the medal in front of family and friends.

"I have four, but it is the first one that I have got in front of family, and this one was extra special. I will remember this one for a while."

For Rick and Kim Scott, Friday represented an opportunity to express a flood of pride towards their son, Pte. Andy Scott.

"It was amazing — just because there was so much pride, joy and love," Kim Scott said about watching her son get the medal. "It was (also) amazing the appreciation that this whole community has shown."

For army spouse Gwen Young, Friday concluded a difficult period.

"To me, the day means the end," Young said. "The end of the tour, the end of the after-tour leave. Although the tour was six months, pre-training and exercises have had the troops very busy and gone for the past year. This day is well-deserved, hard-earned and, in a way, a sense of closure."

Work being done by Canadian troops in Afghanistan goes beyond rebuilding, training and providing security, she said.

It's also shedding new light on the Canadian Forces, said Young.

CFB Gagetown commander of Col. Ken Chadder said support shown from the community has been outstanding.

"I think it is a unique combination of the military and the community that's different than anywhere else and it is really appreciated."

# Liberal hawk heads Afghan panel; PM picks Manley to lead mission debate

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**PUBLICATION:** Kingston Whig–Standard (ON)

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**SECTION:** National/World

**PAGE:** B1

**SOURCE:** The Canadian Press

**BYLINE:** Jennifer Ditchburn

**DATELINE:** OTTAWA

**WORD COUNT:** 515

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Just a few raw weeks after the September 11 attacks, John Manley was already facing questions about what the public might think about Canadian soldiers arriving home in body bags from a new Afghan mission.

Manley, the foreign affairs minister at the time, was indignant.

"Canada does not have a history as a pacifist or neutralist country," he fired back.

"Canada has soldiers who are buried all over Europe because we fought in defence of liberty, and we're not about to back away from a challenge now because we think somebody might get hurt."

Manley was often the hawk among the flock of Liberal doves, and Canadian Alliance MPs – who would later convert to Tories – liked to point out the divisions: "We on this side must compliment the Minister of Foreign Affairs for being more in touch with the views of Canadians on the security issues than many of his colleagues appear to be," MP Brian Pallister said during question period.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper was also undoubtedly cognizant of the sharp differences between Manley and others in the Liberal caucus when he appointed Jean Chretien's deputy prime minister to a panel studying the mission.

"I'm very confident that we will get a report that the government will be very comfortable with having a public debate on," Harper told reporters yesterday.

If Manley agrees that pulling out of combat in 2009 is premature, his analysis could provoke new divisions within Liberal ranks and hand Harper a valuable weapon should the mission develop into a major election issue.

It wouldn't be the first time Manley turned up on the wrong side of Liberal Leader Stephane Dion.

Earlier this year, they publicly disagreed over allowing certain anti-terror provisions to expire from the lawbooks.

Manley told reporters yesterday that he had not made up his mind on the mission. Still, he's quoted in last month's issue of Policy Options with well formed views on the good that Canadian soldiers, diplomats and aid workers are doing in Afghanistan. Manley recently visited the country again as a director of CARE Canada.

"Whenever we asked Afghans what they should [the International Security Assistance Force] or Canada should do, they did not hesitate to say we must stay. Without the presence of the international forces, chaos

would surely ensue."

He added, "We often seek to define Canada's role in the world. Well, for whatever reason, we have one in Afghanistan. Let's not abandon it too easily. But let's use our hard-earned influence to make sure the job is done."

Manley was asked about those statements yesterday and insisted he was not prejudging what Canada should do.

But he made it clear that finding stability for the Afghan people is an issue he's passionate about. In January 2002, he was the first Canadian minister to visit the decaying country in more than 40 years.

He arrived just as NATO troops had toppled the Taliban and Hamid Karzai had begun his tenure as president.

In the Liberal caucus, he and deputy prime minister Anne McLellan became the get-tough-on-terrorism standard bearers after the Sept. 11 attacks.

"Civilized societies have learned many times before that there is only one way to deal with evil," Manley told the Commons in October 2001, as Canadian soldiers arrived in Afghanistan.

"We cannot reason with it, we cannot negotiate with it and we cannot buy time to find a better solution. The only way to deal with evil is to strike at its root, to destroy it and to move on."

When exactly Canadian combat troops should move on, is the question Manley must now grapple with.

# Soldier charged with manslaughter

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**PUBLICATION:** Kingston Whig–Standard (ON)

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**SECTION:** National/World

**PAGE:** B1

**COLUMN:** In brief

**WORD COUNT:** 162

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A Canadian soldier charged in the shooting death of a fellow soldier in Afghanistan will face a court martial on charges of manslaughter and negligent performance of duty, the Canadian Forces director of military prosecutions confirmed yesterday. Master Cpl. Robbie Fraser will face a military trial on charges related to the death of Master Cpl. Jeff Walsh during a patrol on an Afghan road on Aug. 9, 2006, said navy Capt. Holly MacDougall. The decision comes despite the fact members of both the Walsh and Fraser families have expressed doubt about the need for prosecution. The families say that the two men were friends, as well as comrades. Kevin Fraser of South Rustico, P.E.I., Robbie Fraser's father, said it is his understanding the shooting was the result of an accidental discharge of a weapon.

# Ottawa honours five Kingston soldiers; Maj. Paeta Hess–von Kruedener posthumously awarded the Meritorious Service Cross

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<b>PUBLICATION:</b>	Kingston Whig–Standard (ON)
<b>DATE:</b>	2007.10.13
<b>SECTION:</b>	Local news
<b>PAGE:</b>	4
<b>SOURCE:</b>	For The Whig–Standard
<b>BYLINE:</b>	Lee Berthiaume
<b>PHOTO:</b>	The Canadian Press
<b>DATELINE:</b>	OTTAWA
<b>ILLUSTRATION:</b>	Jacqueline Girouard (centre) and Cynthia Hess–von Kruedener(right) wipe tears as they take part in presentation ceremony of Military Valour and Meritorious Service decorations at Rideau Hall in Ottawa yesterday.
<b>WORD COUNT:</b>	843

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Surrounded by soldiers who, like her husband, had proven their courage in the line of fire, Cynthia Hess–von Kruedener thought she would be able to keep her emotions in check.

She'd come to Rideau Hall, the Governor General's estate in Ottawa, to accept the Meritorious Service Cross on behalf of her husband, Maj. Paeta Hess–von Kruedener, who died in Lebanon on July 25, 2006. But when a shaken Jacqueline Girouard hugged Gov.–Gen. Michaëlle Jean for support upon receiving an award for her own husband, who was killed in Afghanistan last year, it was too much.

"I thought I could keep it together, but it really touched me deeply," Cynthia Hess–von Kruedener said in an interview after the ceremony. "It has been horrific for the families."

A total of 47 medals were handed out during yesterday's ceremony, including five to Canadian Forces officers from the Kingston area.

Hess–von Kruedener, who at times during the interview wiped tears from her eyes, said it was "deeply touching" that her husband has been honoured for his actions in Lebanon.

"Throughout the year," she said, "I get further information and keep going over things that happened and the more that I read and understand and realize, the more to me he is truly a hero."

And yet, she remains angry and frustrated as she continues to wait for someone to explain how and why an Israeli bomb killed her husband of 10 years while he was manning a United Nations observation post.

"Something horrible happened that day," she said. "We don't have the complete picture. Men have been killed and there must be accountability for that and repercussions so this doesn't happen in the future."

"I fear for other Canadians who will be serving at UN posts. What may happen to them? If this happens and this is what we do, it's not right."

When Israel launched a war against Hezbollah forces operating in Lebanon in July 2006, Maj. Hess–von Kruedener was working at a United Nations observation post located about 10 kilometres from where the

Lebanese, Israeli and Syrian borders meet.

On July 25, 2006, the post, which had been built in the late 1970s, came under fire from Israeli forces, which continued despite repeated warnings from UN officials.

An Israeli bomb eventually struck the post, killing Maj. Hess–von Kruedener and three other peacekeepers.

Then–UN secretary–general Kofi Annan alleged immediately afterward that the post was intentionally targeted, a belief Hess–von Kruedener's widow continues to hold.

An Israeli investigation into the incident found that inaccurate maps were the cause of the confusion. The veracity of this finding has been questioned, given that the post had been in the same place for decades and that it was clearly marked.

The UN, which launched its own review, criticized Israel for refusing to co–operate, but appeared to accept the finding.

Meanwhile, the Canadian Forces established a board of inquiry to look into the matter. The board completed its investigation in September 2006, but more than a year later, has not released the results.

Hess–von Kruedener said military officials had scheduled to meet with her on Monday to present her with their report and answer her questions, but it has since been postponed.

In addressing award recipients during the ceremony yesterday, Gen. Rick Hillier, the chief of defence staff, singled out Cynthia Hess–von Kruedener and Jacqueline Girouard.

"Your husbands are heroes," he said. "Not because they died. They are heroes because of how lived, how they did their job, and how they represented us, and how they represented our country.

"Our commitment to you is simple, because their footprint in the sand will never be forgotten. You will have our support, as we go through the months and years ahead."

Hess–von Kruedener said her husband's death has been very difficult on her family, a fact she told Jean when the two exchanged a few brief words during the ceremony.

"You have no idea how it has ripped my family apart, to no end," she said.

Fortunately, she has received a great deal of support from other military families living in Kingston and her neighbours.

On Canada Day, Hess–von Kruedener raised a flag outside her Ryan Court home. Her husband had kept that flag in Lebanon and it bore the names of all the places he had served in his military career.

"I looked down my road, and there's all these Canadian flags," she said. "They [the neighbourhood] have been amazing, truly amazing."

In addition to the Meritorious Service Cross for Maj. Hess–von Kruedener, Gov.–Gen. Jean bestowed Meritorious Service Medals to four Kingston–area officers.

Maj. J.M. Francois Bisailon was recognized for his role in training Afghan National Army units from August 2006 to February 2007.

Ottawa honours five Kingston soldiers; Maj. Paeta Hess–von Kruedener posthumously awarded the Meritorious

Col. Frederick Lewis received a medal for his work as deputy commander of Joint Task Force Afghanistan from March 2006 to February 2007, during which time he was stationed in Kandahar.

Maj. Matthew Bruce Sprague was also commended for commanding a Canadian company of the Royal Canadian Regiment in Afghanistan from August 2006 to February 2007. Wounded early in his tour, he was sent back to Canada, but insisted on returning to his unit where he served until the end of his rotation.

Lt.-Col. David Anthony Patterson was also recognized for his work in Ethiopia and Sudan, including Darfur, during which time he was in charge of 17 Canadian soldiers who were helping the African Union force operating there.

A reservist who works full-time at the Canadian Land Forces Command and Staff College, Lt.-Col. Patterson volunteered for an overseas assignment in January 2006. Expecting to go to Afghanistan, he was instead offered a chance to work in Africa.

Over the next six months, he travelled throughout Ethiopia, Sudan and Darfur and worked to secure air transport for African Union operations. He also helped plan long-term operations for the force.

# Germany bucks public mood, extends Afghan mission

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**PUBLICATION:** The  
Chronicle–Herald  
**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
**SECTION:** World  
**PAGE:** A12  
**SOURCE:** The Associated  
Press  
**BYLINE:** David Mchugh  
**WORD COUNT:** 359

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BERLIN – Germany's lower house of parliament voted overwhelmingly on Friday to keep 3,000 troops and six reconnaissance jets in Afghanistan for another year despite mounting public skepticism about the mission.

The vote in the 613-seat Bundestag – 454–79 with 48 abstentions – was the final step needed to extend the mission.

It came after Chancellor Angela Merkel pressed hard for renewal of the legislative mandate for participation in NATO's International Security Assistance Force, or ISAF.

The Netherlands and Canada face a similar decision in the coming months.

The Dutch government is expected to decide this fall whether to extend its mission that is currently due to end next summer. About 1,700 Dutch troops are in Afghanistan.

The mandate for Canada's mission expires in February 2009. The government has indicated it has until next April to tell NATO whether there will be an extension.

ISAF has about 37,000 troops in Afghanistan but only Canada, the United States, Britain and the Netherlands have taken on combat roles in the violent southern regions, where the Taliban insurgency is most active and deeply rooted.

Most of the 2,800 German ground troops are in the quieter north of the country. Germany has resisted any suggestion they should take part in the heavier fighting in the south.

Officials and legislators from Merkel's governing coalition of conservative Christian Democrats and centre-left Social Democrats argued that a pullout would open the door for Taliban and Al-Qaida to once again use Afghanistan as a base for terrorism – and endanger years of progress in rebuilding the country.

Social Democratic legislator Gert Weissenkirchen said a German refusal could lead to abandonment of Afghanistan by other western countries.

"Afghanistan would again fall into the hands of the Taliban," he said. "Therefore I ask you to think it over carefully. A No vote would lead to giving terrorism a chance to further establish itself, to insult people, to repress women. We want to put an end to that and so we need extension of the ISAF mandate."

Under German law, any foreign deployment must be approved by parliament.



Development Minister Heidemarie Wiecezorek-Zeul, a left-wing Social Democrat, said troops were needed to support rebuilding of the school system and give Afghan children – including girls who were banned from schools by the Taliban regime ousted in 2001 – the chance to get an education.

# Fugitive Taliban leader urges neighbours to oust Karzai, drive out foreign troops

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**PUBLICATION:** The Chronicle–Herald  
**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
**SECTION:** World  
**PAGE:** A8  
**SOURCE:** The Associated Press  
**BYLINE:** Fisnik Abrashi  
**WORD COUNT:** 293

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KABUL, Afghanistan – Fugitive Taliban leader Mullah Omar called on Afghanistan's neighbours to help his militants oust the government of President Hamid Karzai and force foreign troops out of the country.

A roadside bomb, meanwhile, struck a police vehicle in southern Helmand province on Friday, leaving two officers dead and four others wounded, a police chief said.

Omar's message – the authenticity of which couldn't be immediately confirmed – said "neighbours should help Afghans drive western forces from Afghanistan as they helped them during the Soviet Union invasion."

"They should abandon any kind of support and understand that they (western forces) are a danger to the whole region," said Omar's statement, posted on a website that previously carried militant messages.

Most of the 2,500 Canadian troops in Afghanistan are based in volatile Kandahar province, which borders Pakistan. Seventy-one Canadian soldiers have been killed since 2002.

It was unclear when Omar's message was posted, though it included greetings for the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr, which is expected to start today.

Afghanistan is going through its most violent period since the Taliban's ouster in the U.S.-led invasion in 2001. More than 5,100 people – mostly militants – have died in insurgency-related violence so far this year.

The Taliban often compare their struggle to the war against the Soviet Union's occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s, when neighbouring Pakistan and Iran – helped by the United States and Saudi Arabia – armed the anti-communist mujahedeen.

Some observers accuse rogue elements in Pakistan's security forces of supporting today's Afghan rebels, and U.S. officials recently raised the alarm about Iranian weapons reaching the Taliban.

Islamabad and Tehran deny any involvement.

Karzai has offered peace talks with the militants and even positions in the government. But the Taliban and warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, leader of the militant group Hezb-i-Islami, have rejected the overtures, saying international troops must first leave the country.

# Soldier charged in shooting of comrade faces court martial

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**PUBLICATION:** The  
Chronicle–Herald  
**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
**SECTION:** Canada  
**PAGE:** A4  
**SOURCE:** The Canadian Press  
**BYLINE:** Chris Morris  
**WORD COUNT:** 382

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FREDERICTON – A Canadian soldier charged in the shooting death of a fellow soldier in Afghanistan will face a court martial on charges of manslaughter and negligent performance of duty, the Canadian Forces director of military prosecutions confirmed Friday.

Master Cpl. Robbie Fraser will face a military trial on charges related to the death of Master Cpl. Jeff Walsh during a patrol on an Afghan road on Aug. 9, 2006, said navy Capt. Holly MacDougall.

The decision comes despite the fact members of both the Walsh and Fraser families have expressed doubt about the need for prosecution. The families say that the two men were friends, as well as comrades. Fraser was originally charged in March. Under military law, several subsequent stages had to be completed before a decision was made on whether to go ahead with a military trial.

"Military prosecutors consider two main issues when deciding whether to prosecute a charge at court martial: whether the evidence is sufficient to provide a reasonable prospect of conviction and whether the public interest requires a prosecution be pursued," MacDougall said in the statement.

The charges against Fraser were reviewed by his battalion commander and the prosecution service. Both could have halted legal proceedings if it was deemed in the interest of the Canadian Forces and the public.

Kevin Fraser of South Rustico, P.E.I., Robbie Fraser's father, said it is his understanding the shooting was the result of an accidental discharge of a weapon.

"I'm very disappointed with the decision and very disappointed that they (military investigators) dragged it out so long," he said in an interview.

"It has been over a year now. My son is off on a course now and they couldn't even wait until Monday to break this."

The Canadian military considers the accidental discharge of a weapon an inexcusable error for a soldier, and charges of this type usually proceed to trial by court martial.

The victim's father, Ben Walsh, relayed his support to the Fraser family on Friday.

"Our sympathy goes out to all of the Fraser family," Walsh said in an interview from his Regina home. "I guess two wrongs don't make a right."

Robbie Fraser, 30, is a member of the 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Regiment, based at Canadian Forces Base Shilo in Manitoba.

Walsh was also based at Shilo. He was married with three children.

Family members say they were told Walsh was seated beside the driver of a cramped, G-wagon armoured vehicle patrolling a bumpy road near Kandahar when another soldier's gun discharged inside the vehicle.

Walsh, 33, died from a single gunshot.

No date for the court martial has been set, but it will be held at CFB Shilo.

# Should we stay or should we go?; Harper appoints panel to study whether to bring troops home in '09

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**PUBLICATION:** The  
Chronicle–Herald  
**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
**SECTION:** Front  
**PAGE:** A1  
**SOURCE:** The Canadian Press  
**BYLINE:** Alexander Panetta  
**WORD COUNT:** 762

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OTTAWA – Stephen Harper says his decision to name a prominent Liberal to lead a panel on the future of Canada's Afghan mission is all about policy – but critics suggest it's more about politics.

The prime minister announced Friday that a five–member group led by former Liberal cabinet minister John Manley will make a recommendation by the end of January on what Canada should do when its commitment to the NATO mission expires in 2009.

With an election possibly looming and the political dispute over Afghanistan intensifying, Harper's opponents suggested the move might be more about political strategy than a sincere desire for a non–partisan opinion.

Manley, like Harper, has said Canada should not abandon its mission in the war–torn country.

But he dismissed suggestions that he is being used as a political pawn by Harper. He said he worried for days about how his decision to serve a Conservative prime minister might be perceived.

Harper noted that he's not forced to follow the panel's advice and that he still plans to let Parliament vote on the future of the Afghan deployment

The Liberals welcomed Manley's appointment but warned that the prime minister might now use the panel as an excuse to avoid debate this fall.

All opposition parties want an end to Canada's combat mission in Kandahar by February 2009 and the NDP is calling for a withdrawal immediately.

Harper scoffed at the suggestion he's trying to avoid debate on Afghanistan.

"You know the government can't take the issue off the table," he told a news conference, with Manley by his side.

"Afghanistan is a major public policy issue and it will be addressed in (next week's) throne speech. What I've said the government wants to do . . . is make sure we have a rational and considered debate." He said the panel will consider four options:– Continue training the Afghan army and police so Canada can begin withdrawing its forces in February 2009. Harper described this as the status quo option.

– Focus on reconstruction and have forces from another country take over security in the volatile Kandahar region.

- Shift Canadian security and reconstruction efforts to another region in Afghanistan.
- Withdraw all Canadian military except a minimal force to protect aid workers and diplomats.

But Manley appeared unclear on at least one central point of his assignment: the question of whether the status quo remains a viable option beyond 2009. He said the list of options provided by the prime minister did not include continuing the current mandate.

Harper quickly contradicted him and said one of the four options – scaling back fighting to focus more on training Afghans – is essentially the status quo.

Manley said he called Liberal Leader Stephane Dion on Thursday night to inform him of his decision. Dion praised the appointment and expressed hope that Manley might get the prime minister to modify his Afghan position.

Manley said he finally decided to accept the position because of a desire to serve his country and by two emotional visits he made to Afghanistan – first as a cabinet minister in 2002 and then as a member of CARE Canada in 2007.

"I'm a Liberal," said Manley, who ran for his party leadership just four years ago.

"I'm a supporter of the Liberal party. But I have some history in Afghanistan in my two visits that touched me very deeply. . . . The question of what Canada does in Afghanistan following the current mandate is one that really transcends partisan politics.

"It's an issue for our country, and when called upon to serve, it's not only an honour for me but it's my responsibility to do so to the best of my ability."

Manley has repeatedly come out strongly in favour of Canada's combat mission.

The other panel members are: Pamela Wallin, a veteran broadcaster and former consul general in New York; Derek Burney, former ambassador to Washington and one-time chief of staff to Brian Mulroney; Paul Tellier, former clerk of the Privy Council and Jake Epp, a former Mulroney cabinet minister.

The panel will report by the end of January and the government has indicated that it will disclose Canada's post-2009 intentions to NATO by next spring – but, in the meantime, there could be an election.

"I hope very much that Mr. Harper doesn't use the panel as an excuse to say nothing over the next two months or to refuse to answer questions or to engage in a real discussion in the House of Commons," said Bob Rae, the Liberals' foreign affairs critic.

Bloc Quebecois Leader Gilles Duceppe had the same concern. He has pushed for next week's throne speech to promise a 2009 pullout and said he will continue to do so.

"I know these Ottawa habits all too well," Duceppe said. "When there's a problem, instead of dealing with the problem, they create a committee.

"They put in place a process and a few months later they create another committee to evaluate the work of the first committee, and then everyone talks about how the process is working and its speed or delays, and by then nobody's talking about the actual issue anymore."

The Liberals used the appointment to poke fun at the quality of Harper's cabinet.

Should we stay or should we go?; Harper appoints panel to study whether to bring troops home in 499

"When you have a tough job to do, I guess you have to find a Liberal to give you the advice," Rae said.

# K ickin' it; Kabul–styleIn war–torn Afghanistan, a friendly game of soccer is a welcome diversion

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**PUBLICATION:** The Chronicle–Herald

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**SECTION:** Front

**PAGE:** A1

**BYLINE:** Jeffrey Simpson Staff Reporter

**ILLUSTRATION:** An Afghanistan soccer player kicks the ball during atraining session at the Jinnah Stadium in Islamabad, Pakistan, in August. Afghans love the game and FIFA has been sponsoring a national women's team for the past six years since the Taliban were deposed. (AAMIR QURESHI / AFP); An Afghanistan soccer player kicks the ball during a training session at the Jinnah Stadium in Islamabad, Pakistan, in August. Afghans love the game and FIFA has been sponsoring a national women's team for the past six years since the Taliban were deposed. (AAMIR QURESHI / AFP)

**WORD COUNT:** 480

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When Maj. Eileen Vaughan accepted an offer of a soccer match with a local Afghan team in Kabul, she cobbled together a squad of players from various NATO countries.

But the Halifax native didn't fully realize what she was getting into.

"I expected a recreational friendly game with local women, not knowing it was the national team asking for a game," Maj. Vaughan, 49, recalled in a recent e–mail from the war–ravaged country. "It was huge.

"When we got to the field, it was a much bigger event than my wildest dreams. There was media, speeches, politicians, including the minister for women, FIFA (International Federation of Association Football) flags flying and at least 100 spectators."

That soccer was such a big deal in the impoverished nation came as no surprise.

"In a country where money is scarce and times are tough, it is both a welcome diversion and inexpensive," Maj. Vaughan said. "Afghans love to both play and watch the game recreationally and competitively."

But women have been permitted to play only for the past six years since the Taliban were deposed.

"FIFA sponsors the national team in part to promote women in Afghanistan, who have lived under extreme restrictions for more than 20 years," Maj. Vaughan said.

"These young women had to wear burkas in public and were not allowed to attend school a few short years ago. To play soccer and represent your country is a huge achievement."

The Afghan girls are aged 16 to 23. During games, they wear long sleeves and pants, and a few wear head scarves.

Captain and centre–forward Shamila Kohestani told the Sunday Mirror of London that as a 12–year–old she was beaten by Taliban soldiers for leaving home wearing a head scarf instead of a burka.



The Taliban had banned all sports, even flying kites, but made an exception for men's soccer, which attracted crowds of thousands to the same stadium where girls now play. Matches were preceded by executions.

Ms. Kohestani, 19, told the newspaper she pined to play but was forced to watch boys' games from the sidelines.

"I would do anything to join in but I couldn't risk it because girls were forbidden from exercising," she said. "Instead, I made do with fetching the ball when it went outside the pitch and I watched and waited."

Now she wears a head scarf sometimes when she plays but will often throw it off if it gets in the way, she said.

Maj. Vaughan, who is wrapping up a six-month deployment to Kabul as the deputy commander of the Headquarters Support Group at International Security Assistance Force headquarters, had a tough time convincing enough of her female comrades to join her. They ranged in age from their 20s to their 40s and many hadn't played since childhood. They met each other for the first time on their way to the game.

As a result, the considerably younger team of Afghan girls won 4-0. But Maj. Vaughan, who grew up playing soccer on Halifax-area teams with her sister, Coun. Sheila Fougere (Connaught-Quinpool), said her impromptu team fared well, allowing only one goal in the second half.

"When we realized they were a national team and not just a group of local players, their skill was not too surprising," she said. "We gave them a pretty good game when all was said and done."

"The game was the highlight of my deployment and very important for the women of Afghanistan." ( )

# Canadian soldier to face military trial; Facing court martial after being charged in shooting of comrade

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<b>PUBLICATION:</b>	The Telegram (St. John's)
<b>DATE:</b>	2007.10.13
<b>SECTION:</b>	National
<b>PAGE:</b>	A15
<b>SOURCE:</b>	The Canadian Press
<b>BYLINE:</b>	Chris Morris
<b>DATELINE:</b>	Fredericton
<b>ILLUSTRATION:</b>	Master Cpl. Jeffrey Walsh's widow, Julie, kisses the head of her infant son, Benjamin, during a memorial service to honour her husband at CFI Shilo, just east of Brandon, Man. in August 2006. Walsh, a member of the second battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry was killed in a shooting near Kandahar, Afghanistan Aug. 9, 2006. A fellow soldier, Master Cpl. Robbie Fraser, has since been charged with manslaughter and negligent performance of duty. – File photo by The Canadian Press
<b>WORD COUNT:</b>	368

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A Canadian soldier charged in the shooting death of a fellow soldier in Afghanistan will face a court martial on charges of manslaughter and negligent performance of duty, the Canadian Forces director of military prosecutions confirmed Friday.

Master Cpl. Robbie Fraser will face a military trial on charges related to the death of Master Cpl. Jeff Walsh during a patrol on an Afghan road on Aug. 9, 2006, said navy Capt. Holly MacDougall.

The decision comes despite the fact members of both the Walsh and Fraser families have expressed doubt about the need for prosecution. The families say that the two men were friends, as well as comrades. Fraser was originally charged in March. Under military law, several subsequent stages had to be completed before a decision was made on whether to go ahead with a military trial.

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Both could have halted legal proceedings if it was deemed in the interest of the Canadian Forces and the public.

Kevin Fraser of South Rustico, P.E.I., Robbie Fraser's father, said it is his understanding the shooting was the result of an accidental discharge of a weapon.

"I'm very disappointed with the decision and very disappointed that they (military investigators) dragged it out so long," he said in an interview.

"It has been over a year now. My son is off on a course now and they couldn't even wait until Monday to break this."

The Canadian military considers the accidental discharge of a weapon an inexcusable error for a soldier, and charges of this type usually proceed to trial by court martial.

Victim's father sympathetic

The victim's father, Ben Walsh, relayed his support to the Fraser family on Friday.

"Our sympathy goes out to all of the Fraser family," Walsh said in an interview from his Regina home. "I guess two wrongs don't make a right."

Robbie Fraser, 30, is a member of the 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Regiment, based at Canadian Forces Base Shilo in Manitoba.

Walsh was also based at Shilo. He was married with three children.

Family members say they were told Walsh was seated beside the driver of a cramped, G-wagon armoured vehicle patrolling a bumpy road near Kandahar when another soldier's gun discharged inside the vehicle.

Walsh, 33, died from a single gunshot.

No date for the court martial has been set, but it will be held at CFB Shilo.

# Military base stages welcome-home ceremony for soldiers

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**PUBLICATION:** The Telegram (St. John's)

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**SECTION:** National

**PAGE:** A14

**COLUMN:** Briefs

**WORD COUNT:** 103

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Oromocto, N.B. (CP) – More than 650 Canadian soldiers who served in Afghanistan will get an official welcome home today at Canadian Forces Base Gagetown in New Brunswick.

Many of the soldiers have been home for more than two months, but officials at the base and the local communities decided they wanted to do more for their local heroes.

Defence Minister Peter MacKay and Lt.-Gen. Andrew Leslie, the chief of the land staff, will present medals to the soldiers during a ceremony this morning.

The Second Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment Group will also be honoured with the General Campaign Star.

The Gagetown soldiers were among nearly 2,500 Canadian troops that completed a six-month deployment to Afghanistan in August.

# Canadian military hopes for lull in fighting as Muslims celebrate

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**PUBLICATION:** The Telegram (St. John's)

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**SECTION:** National/World

**PAGE:** A9

**SOURCE:** The Canadian Press

**BYLINE:** Dene Moore

**DATELINE:** Kandahar, Afghanistan

**WORD COUNT:** 239

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Muslims will celebrate the end of the holy month of Ramadan this weekend, an occasion that often marks a lull in fighting as insurgents hunker down for the harsh Afghan winter.

If it comes to pass, the lull will be a welcome respite from one of the bloodiest years since the fall of the Taliban six years ago.

"Historically, there has been a lull between, I'd say, the last week of October and the first weeks of spring, where the Taliban would slow down the fighting," said Maj. Eric Landry, chief planning officer for Canadian Forces operations in Afghanistan.

The three-day celebration of Eid al-Fitr is expected to begin this year on Saturday, depending on the sighting of the moon.

"Usually, the insurgents would use that holiday to go back to their families and then stay there over the winter. But right now, we have really no indicators that they will not come back," Landry said.

So far, there has been no break in fighting, as Canadians have pushed into Taliban strongholds this fall to reassert control and establish police sub-stations that are being manned by Afghan National Police and Canadian mentoring teams.

From a military standpoint, the plan is to hand over security in the dangerous Zhari and Panjwaii districts to Afghan national security forces by the end of the year.

That will free up Canadian soldiers to move into other areas of the province.

"What we expect is when winter kicks in, we can have more permissive areas where we can expand easier," Landry said.

The fugitive leader of the Taliban, Mullah Omar, welcomed Eid by calling on neighbouring countries to help Afghan insurgents oust the government of President Hamid Karzai and force foreign troops out of the country.

# Manley to head panel on Afghan mission

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**PUBLICATION:** The Telegram (St. John's)

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**SECTION:** National/World

**PAGE:** A9

**SOURCE:** The Canadian Press

**BYLINE:** Jennifer Ditchburn

**DATELINE:** Ottawa

**ILLUSTRATION:** Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced Friday Deputy Prime Minister John Manley (right) will head a review panel to look at Canada's mission in Afghanistan. – Photo by The Canadian Press

**WORD COUNT:** 283

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Just a few raw weeks after the September 11 attacks, John Manley was already facing questions about what the public might think about Canadian soldiers arriving home in body bags from a new Afghan mission.

Manley, the foreign affairs minister at the time, was indignant.

"Canada does not have a history as a pacifist or neutralist country," he fired back. "Canada has soldiers who are buried all over Europe because we fought in defence of liberty, and we're not about to back away from a challenge now because we think somebody might get hurt."

Manley, often the hawk among the flock of Liberal doves, and Canadian Alliance MPs – who would later convert to Tories – liked to point out the divisions.

"We on this side must compliment the Minister of Foreign Affairs for being more in touch with the views of Canadians on the security issues than many of his colleagues appear to be," MP Brian Pallister said during question period.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper was also undoubtedly cognizant of the sharp differences between Manley and others in the Liberal caucus when he appointed Jean Chretien's deputy prime minister to a panel studying the mission.

If Manley agrees that pulling out of combat in 2009 is premature, his analysis could provoke new divisions within Liberal ranks and hand Harper a valuable weapon should the mission develop into a major election issue.

It wouldn't be the first time Manley turned up on the wrong side of Liberal Leader Stephane Dion. Earlier this year, they publicly disagreed over allowing certain anti-terror provisions to expire from the lawbooks.

Manley told reporters Friday that he had not made up his mind on the mission. Still, he's quoted in last month's issue of Policy Options with well formed views on the good that Canadian soldiers, diplomats and aid workers are doing in Afghanistan.

# Military killing going to trial

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**IDNUMBER** 200710130003  
**PUBLICATION:** The Leader-Post (Regina)  
**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A1 / FRONT  
**BYLINE:** Barb Pacholik  
**SOURCE:** Leader-Post  
**WORD COUNT:** 474

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The father of a Regina soldier killed in Afghanistan remains anxious for answers in his son's death as news broke Friday that a fellow soldier charged with manslaughter is headed for a military trial.

The Canadian Forces Director of Military Prosecutions announced that charges of manslaughter and negligently performing a military duty laid against Master Cpl. Robbie Fraser will proceed to a court martial at the first available date.

The charges stem from the death of 33-year-old Master Cpl. Jeffrey Scott Walsh, who was shot while on routine patrol near Kandahar on Aug. 9 last year. The shot came from inside the armoured military vehicle in which Walsh and Fraser were travelling. Some media reports have suggested they were on a bumpy road at the time.

"Our thoughts and prayers go out to all the Fraser family. They also have gone through 14 months of hell," Ben Walsh, Jeffrey's father, said in an interview Friday. "And, there again, they don't know what's ahead of them."

Walsh reiterated comments he has made earlier that the family doesn't want to see Fraser "persecuted."

"Our family -- my wife and I and our daughter -- we certainly support Robbie Fraser. However, if there has an offence committed, somebody has to be punished for the offence," he said.

Walsh has spoken out since his son's death about how his family and those of other grieving soldiers are stonewalled in trying to get details. He said his family is still waiting for answers to their questions surrounding Jeffrey's shooting. He's hoping prosecutors will at least be able to give them some statement of fact of what occurred prior to the court martial hearing, which will likely be set for early in 2008 at Canadian Forces Base Shilo, near Brandon, Man. No date had been fixed as of Friday.

"I realize they can't give us everything, but at least a statement of facts. We'd certainly like to have that," said Ben Walsh, a former RCMP officer. "It's always waiting."

When Fraser was originally charged in March, a military spokesman said the shooting was considered an accident, but charges were laid due to the serious nature of the incident.

According to Friday's statement, after charges under the National Defence Act are laid, military prosecutors then must decide whether or not to proceed to a court martial.

Military spokesman Michael McWhinnie explained that prosecutors, in reviewing the information in the case,

could have halted the process at that point. They consider whether the evidence is sufficient to provide a reasonable prospect of conviction and whether the public interest requires a prosecution be pursued.

"The Director of Military Prosecutions has signed and sent those charges to a court martial administrator who will then get together a judge, prosecutor, defence, witnesses, a facility and schedule a court martial," he said.

Both Jeffrey Walsh and Fraser, who hails from Prince Edward Island, were members of the 2nd Battalion of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Regiment, based at CFB Shilo.



# Crafty PM ensures war won't be liability

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**IDNUMBER** 200710130030  
**PUBLICATION:** Calgary Herald  
**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A15  
**COLUMN:** Calgary's Eye on National Politics  
**KEYWORDS:** POLITICIANS; POLITICAL PARTIES; GOVERNMENT; CANADA  
**DATELINE:** OTTAWA  
**BYLINE:** Don Martin  
**SOURCE:** Calgary Herald  
**WORD COUNT:** 514

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OTTAWA – The nagging nightmare for ready-to-roll Conservative election strategists was having a rash of Kandahar ramp ceremonies for fallen soldiers disrupt their campaign.

It was bad news they could not predict nor manage. And as the lone military hawk up against a trio of mission doves, the blood of soldiers killed in Afghanistan during the writ period would splash disproportionately more on Stephen Harper than the other party leaders.

But this gobsmackingly shrewd prime minister has produced a Conservative dream scenario from the Afghanistan quagmire on the same day an Ipsos Reid poll for CanWest News Service becomes the first in 2007 to show his party marching into majority government territory with 40 per cent of decided voter support.

It seemed simple enough for Harper to announce a panel to pick one of four options for Canada's military future in Kandahar beyond February 2009 — an exclusive focus on security force training, a retreat to less dangerous areas of Afghanistan, ceasing military operations for reconstruction work, or a full military withdrawal from the country.

That alone would qualify as a smart pre-election move with superior optics and plenty of risk-reduction potential in the event of tragedies during a vote.

But by filling the chair slot with John Manley, the deputy prime minister who supervised the Afghanistan mission launch under the Chretien Liberals, well, that elevates the announcement into the strategic realm of evil genius.

Yes, yes, there are other members including, perish the thought, former television personality Pam Wallin.

But this will likely be called the Manley Report when it's released in five months and that puts its recommendations under a Liberal flag that current Liberal Leader Stephane Dion will find difficult, if not impossible, to angrily refute. Whatever it recommends, Harper is expected to adopt. And that means it cannot be casually shrugged off by the Official Opposition as Conservatives goose-stepping in policy lockstep with U.S. President George W. Bush.

With this single Harper masterstroke, Afghanistan has ceased to be a point of confrontation in the House of Commons this fall, it has been eliminated as an explosive issue in any fall election, and it will ultimately provide a road map for Harper's face-saving Afghanistan exit strategy with built-in independent,

non-partisan credibility.

Having moved from a hard-nosed advocate of the military mission's extension to a softer position as a parliamentary consensus-seeker to a man surrendering the decision to a review panel, the prime minister shows increasing determination to do the right thing, whatever that may be.

Of course, the move has pushed election fever to thermometer-straining temperatures, particularly after Harper's Atlantic Accord amends with Nova Scotia this week.

The Liberals are showing symptoms too by rolling out an early plank of their election platform by promising modestly lower corporate taxes and vowing to build \$42 million worth of small boat harbours in Nunavut if elected. I don't get the harbour-building spree, but it sure sounds like a campaign starting-gun being cocked. For Harper, the panel ensures he now has protection if Canadian victims of Taliban violence occur during any campaign.

But for hapless Stephane Dion, it merely continues to be a nightmare that never seems to end.

[dmartin@canwest.com](mailto:dmartin@canwest.com)

# Harper appoints Grit as panel chair; Manley to advise on future of Afghan mission

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**IDNUMBER** 200710130029  
**PUBLICATION:** Calgary Herald  
**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A15  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Photo: John Manley;  
**KEYWORDS:** POLITICIANS; POLITICAL PARTIES; GOVERNMENT; CANADA  
**DATELINE:** OTTAWA  
**SOURCE:** CanWest News Service  
**WORD COUNT:** 383

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OTTAWA – Prime Minister Stephen Harper took a step toward defusing an election-triggering showdown over Afghanistan Friday, appointing a non-partisan panel, chaired by former Liberal cabinet minister John Manley, to review Canada's role in the war.

The panel will advise Parliament on how to proceed after the current deployment expires in February 2009, an issue that has caused vicious sniping among the federal parties.

But Harper struck a more statesmanlike pose Friday, calling for a "full, open and informed" debate on the country's options.

"This is not an easy question," the prime minister said at a news conference to announce the panel. "I think we would all be well advised to take a deep breath and to take a look at the facts before we rush to judgment."

The appointment of Manley, once a leading contender to succeed former prime minister Paul Martin as Liberal leader, will be seen by some as a strategic coup for Harper and a sign of division within party ranks.

But the move could also be an unexpected boon for the Liberals, giving them time to work through recent party infighting under leader Stephane Dion.

Dion cautiously welcomed the panel's input, although he warned that it should not be used as "a pretext to postpone the clarity we need on the combat mission."

But other party leaders remained suspicious of the prime minister's motives.

NDP Leader Jack Layton suggested the panel would undermine the role of MPs, who were elected by Canadians to make decisions about government policies.

"It's a delay tactic with a partisan edge," said Layton. "The House of Commons should be the place where these discussions happen."

Bloc Quebecois Leader Gilles Duceppe did not budge from his demand that the government clarify in its throne speech on Tuesday that the mission will end in February 2009.

"Harper wants to gain time and to create a problem for the Liberals," he said in an interview.

The throne speech is considered a matter of confidence in the government, so its defeat in a parliamentary vote would trigger an election.

Should Harper decide not to push the envelope, the panel gives him a safety valve, allowing him to argue that his government is awaiting independent advice. The panel will report back to Parliament before the end of January.

Both Manley and Dion sought to downplay the effect of Manley's appointment on Liberal unity.

"I'm a Liberal; I'm a supporter of the Liberal party," said Manley. "But I have some history in Afghanistan in my two visits that have touched me very deeply in terms of the humanitarian needs that I've seen there, and I'm very conscious of the responsibility that Canada has as a member of the global community."

# Soldier faces military trial in Afghanistan death

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**IDNUMBER** 200710130018  
**PUBLICATION:** Calgary Herald  
**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A7  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Colour Photo: Master Cpl. Jeffrey Scott Walsh;  
**KEYWORDS:** COURT MARTIAL  
**DATELINE:** REGINA  
**SOURCE:** CanWest News Service  
**WORD COUNT:** 207

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REGINA – The father of a Regina soldier killed in Afghanistan remains anxious for answers in his son's death, as news broke Friday that a fellow soldier charged with manslaughter is headed for a military trial.

Charges of manslaughter and negligently performing a military duty laid against Master Cpl. Robbie Fraser will proceed to a court martial at the first available date, said the Canadian Forces Director of Military Prosecutions.

The charges stem from the death of 33-year-old Master Cpl. Jeffrey Scott Walsh, who was shot while on routine patrol near Kandahar on Aug. 9 last year. The shot came from inside the armoured military vehicle in which Walsh and Fraser were travelling. Some media reports have suggested they were on a bumpy road at the time.

"Our thoughts and prayers go out to all the Fraser family. They also have gone through 14 months of hell," Ben Walsh, Jeffrey's father, said Friday. "And, there again, they don't know what's ahead of them."

Walsh reiterated comments he has already made that the family doesn't want to see Fraser "persecuted."

Jeffrey Walsh and Fraser, who hails from Prince Edward Island, were members of the 2nd Battalion of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Regiment, based at Canadian Forces Base Shilo, near Brandon, Man.

The hearing will likely be set for early in 2008 at the base.

# Canadian soldier charged in shooting of comrade to face court martial

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**DATE:** 2007.10.12  
**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE  
**PUBLICATION:** cpw  
**WORD COUNT:** 587

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FREDERICTON \_ A Canadian soldier charged in the shooting death of a fellow soldier in Afghanistan will face a court martial on charges of manslaughter and negligent performance of duty, the Canadian Forces director of military prosecutions confirmed Friday.

Master Cpl. Robbie Fraser will face a military trial on charges related to the death of Master Cpl. Jeff Walsh during a patrol on an Afghan road on Aug. 9, 2006, said navy Capt. Holly MacDougall.

The decision comes despite the fact members of both the Walsh and Fraser families have expressed doubt about the need for prosecution. The families say that the two men were friends, as well as comrades.

Fraser was originally charged in March. Under military law, several subsequent stages had to be completed before a decision was made on whether to go ahead with a military trial.

“Military prosecutors consider two main issues when deciding whether to prosecute a charge at court martial: whether the evidence is sufficient to provide a reasonable prospect of conviction and whether the public interest requires a prosecution be pursued,” MacDougall said in the statement.

The charges against Fraser were reviewed by his battalion commander and the prosecution service. Both could have halted legal proceedings if it was deemed in the interest of the Canadian Forces and the public.

Kevin Fraser of South Rustico, P.E.I., Robbie Fraser's father, said it is his understanding the shooting was the result of an accidental discharge of a weapon.

“I'm very disappointed with the decision and very disappointed that they (military investigators) dragged it out so long,” he said in an interview.

“It has been over a year now. My son is off on a course now and they couldn't even wait until Monday to break this.”

The Canadian military considers the accidental discharge of a weapon an inexcusable error for a soldier, and charges of this type usually proceed to trial by court martial.

The victim's father, Ben Walsh, relayed his support to the Fraser family on Friday.

“Our sympathy goes out to all of the Fraser family,” Walsh said in an interview from his Regina home. “I guess two wrongs don't make a right.”

Robbie Fraser, 30, is a member of the 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Regiment, based at Canadian Forces Base Shilo in Manitoba.

Walsh was also based at Shilo. He was married with three children.

Family members say they were told Walsh was seated beside the driver of a cramped, G-wagon armoured vehicle patrolling a bumpy road near Kandahar when another soldier's gun discharged inside the vehicle.

Walsh, 33, died from a single gunshot.

No date for the court martial has been set, but it will be held at CFB Shilo.

It was not immediately known how many soldiers have been convicted of negligence in accidental discharges of their weapons since Canada first sent regular troops to Afghanistan early in 2002. Some have been fined, others have been sentenced to labour, and a few have received both penalties, usually meted out during summary trials in-theatre.

The Canadian military follows the civilian Criminal Code in defining manslaughter as "culpable homicide" that falls short of murder. The maximum penalty is life imprisonment.

Negligent performance of duty is a violation of the National Defence Act with a maximum penalty of disgraceful dismissal from the Canadian Forces.

Walsh's widow, Julie Mason, declined to be interviewed Friday, but she has said in the past that she doesn't agree with the action the military has taken.

"Rob was a good friend of Jeff, and what is taking place right now I don't agree with," she said in an interview several months ago.

Ben Walsh said that while he doesn't want to see anyone prosecuted for what happened to his son, he does want to see accountability.

Earlier this year, another Canadian soldier was killed by an apparent accidental discharge, this one inside his tent on the base in Kandahar.

Cpl. Kevin Megeney was a 25-year-old reservist from Stellarton, N.S.

Weapons are usually fully loaded when soldiers are on patrol in Kandahar province, the scene of many insurgent attacks on NATO forces, including suicide car bombings.

# Canadian women take break from war with soccer match against Afghans

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**DATE:** 2007.10.12  
**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL SPORTS  
**PUBLICATION:** cpw  
**WORD COUNT:** 445

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HALIFAX \_ When Maj. Eileen Vaughan accepted an offer of a soccer match with a local Afghan team in Kabul, she cobbled together a squad of players from various NATO countries.

But the Halifax native didn't fully realize what she was getting into.

“I expected a recreational friendly game with local women, not knowing it was the national team asking for a game,” Vaughan, 49, recalled in a recent e-mail from the war-ravaged country. “It was huge.”

“When we got to the field, it was a much bigger event than my wildest dreams. There was media, speeches, politicians, including the minister for women, FIFA (International Federation of Association Football) flags flying and at least 100 spectators.”

That soccer was such a big deal in the impoverished nation came as no surprise.

“In a country where money is scarce and times are tough, it is both a welcome diversion and inexpensive, Vaughan said. “Afghans love to both play and watch the game recreationally and competitively.”

But women have been permitted to play only for the past six years since the Taliban were deposed.

“FIFA sponsors the national team in part to promote women in Afghanistan, who have lived under extreme restrictions for more than 20 years,” Vaughan said.

“These young women had to wear burkas in public and were not allowed to attend school a few short years ago. To play soccer and represent your country is a huge achievement.”

The Afghan girls are aged 16 to 23. During games, they wear long sleeves and pants, and a few wear head scarves.

Captain and centre-forward Shamila Kohestani told the Sunday Mirror of London that as a 12-year-old she was beaten by Taliban soldiers for leaving home wearing a head scarf instead of a burka.

The Taliban had banned all sports, even flying kites, but made an exception for men's soccer, which attracted crowds of thousands to the same stadium where girls now play. Matches were preceded by executions.

Kohestani, 19, told the newspaper she pined to play but was forced to watch boys' games from the sidelines.

“I would do anything to join in but I couldn't risk it because girls were forbidden from exercising,” she said. “Instead, I made do with fetching the ball when it went outside the pitch and I watched and waited.”

Now she wears a head scarf sometimes when she plays but will often throw it off if it gets in the way, she said.



Vaughan, who is wrapping up a six-month deployment to Kabul as the deputy commander of the Headquarters Support Group at International Security Assistance Force headquarters, had a tough time convincing enough of her female comrades to join her.

They ranged in age from their 20s to their 40s and many hadn't played since childhood.

They met each other for the first time on their way to the game.

The considerably younger team of Afghan girls won 4-0.

But Vaughan, who grew up playing soccer on Halifax-area teams with her sister, Coun. Sheila Fougere, said her impromptu team fared well, allowing only one goal in the second half.

“When we realized they were a national team and not just a group of local players, their skill was not too surprising,” she said. “We gave them a pretty good game when all was said and done.

“The game was the highlight of my deployment and very important for the women of Afghanistan.”

(Halifax Chronicle Herald)

# Harper picks one of Liberal party's hawks for Afghan panel

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**DATE:** 2007.10.12

**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

**PUBLICATION:** cpw

**WORD COUNT:** 605

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OTTAWA \_ Just a few raw weeks after the September 11 attacks, John Manley was already facing questions about what the public might think about Canadian soldiers arriving home in body bags from a new Afghan mission.

Manley, the foreign affairs minister at the time, was indignant.

“Canada does not have a history as a pacifist or neutralist country,” he fired back. “Canada has soldiers who are buried all over Europe because we fought in defence of liberty, and we're not about to back away from a challenge now because we think somebody might get hurt.”

Manley was often the hawk among the flock of Liberal doves, and Canadian Alliance MPs \_ who would later convert to Tories \_ liked to point out the divisions: “We on this side must compliment the Minister of Foreign Affairs for being more in touch with the views of Canadians on the security issues than many of his colleagues appear to be,” MP Brian Pallister said during question period.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper was also undoubtedly cognizant of the sharp differences between Manley and others in the Liberal caucus when he appointed Jean Chretien's deputy prime minister to a panel studying the mission.

“I'm very confident that we will get a report that the government will be very comfortable with having a public debate on,” Harper told reporters Friday.

If Manley agrees that pulling out of combat in 2009 is premature, his analysis could provoke new divisions within Liberal ranks and hand Harper a valuable weapon should the mission develop into a major election issue.

It wouldn't be the first time Manley turned up on the wrong side of Liberal Leader Stephane Dion. Earlier this year, they publicly disagreed over allowing certain anti-terror provisions to expire from the lawbooks.

Manley told reporters Friday that he had not made up his mind on the mission. Still, he's quoted in last month's issue of Policy Options with well formed views on the good that Canadian soldiers, diplomats and aid workers are doing in Afghanistan. Manley recently visited the country again as a director of CARE Canada.

“Whenever we asked Afghans what they should (the International Security Assistance Force) or Canada should do, they did not hesitate to say we must stay. Without the presence of the international forces, chaos would surely ensue.”

He added, “We often seek to define Canada's role in the world. Well, for whatever reason, we have one in Afghanistan. Let's not abandon it too easily. But let's use our hard-earned influence to make sure the job is done.”

Manley was asked about those statements Friday and insisted he was not prejudging what Canada should do.

But he made it clear that finding stability for the Afghan people is an issue he's passionate about. In January 2002, he was the first Canadian minister to visit the decaying country in more than 40 years. He arrived just as NATO troops had toppled the Taliban and Hamid Karzai had begun his tenure as president.

In the Liberal caucus, he and deputy prime minister Anne McLellan became the get-tough-on-terrorism standard bearers employed by former prime minister Jean Chretien to push through legislation and policies demanded by the broader public after the Sept. 11 attacks.

He is often quoted from that period saying Canada couldn't merely sit among G-8 countries, ``and then, when the bill comes, go to the washroom."

``Civilized societies have learned many times before that there is only one way to deal with evil," Manley told the Commons in October 2001, as Canadian soldiers arrived in Afghanistan. ``We cannot reason with it, we cannot negotiate with it and we cannot buy time to find a better solution. The only way to deal with evil is to strike at its root, to destroy it and to move on."

When exactly Canadian combat troops should move on, is the question Manley must now grapple with.

# Harper names Manley to head Afghan panel; critics worry it's political ploy

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**DATE:** 2007.10.12

**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

**PUBLICATION:** cpw

**WORD COUNT:** 757

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OTTAWA \_ Stephen Harper says his decision to name a prominent Liberal to lead a panel on the future of Canada's Afghan mission is all about policy \_ but critics suggest it's more about politics.

The prime minister announced Friday that a five-member group led by former Liberal cabinet minister John Manley will make a recommendation by the end of January on what Canada should do when its commitment to the NATO mission expires in 2009.

With an election possibly looming and the political dispute over Afghanistan intensifying, Harper's opponents suggested the move might be more about political strategy than a sincere desire for a non-partisan opinion.

Manley, like Harper, has said Canada should not abandon its mission in the war-torn country.

But he dismissed suggestions that he is being used as a political pawn by Harper. He said he worried for days about how his decision to serve a Conservative prime minister might be perceived.

Harper noted that he's not forced to follow the panel's advice and that he still plans to let Parliament vote on the future of the Afghan deployment

The Liberals welcomed the appointment of Manley but warned that the prime minister might now use the panel as an excuse to avoid debate this fall.

All opposition parties want an end to Canada's combat mission in Kandahar by February 2009 and the NDP is calling for a withdrawal immediately.

Harper scoffed at the suggestion he's trying to avoid debate on Afghanistan.

“You know the government can't take the issue off the table,” he told a news conference, with Manley by his side.

“Afghanistan is a major public policy issue and it will be addressed in (next week's) throne speech. What I've said the government wants to do . . . is make sure we have a rational and considered debate.”

He said the panel will consider four options:

\_ Continue training the Afghan army and police so Canada can begin withdrawing its forces in February 2009. Harper described this as the status-quo option.

\_ Focus on reconstruction and have forces from another country take over security in the volatile Kandahar region.

\_ Shift Canadian security and reconstruction effort to another region in Afghanistan.

\_ Withdraw all Canadian military except a minimal force to protect aid workers and diplomats.

But Manley appeared unclear on at least one central point of his assignment: the question of whether the status quo remains a viable option beyond 2009. He said the list of options provided by the prime minister did not include continuing the current mandate.

Harper quickly contradicted him and said one of the four options \_ scaling back fighting to focus more on training Afghans \_ is essentially the status quo.

Manley said he called Liberal Leader Stéphane Dion on Thursday night to inform him of his decision. Dion praised the appointment and expressed hope that Manley might get the prime minister to modify his Afghan position.

Manley said he finally decided to accept the position because of a desire to serve his country and by two emotional visits he made to Afghanistan \_ first as a cabinet minister in 2002 and then as a member of CARE Canada in 2007.

"I'm a Liberal," said Manley, who ran for his party leadership just four years ago.

"I'm a supporter of the Liberal party. But I have some history in Afghanistan in my two visits that touched me very deeply. . . The question of what Canada does in Afghanistan following the current mandate to be one that really transcends partisan politics.

"It's an issue for our country, and when called upon to serve it's not only an honour for me but it's my responsibility to do so to the best of my ability."

Manley has repeatedly come out strongly in favour of Canada's combat mission.

The other panel members are: Pamela Wallin, a veteran broadcaster and former consul-general in New York; Derek Burney, former ambassador to Washington and one-time chief of staff to Brian Mulroney; Paul Tellier, former clerk of the privy council; Jake Epp, a former Mulroney cabinet minister.

The panel will report by the end of January and the government has indicated that it will disclose Canada's post-2009 intentions to NATO by next spring \_ but, in the meantime, there could be an election.

"I hope very much that Mr. Harper doesn't use the panel as an excuse to say nothing over the next two months or to refuse to answer questions or to engage in a real discussion in the House of Commons," said Bob Rae, the Liberals' foreign-affairs critic.

Bloc Québécois Leader Gilles Duceppe had the same concern. He has pushed for next week's throne speech to promise a 2009 pullout and says he will continue to do so.

"I know these Ottawa habits all too well," Duceppe said. "When there's a problem, instead of dealing with the problem they create a committee.

"They put in place a process and a few months later they create another committee to evaluate the work of the first committee, and then everyone talks about how the process is working and its speed or delays, and by then nobody's talking about the actual issue anymore."

The Liberals used the appointment to poke fun at the quality of Harper's cabinet.

"When you have a tough job to do I guess you have to find a Liberal to give you the advice," Rae said.

# U.S. military reviews Guantanamo Bay enemy combatant hearings

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**DATE:** 2007.10.12

**KEYWORDS:** INTERNATIONAL POLITICS DEFENCE JUSTICE

**PUBLICATION:** cpw

**WORD COUNT:** 835

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GUANTANAMO BAY NAVAL BASE, Cuba \_ The U.S. military is reviewing its decision to classify hundreds of Guantanamo Bay inmates as "enemy combatants," a step that could lead to new hearings for men who have spent years behind bars in indefinite detention.

Critics called it an overdue acknowledgement that the so-called Combatant Status Review Tribunals are unfairly geared toward labelling detainees the enemy, even when they pose little danger. Simply redoing the tribunals won't fix the problem, they said, because the system still allows coerced evidence and denies detainees legal representation.

Navy Capt. Theodore Fessel Jr., the lead officer at Guantanamo for the Defence Department agency that oversees the panels, said authorities have begun seeking new or previously overlooked evidence that may warrant new hearings after the process came under fire.

"With all the outside eyes looking in at the process, it's forcing us to say, 'OK, did we take everything into consideration when we did the Combatant Status Review Tribunals?'" Fessel told journalists Wednesday at the naval base in southeast Cuba.

Lt. Col. Stephen Abraham, an insider who has become one of the most prominent critics of the tribunal process, said Thursday the development shows the system is fatally flawed.

"Ultimately, conducting new CSRTs \_ even discussing the possibility \_ repudiates every prior assertion that the original CSRTs were valid acts," Abraham told The Associated Press in an e-mail Thursday. "They are, in essence, both a hypocritical act as well as an act of moral cowardice."

Abraham, an Army reservist who was a liaison between Guantanamo tribunals and intelligence agencies and served on a combatant review panel, made headlines this summer when he told Congress and the Supreme Court that tribunal members felt pressured to find against detainees.

Last week, an Army major who sat on 49 tribunals also publicly criticized the panels, saying in an affidavit that they favoured the government. Both men said that in cases where the panels declared a detainee was not an enemy combatant, commanders reconvened panels to hear more evidence, and sometimes reversed the findings without sufficient new evidence.

The military and the Bush administration have consistently defended the tribunals, established in 2004 to legitimize the detention of men they described as among the world's worst terrorists.

The military held Combatant Status Review Tribunals for 558 detainees in 2004 and 2005. Detainees were handcuffed and provided with a military "personal representative" instead of a defence attorney as they appeared in a trailer before three-officer panels. All but 38 were determined to be "enemy combatants," a classification the Bush administration has used to mean they can be held indefinitely without many of the rights afforded to conventional prisoners of war.

“The CSRTs were NOT fair,” Abraham wrote in his e-mail to the AP. “They were specifically designed to reach a result and, in the few instances where a contrary result was reached, pressure was exerted to change the decision, a new tribunal was selected” or the decision was disregarded.

By reviewing the cases, Fessel said the military is recognizing that some detainees may no longer pose a threat. Citing a hypothetical example, he said a detainee who belonged to a Taliban faction that has stopped fighting may no longer be a security risk.

“It’s an acknowledgement that if there is new evidence or a new thing to take into bearing, in the spirit of being an open and fair process, we have to take that into consideration,” said Fessel, of the Pentagon’s Office of Administrative Review of Detained Enemy Combatants.

He said he did not know how many of the roughly 330 detainees currently held at Guantanamo Bay on suspicion of links to terrorism, al-Qaida or the Taliban might face new hearings.

Lawyers for Canada’s lone Guantanamo detainee, Omar Khadr, are trying to stop the U–S legal case against him from proceeding. They filed an appeal with the U–S Court of Appeals earlier this week.

Military lawyer Commander William Kuebler says a special military appeals court was wrong last month when it said the case could go ahead. At issue is the fact that Khadr hasn’t been designated an illegal enemy combatant as required by Congress.

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

Khadr is accused of throwing a grenade that killed a U–S medic in a 2002 firefight in Afghanistan. Khadr’s military commission is scheduled to resume in November.

Once detainees are deemed enemy combatants, they face review boards once a year that assess whether they still pose a threat or have intelligence value, and recommend whether they should be transferred, released or continue to be detained. Assistant Secretary of Defense Gordon England determined after last year’s hearings that 328 men should continue to be detained and 55 should be transferred.

The commander of the detention centre, Navy Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby, said Wednesday that its population will likely continue to shrink until slightly more than 200 detainees remain – “the real hard–core people that are very unrepentant, committed jihadists.”

But critics said the system will remain unfair as long as the evidence is kept secret.

# Germany approves extension of Afghan deployment of 3,000 troops

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**DATE:** 2007.10.12

**KEYWORDS:** INTERNATIONAL POLITICS DEFENCE

**PUBLICATION:** cpw

**WORD COUNT:** 346

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BERLIN \_ Germany's lower house of parliament Friday overwhelmingly approved extending the deployment of 3,000 troops and six reconnaissance jets in Afghanistan for another year, despite mounting public skepticism about the mission.

The vote in the 613-seat Bundestag \_ 454-79 with 48 abstentions \_ was the final step needed to extend the mission.

Public opinion polls recently indicated most Germans want the troops to come home following attacks on German forces and kidnappings of German citizens there.

But Chancellor Angela Merkel's government had pressed for a renewal, saying to pull out now would open the door to a possible return of the Taliban regime ousted in 2001 and endanger years of progress in rebuilding the country.

Development Minister Heidemarie Wiecek-Zeul, a left-wing Social Democrat, said during the Bundestag debate that troops were needed to support rebuilding schools so that Afghan children, especially girls who were banned from schools by the Taliban, had a chance to get an education.

"This is real development that we are moving forward with," Wiecek-Zeul said. "Seventy percent of the population is under 25 and we want, through building up of the educational system and above all through elementary education, to give children and youth \_ and precisely girls \_ the chance to go to school."

The all-weather jets from the Luftwaffe's Tactical Reconnaissance Wing 51 "Immelmann," supported by 280 personnel, are based near Mazar-e-Sharif in northern Afghanistan and can provide faster, farther-ranging photographic information to assist security forces on the ground than can unpiloted drones, according to the German air force.

Most of the 2,800 German ground troops are in the north of the country as part of the International Security Assistance Force, or ISAF. Germany has resisted any suggestion they should take part in the heavier fighting in the south of the country.

The head of the Social Democrats' parliamentary faction, former Defence Minister Peter Struck, said the mission had already been a success and the situation in the north had become "much more stable." At the same time he warned the mission could remain in place for another decade.



# Canadian military hopes for lull in fighting as Muslims mark Eid

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**DATE:** 2007.10.12  
**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL  
**PUBLICATION:** cpw  
**WORD COUNT:** 616

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KANDAHAR, Afghanistan \_ Muslims will celebrate the end of the holy month of Ramadan this weekend, an occasion that often marks a lull in fighting as insurgents hunker down for the harsh Afghan winter.

If it comes to pass, the lull will be a welcome respite from one of the bloodiest years since the fall of the Taliban six years ago.

“Historically, there has been a lull between, I'd say, the last week of October and the first weeks of spring, where the Taliban would slow down the fighting,” said Maj. Eric Landry, chief planning officer for Canadian Forces operations in Afghanistan.

The three-day celebration of Eid al-Fitr is expected to begin this year on Saturday, depending on the sighting of the moon.

“Usually, the insurgents would use that holiday to go back to their families and then stay there over the winter. But right now, we have really no indicators that they will not come back,” Landry said.

So far, there has been no break in fighting, as Canadians have pushed into Taliban strongholds this fall to reassert control and establish police sub-stations that are being manned by Afghan National Police and Canadian mentoring teams.

From a military standpoint, the plan is to hand over security in the dangerous Zhari and Panjwaii districts to Afghan national security forces by the end of the year.

That will free up Canadian soldiers to move into other areas of the province.

“What we expect is when winter kicks in, we can have more permissive areas where we can expand easier,” Landry said.

“But right now, we have no sign of that lull, or that reduced fighting season coming from the insurgents.”

In fact, the fugitive leader of the Taliban, Mullah Omar, welcomed Eid by calling on neighbouring countries to help Afghan insurgents oust the government of President Hamid Karzai and force foreign troops out of the country.

In a message posted online \_ one which could not be immediately authenticated \_ Omar said Muslims in neighbouring countries should help drive western forces from Afghanistan as they helped evict the Soviets.

“They should abandon any kind of support and understand that they (western forces) are a danger to the whole region,” said the statement.

This has already been the bloodiest years of war since the fall of the Taliban in 2001.

More than 5,100 people \_ more than 3,000 of them militants \_ have died in insurgency-related violence so far this year, according to estimates by the United Nations and The Associated Press.

Twenty-seven Canadian soldiers have died since January, 22 of them killed by roadside bombs \_ the Taliban's latest weapon of choice in its guerrilla war against government and international troops.

In 2006, 36 Canadian soldiers and diplomat Glyn Berry were killed.

A total of 71 soldiers, as well as Berry, have died since Canadian troops deployed to Afghanistan in 2002.

A slow down in insurgents activity would be welcome news for humanitarian workers, who are themselves trying to prepare for winter.

“They're going to be wanting to prepare families with the food stocks they need for the cold winter months,” said Ron Schatz, director of development for the Canadian Provincial Reconstruction Team in Kandahar province.

Food stores need to be in place by the end of December, before snow and rain make the country's rural roads impassable.

Both the International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations representative for the human rights of internally displaced persons have warned of a potential humanitarian crisis this winter.

Fighting has driven tens of thousands of people from their homes into refugee camps or simply to the streets of cities.

Humanitarian aid and development are key to the Canadian mission in Afghanistan, both with the Afghan population and the voting public back home.

When there is a slow-down in fighting, it's allows more extensive, long-term projects to go ahead, Landry said.

“We've been using that period of time to really reinforce the development line of operation,” he said.

The reconstruction team in Kandahar works with the Afghan Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development to decide which projects go ahead.

Schatz said that the focus has been on improving water supply and irrigation in this largely rural, agricultural region. That work will continue this winter, “security permitting.”

“Security affects everyone,” he said.

“Sometimes, being less visible is as effective as being out in force.”

Schatz said the reconstruction team tries to work quietly in this region where Taliban have targeted development projects. A bridge-building project was recently shut down after it was blown up by insurgents, and dozens of schools have been burned down.

“That's the nature of the work here,” Schatz said.

# New Brunswick military base stages welcome home ceremony for soldiers

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**DATE:** 2007.10.12  
**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE POLITICS SOCIAL  
**PUBLICATION:** cpw  
**WORD COUNT:** 339

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family and friends, much of the conversation was about their fallen comrades, whose families were presented with medals at funerals, rather than Friday's celebration.

Warrant Officer Brad Rogers of Canning, N.S., said his medal will always be a reminder of the colleagues who were killed.

“There's no way of looking at that medal without being reminded of these soldiers that we lost, and the soldiers that are taking their place,” he said.

OROMOCTO, N.B. \_ More than 600 Canadian soldiers who recently served in Afghanistan were honoured and officially welcomed home to their New Brunswick base Friday, but many of them said their thoughts were still with the soldiers killed during the deployment.

Eighteen members of the battle group were killed during the six-month tour that ended in August, including five from Canadian Forces Base Gagetown, near Fredericton.

Pte. Brennan Leslie of Cole Harbour, N.S., was the driver of a vehicle that hit a roadside bomb on Easter Sunday, killing six soldiers.

He told reporters it was as if his fallen comrades were with him at Friday's ceremony.

“They were indeed,” he said. “I was holding back the tears.”

Leslie was among more than 400 soldiers who were presented Campaign Star medals by Defence Minister Peter MacKay and Lt.-Gen. Andrew Leslie.

The Second Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment Group was also honoured with their General Campaign Star.

MacKay said the work of the soldiers has resulted in significant improvements for the people of Afghanistan.

“A free country is being reborn because of your contributions,” MacKay said in a speech.

The minister thanked all the soldiers and their families, and made specific mention of those who have lost loved ones in Afghanistan.

“And I hope that you will find some comfort in the knowledge that, as in previous struggles in which Canada has been present, that the freedoms and privileges that Canadians enjoy today are a direct result of those who have sacrificed to defend our country,” he said.

Lt.-Gen. Leslie spent a lot of time speaking individually to the soldiers, and said while the medals are only made of a bit of metal and cloth, they are symbols of their teamwork and sacrifice.

“It doesn't cost a lot to make, but by golly the price to wear it can be high,” he said.

The hundreds of soldiers attending the ceremony stood shoulder to shoulder, row on row, filling the perimeter of a huge drill hall on the training base in central New Brunswick.

All stood at attention with eyes forward for the two hour ceremony.

Afterwards, as the soldiers relaxed and mingled outside with

# Taliban chief urges Afghanistan's neighbours to help drive out foreign troops

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**DATE:** 2007.10.12  
**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL  
**PUBLICATION:** cpw  
**WORD COUNT:** 470

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KABUL, Afghanistan \_ Fugitive Taliban leader Mullah Omar called on Afghanistan's neighbours to help his militants oust the government of President Hamid Karzai and force foreign troops out of the country.

A roadside bomb, meanwhile, struck a police vehicle in southern Helmand province on Friday, leaving two officers dead and four others wounded, a police chief said.

Omar's message \_ the authenticity of which couldn't be immediately confirmed \_ said ``neighbours should help Afghans drive western forces from Afghanistan as they helped them during the Soviet Union invasion."

``They should abandon any kind of support and understand that they (western forces) are a danger to the whole region," said Omar's statement, posted on a website that previously carried militant messages.

Most of the 2,500 Canadian troops in Afghanistan are based in volatile Kandahar province, which borders Pakistan. Seventy-one Canadian soldiers have been killed since 2002.

It was unclear when Omar's message was posted, though it included greetings for the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr, which is expected to start Saturday.

Afghanistan is going through its most violent period since the Taliban's ouster in the U.S.-led invasion in 2001. More than 5,100 people \_ mostly militants \_ have died in insurgency-related violence so far this year.

The Taliban often compare their struggle to the war against the Soviet Union's occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s, when neighbouring Pakistan and Iran \_ helped by the United States and Saudi Arabia \_ armed the anti-communist mujahedeen.

Some observers accuse rogue elements in Pakistan's security forces of supporting today's Afghan rebels, and U.S. officials recently raised the alarm about Iranian weapons reaching the Taliban.

Islamabad and Tehran deny any involvement.

Karzai has offered peace talks with the militants and even positions in the government. But the Taliban and warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, leader of the militant group Hezb-i-Islami, have rejected the overtures, saying international troops must first leave the country.

In his Internet statement, Omar said Karzai's offers were the result of the Taliban's resilience on the battlefield. He said western forces should end ``satanic" policies, including air strikes that kill civilians, and withdraw.

But he also called on his fighters to be mindful of civilians during combat, suggesting the bloodshed is sapping support also for the militants among ordinary Afghans.

Insurgents often launch attacks from civilian homes and a constant stream of suicide attacks are killing far more civilians than Afghan or foreign troops.

Omar went into hiding after a U.S.-led invasion toppled his Taliban regime in Afghanistan six-years ago. Afghan officials have said he is hiding in the Pakistani city of Quetta. Pakistan says he is in Afghanistan.

In southern Afghanistan, meanwhile, a roadside blast targeted a police patrol in Helmand province's Gereshk district, killing two officers and wounding four others, said the Helmand's police chief, Mohammad Hussein Andiwal.

In eastern Kunar province, three rockets struck a house in the provincial capital of Asadabad, killing one young girl and wounding two other children, said Mohammad Jalal, the provincial police chief. He blamed the Taliban for firing the rockets.

# bc-CCN-ON-GOV-LAW

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**DATE:** 2007.10.12

**PUBLICATION:** cpw

**WORD COUNT:** 245

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^DND: Soldier Will Face Charges in Shooting Death@<

October 12, 2007

OTTAWA, ONTARIO--(Marketwire – Oct. 12, 2007) – Captain (Navy) Holly MacDougall, the Canadian Forces Director of Military Prosecutions (DMP), has preferred charges of Manslaughter and Negligently Performing a Military Duty against Master Corporal Robbie Fraser in the shooting death of Master Corporal Jeffrey Scott Walsh.

On August 9, 2006, while deployed to Afghanistan, Master Corporal Walsh was killed in a shooting incident. On March 12, 2007, the Canadian Forces National Investigation Service (CFNIS) brought charges against Master Corporal Robbie Fraser. These charges were then referred to the DMP by the chain of command on July 11, 2007.

The charge of Manslaughter is contrary to Section 130 of the National Defence Act, which incorporates Section 236 of the Criminal Code. The charge of Negligently Performing a Military Duty is contrary to Section 124 of the National Defence Act.

Military prosecutors consider two main issues when deciding whether to prosecute a charge at court martial: whether the evidence is sufficient to provide a reasonable prospect of conviction and whether the public interest requires a prosecution be pursued. They continually reassess these issues as new information about the case becomes available.

The charges were forwarded to the Court Martial Administrator who will convene a General Court Martial at the first available date.

Notes to editors: The DMP policy on post charge screening is at:  
[http://www.forces.gc.ca/jag/military\\_justice/cmpps/policy\\_and\\_directives/policy3\\_e.asp](http://www.forces.gc.ca/jag/military_justice/cmpps/policy_and_directives/policy3_e.asp).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Information: 613-996-2353/54

After hours: 613-792-2973

[www.forces.gc.ca](http://www.forces.gc.ca)

INDUSTRY: Government – International, Government – Local,

Government – National, Government – Security (law enforcement, homeland etc), Government – State

SUBJECT: LAW





# Germany extends Afghan mission despite mounting public dismay

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**DATE:** 2007.10.12

**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL

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**WORD COUNT:** 608

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BERLIN \_ Germany's lower house of parliament voted overwhelmingly on Friday to keep 3,000 troops and six reconnaissance jets in Afghanistan for another year despite mounting public skepticism about the mission.

The vote in the 613-seat Bundestag \_ 454-79 with 48 abstentions \_ was the final step needed to extend the mission.

It came after Chancellor Angela Merkel pressed hard for renewal of the legislative mandate for participation in NATO's International Security Assistance Force, or ISAF.

The Netherlands and Canada face a similar decision in the coming months.

The Dutch government is expected to decide this fall whether to extend its mission that is currently due to end next summer. About 1,700 Dutch troops are in Afghanistan.

The mandate for Canada's mission expires in February 2009.

The Canadian government has indicated it has until next April to tell NATO whether there will be an extension. Opposition parties in Canada are against an extension; the New Democratic party wants Canadian troops withdrawn even sooner.

On Friday, Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced the establishment of a five-member panel to examine the future role of Canada in Afghanistan.

ISAF has about 37,000 troops in Afghanistan but only Canada, the United States, Britain and the Netherlands have taken on combat roles in the violent southern regions, where the Taliban insurgency is most active and deeply rooted.

Canada has about 2,300 troops in Kandahar province as part of its overall commitment of 2,500 to ISAF. Seventy-one Canadian soldiers and one diplomat have died in Afghanistan since 2002.

In contrast, most of the 2,800 German ground troops are in the quieter north of the country. Germany has resisted any suggestion they should take part in the heavier fighting in the south.

Officials and legislators from Merkel's governing coalition of conservative Christian Democrats and centre-left Social Democrats argued that a pullout would open the door for Taliban and Al-Qaida to once again use Afghanistan as a base for terrorism \_ and endanger years of progress in rebuilding the country.

Social Democratic legislator Gert Weissenkirchen said a German refusal could lead to abandonment of Afghanistan by other western countries.

``Afghanistan would again fall into the hands of the Taliban," he said. ``Therefore I ask you to think it over carefully. A No vote would lead to giving terrorism a chance to further establish itself, to insult people, to

repress women. We want to put an end to that and so we need extension of the ISAF mandate."

Under German law, any foreign deployment must be approved by parliament.

Development Minister Heidemarie Wiecek-Zeul, a left-wing Social Democrat, said troops were needed to support rebuilding of the school system and give Afghan children \_ including girls who were banned from schools by the Taliban regime ousted in 2001 \_ the chance to get an education.

"This is real development that we are moving forward with," Wiecek-Zeul said.

"Seventy per cent of the population is under 25 and we want, through building up of the educational system and above all through elementary education, to give children and youth \_ and especially girls \_ the chance to go to school."

Public opinion polls recently indicate most Germans want the troops to come home following attacks on their forces and kidnappings of their citizens in Afghanistan. Members of the environmentalist Greens and the Left party \_ former East German communist and disgruntled Social Democrats \_ also opposed the extension.

Merkel, who did not speak during the debate, has argued forcefully for staying the course, saying Germany must not "leave Afghanistan in the hands of the terrorists."

The all-weather Tornado jets from the Luftwaffe's Tactical Reconnaissance Wing 51 "Immelmann," supported by 280 personnel, are based near Mazar-e-Sharif in northern Afghanistan.

The German air force says the jets can provide faster, farther-ranging photographic information to assist security forces on the ground than can pilotless drones.

Another vote will be held later this fall on a mandate on Germany's participation in the U.S.-led anti-terror Operation Enduring Freedom. Germany participation has consisted of anti-terrorist ship patrols off the Horn of Africa.

# Police say signs honouring fallen soldiers stolen from Highway of Heroes

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**DATE:** 2007.10.12

**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE POLITICS

**PUBLICATION:** cpw

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COBOURG, Ont. \_ Police say some signs dedicated to the memory of fallen Canadian soldiers have been stolen from the Highway of Heroes, a renamed stretch of Highway 401 in eastern Ontario.

Provincial police say the missing signs were taken from exit ramps on the highway between Trenton and east-end Toronto.

Police spokesman Doug Orton says he doesn't know how many signs have been stolen, but called the thefts despicable.

The 170-kilometre stretch of highway was officially renamed in August by the Ontario government as a tribute to soldiers who have died in Afghanistan.

Hearses carrying the flag-draped coffins of fallen soldiers travel from CFB Trenton, where the bodies are repatriated to Canadian soil, to a forensics centre in Toronto.

The name change was prompted by an electronic petition to officially rename that stretch of highway. (CHUC)

# Rae–Foreign–Affairs

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**DATE:** 2007.10.12  
**KEYWORDS:** INTERNATIONAL POLITICS  
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**WORD COUNT:** 127

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OTTAWA — The new Liberal foreign affairs critic isn't waiting for Tuesday's throne speech to attack the Harper government's foreign policy.

Bob Rae says that not since the Second World War has Canada espoused such an inexperienced and narrow world view.

The former N–D–P premier of Ontario, and Liberal leadership candidate, says the Harper government — in essence — simply follows the lead of U–S President Bush.

On the key issue of Afghanistan Rae says the Liberals are united in their position that the combat portion of the mission should end in 2009.

Stephen Harper has committed to holding a vote in Parliament on extending the combat mission past February 2009.

However the prime minister has made it clear he supports staying on to better secure Kandahar province.

Bob Rae, meantime, has yet to win a seat in the Commons, but says he'll be attending weekly caucus meetings.

Barring a fall general election, Rae will likely face a byelection in Toronto early next year.

(The Canadian Press)

ScH

# Harper–Afghanistan–Update (adds Manley)

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**DATE:** 2007.10.12  
**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 125

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OTTAWA — Prime Minister Stephen Harper has appointed a high-profile Liberal to look into the future of Canada's mission to Afghanistan.

Former cabinet minister John Manley will head a five-member panel that will offer recommendations about what Canada should do when its current mission expires in February 2009.

Harper says the panel will consider four options, including shifting troops to another region, switching from a combat to a reconstruction mission or withdrawing most troops.

The prime minister says he wants an open and non-partisan debate about the Afghan mission.

Manley dismisses suggestions that he's being used as a political pawn by Harper, saying he feels a personal duty to both Canada and Afghanistan.

He says he's a Liberal and told party leader Stephane Dion about the appointment before he accepted the position.

Manley has visited Afghanistan twice, most recently last May as a member of CARE Canada's board of directors.

(The Canadian Press)

# INDEX:Defence, International, Justice

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**DATE:** 2007.10.12  
**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 143

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SOUTH RUSTICO, P.E.I. – A Canadian soldier charged in the shooting death of a fellow soldier in Afghanistan last year will face a military trial on charges of manslaughter and negligent performance of duty.

The Canadian Forces National Investigation Service issued a brief statement today saying Master Cpl. Robbie Fraser will have to face trial on charges relating to the death of Master Cpl. Jeff Walsh during a patrol on an Afghan highway on Aug. 9, 2006.

The accused man's father says he is bitterly disappointed with the decision.

Kevin Fraser of Prince Edward Island says he has not yet been able to speak with his son, who has been away on a training course.

He says the shooting was accidental and neither his family nor the Walsh family wanted charges to be pursued.

The two soldiers were reportedly travelling in the cramped confines of a G-wagon armoured vehicle on a bumpy road when the fatal shooting occurred.

(The Canadian Press)

# INDEX:Defence, Politics, Social

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**DATE:** 2007.10.12  
**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE POLITICS SOCIAL  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 116

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OROMOCTO, N.B. – More than 650 Canadian soldiers who served in Afghanistan will get an official welcome home today at Canadian Forces Base Gagetown in New Brunswick.

Many of the soldiers have been home for more than two months, but officials at the base and the local communities decided they wanted to do more for their local heroes.

Defence Minister Peter MacKay and Lt.-Gen. Andrew Leslie, the chief of the land staff, will present medals to the soldiers during a ceremony this morning.

The Second Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment Group will also be honoured with the General Campaign Star.

The Gagetown soldiers were among nearly 2,500 Canadian troops that completed a six-month deployment to Afghanistan in August.

Families and friends have been invited to the base to watch the ceremony, which will include some live entertainment.

(The Canadian Press)

# Afghan–Marines–Shooting

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**DATE:** 2007.10.12  
**KEYWORDS:** INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE JUSTICE  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 108

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RALEIGH, North Carolina -- The U–S marines plan to use a rare legal tribunal to investigate exactly what happened when troops in Afghanistan opened fire and killed as many as 19 civilians.

The last time an investigation like this took place was in 1956.

The court of inquiry will convene at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, to look into the March shooting.

The top marine officer at the U–S Central Command will appoint the members of the court.

Lieutenant General James Mattis will review the panel's findings before deciding whether criminal charges should be filed.

Afghanistan's Independent Human Rights Commission has said the shootings happened along a 16–kilometre stretch of road after a minivan laden with explosives rammed a convoy.

Witnesses told the commission the marines fired indiscriminately at civilian cars and pedestrians.

(The Associated Press)

LAK



# Harper–Afghanistan–Committee–Update (adds Dion, Layton, Duceppe)

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**DATE:** 2007.10.12  
**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 146

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OTTAWA \_ The decision to appoint a blue-ribbon panel to look at Canada's future course in Afghanistan is getting mixed reviews from the opposition.

Liberal Leader Stephane Dion, speaking in Toronto, said he's worried the Conservative minority government will use it to duck any further debate in the Commons about the country's mission.

But he says an independent panel will bring some clarity to the issue which has divided the country.

N–D–P Leader Jack Layton completely rejected the panel, which will be headed by former Liberal foreign affairs minister John Manley.

He suspects it will be bias in favour of Harper's position, which has leaned towards the continuation of the existing mission.

Harper says the panel will consider four options, including shifting troops to another region, switching from a combat to a reconstruction mission or withdrawing most troops.

The prime minister says he wants an open and non-partisan debate about the Afghan mission.

Bloc Quebecois Leader Gilles Duceppe says the panel is a waste of time and it's the Conservatives way of trying to avoid debate.

(The Canadian Press)

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# Harper names review panel to look at future of Afghanistan mission

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**DATE:** 2007.10.12

**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

**PUBLICATION:** bnw

**WORD COUNT:** 116

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OTTAWA – Prime Minister Stephen Harper has formally appointed former Liberal cabinet minister John Manley to a five-member panel which will look at the future of Canada's Afghanistan mission.

Harper says the group will offer a non-partisan recommendation on what should be done once Canada's present commitment to the NATO mission expires in February 2009.

Opposition parties have all attacked the government on the issue, demanding an end to Canada's combat commitment.

The other panel members are: Pamela Wallin, a veteran broadcaster and former consul-general in New York; Derek Burney, former ambassador to Washington and one-time chief of staff to Brian Mulroney; Paul Tellier, former clerk of the privy council; and Jake Epp, a former Mulroney cabinet minister.

(The Canadian Press)

# Germany approves extension of Afghan deployment of 3,000 troops

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**DATE:** 2007.10.12  
**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL  
**PUBLICATION:** bnw  
**WORD COUNT:** 167

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BERLIN – Germany's lower house of parliament has overwhelmingly approved extending the deployment of 3,000 troops and six reconnaissance jets in Afghanistan for another year in the face of mounting public skepticism about the mission.

The vote in the 613-seat parliament today – 454 to 79 with 48 abstentions – was the final step needed to extend the mission.

Opinion polls show most Germans want the troops to come home, after attacks on German forces and kidnappings of German citizens there.

But Chancellor Angela Merkel has argued forcefully for staying the course, saying Germany must not 'leave Afghanistan in the hands of the terrorists.'

Most of the 2,800 German ground troops are in the quieter north of the country as part of the International Security Assistance Force, or ISAF. Germany has resisted any suggestion they should take part in the heavier fighting in the south of the country.

Most of Canada's 2,500 troops in Afghanistan are based in the volatile southern province of Kandahar. There has been fierce debate over whether Canada should extend its combat mission there past February 2009.

(The Associated Press)

# INDEX:Defence, International, Justice, Politics

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**DATE:** 2007.10.12

**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE POLITICS

**PUBLICATION:** bnw

**WORD COUNT:** 121

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COBOURG, Ont. – Police say some signs dedicated to the memory of fallen Canadian soldiers have been stolen from the Highway of Heroes, a renamed stretch of Highway 401 in eastern Ontario.

Provincial police say the missing signs were taken from exit ramps on the highway between Trenton and east-end Toronto.

Police spokesman Doug Orton says he doesn't know how many signs have been stolen, but called the thefts despicable.

The 170-kilometre stretch of highway was officially renamed in August by the Ontario government as a tribute to soldiers who have died in Afghanistan.

Hearses carrying the flag-draped coffins of fallen soldiers travel from CFB Trenton, where the bodies are repatriated to Canadian soil, to a forensics centre in Toronto.

The name change was prompted by an electronic petition to officially rename that stretch of highway. (CHUC)

(The Canadian Press)

# Soldier charged with manslaughter court-martialed

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**IDNUMBER** 200710130012  
**PUBLICATION:** Times Colonist (Victoria)  
**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A5  
**DATELINE:** REGINA  
**SOURCE:** CanWest News Service  
**WORD COUNT:** 131

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The father of a Regina soldier killed in Afghanistan remains anxious for answers in his son's death, as news broke yesterday that a fellow soldier charged with manslaughter is headed for a military trial.

Charges of manslaughter and negligently performing a military duty laid against Master Cpl. Robbie Fraser will proceed to a court martial at the first available date, said the Canadian Forces Director of Military Prosecutions.

The charges stem from the death of 33-year-old Master Cpl. Jeffrey Scott Walsh, who was shot while on routine patrol near Kandahar on Aug. 9 last year. The shot came from inside the armoured military vehicle in which Walsh and Fraser were travelling. Some media reports have suggested they were on a bumpy road at the time.

# PM names review panel in effort to defuse Afghan issue

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**IDNUMBER** 200710130017  
**PUBLICATION:** Vancouver Sun  
**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A9  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Colour Photo: Finbarr O'Reilly, Reuters / Canadian soldiers from the NATO-led coalition are enveloped in a dust cloud created by a helicopter lifting off from Ma'sum Ghar camp in Kandahar province, southern Afghanistan on Friday. ;  
**KEYWORDS:** POLITICIANS; POLITICAL PARTIES; GOVERNMENT; CANADA  
**DATELINE:** OTTAWA  
**BYLINE:** Andrew Mayeda and Juliet O'Neill  
**SOURCE:** CanWest News Service, with files from Reuters  
**WORD COUNT:** 464

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OTTAWA — Prime Minister Stephen Harper took a step toward defusing an election-triggering showdown over Afghanistan Friday. He appointed a non-partisan panel, chaired by former Liberal cabinet minister John Manley, to review Canada's role in the war.

The panel will advise Parliament on what to do after the deployment expires in February 2009, a question that has caused vicious sniping among the federal parties.

But Harper struck a more statesmanlike pose, calling for a "full, open and informed" debate on Canada's options.

"This is not an easy question," Harper said. "I think we would all be well advised to take a deep breath and to take a look at the facts before we rush to judgment."

The appointment of Manley will be seen by some as a strategic coup for Harper and a sign of division within party ranks. But it could also be an unexpected boon for the Liberals, allowing time to resolve party infighting.

Dion cautiously welcomed the panel's participation, although he warned that it shouldn't be used as "a pretext to postpone the clarity we need on the combat mission."

But other party leaders remained suspicious of Harper's motives.

NDP Leader Jack Layton suggested the panel would undermine the role of MPs, who were elected to make decisions about government policies.

"It's a delay tactic with a partisan edge," said Layton. "The House of Commons should be the place where these discussions happen."

Bloc Quebecois Leader Gilles Duceppe continued to demand that the government clarify in the upcoming speech that the mission will end in February 2009. "Harper wants to gain time and to create a problem for the

Liberals," he said in an interview.

The government will deliver its throne speech on Tuesday, laying out its priorities for the new parliamentary session and is considered a matter of confidence in the government. Harper stoked speculation last week that he will try to force a fall vote.

A recent rise in popular support should embolden the Conservatives. The party has surged to 40 per cent in popular support — its highest level in months — compared with 28 per cent for the Liberals, according to an Ipsos-Reid poll for CanWest News Service and Global National, released Friday.

Should Harper decide not to push the envelope, the panel gives him a safety valve, allowing him to argue that his government is awaiting independent advice. The panel will report back to Parliament before the end of January.

Manley will be joined on the panel by Derek Burney, former Canadian ambassador to the U.S. and chief of staff to Brian Mulroney; former Privy Council clerk and Bombardier CEO Paul Tellier; former PC cabinet minister Jake Epp, and Pamela Wallin, former broadcaster and consul general in New York.

The panel's mandate appears to confirm that Canada's present mission in Afghanistan is in question. The panel will focus on four options:

- Continue training the Afghan army and police so Canada can begin withdrawing its forces in February 2009;
- Focus on reconstruction and have forces from another country take over security in the volatile southern province of Kandahar;
- Shift Canadian security and reconstruction to another region in Afghanistan; or
- Withdraw all Canadian military except a minimal force to protect aid workers and diplomats.

# A shrewd manoeuvre by Harper

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**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Star  
**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
**EDITION:** Ont  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A21  
**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation  
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Ottawa Point, set, and maybe even match to Stephen Harper. With the single stroke of recruiting Liberal John Manley to help rescue Conservatives from Afghanistan, the Prime Minister is protecting his party from voter backlash in a looming fall election and putting knee-buckling pressure on Stephane Dion.

This is how politics is played when it's played shrewdly. Days before Tuesday's throne speech, Harper is neutralizing the combat mission as a ballot issue while steering the country toward the consensus Conservatives favour on a continuing Afghanistan role.

What Jean Chretien's former deputy prime minister gives Harper is political cover and policy consistency. Attacking recommendations from a Liberal with better credentials than his own won't be easy for Dion. Better still for Harper, there's no risk this handpicked panel will tell Canadians anything he doesn't want them to hear.

Manley's views are known: Afghanistan helps define Canada internationally and shouldn't be easily abandoned. Equally important for Harper, Manley sees policy priorities through the U.S. prism. His ministerial resume lists foreign affairs, finance and 9/11 security czar, responsibilities that require finessing Ottawa's hypersensitive relationship with Washington.

Weaving those two strands into a single thread is striking new evidence that successive Liberal governments were more concerned with healing Bush administration wounds than curing Afghanistan's terrorism virus or building democracy. In a riveting new book, Janice Gross Stein, the University of Toronto's wise international thinker, and Ottawa policy insider Eugene Lang document how Canada slipped unwittingly into a war in a country it knew nothing about.

What Stein and Lang detail in *The Unexpected War* – and what voters need to know to fully appreciate Manley's appointment – is that Afghanistan was Canada's way of saying "yes" to the U.S. after saying "no" to joining the Iraq invasion and ballistic missile defence.

Understanding Canada's motivation then is vital to reaching an informed choice on what Canada should do in 2009 when the Kandahar mission ends. One of the two annoying realities Harper expects Manley to help manage is that Ottawa is mired in a counter-insurgency it didn't anticipate, wasn't prepared to fight and now can't escape without damaging NATO as well as cross-border relations.

The other reality is that Harper wants Canada to stay for many of the same U. S.-centric reasons that persuaded Chretien and Paul Martin that it was in Canada's overarching interest to join the most dangerous and expensive offshore operation in generations. Harper's problem is the gaping disconnect between those reasons and how a reconstruction mission that turned into a war is being marketed to a polarized country with a minority government that could fall next week, month or year.



So Harper is doing what successful politicians always do: He's buying time while prepping the country for a foregone conclusion. By the time Manley reports in January the election may be over and, even if not, his findings will only make it easier for the Prime Minister to argue for a continuing, if modified, Afghanistan presence.

That's cynically intended to mute any meaningful election debate on why Canadians are dying in Afghanistan and what their deaths can reasonably achieve. But, as Stein and Lang write, politicians have never been straight with voters about a war that took Ottawa by surprise while it was pleasing Washington.

James Travers' national affairs column appears Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

# Key Liberal once again confounds colleagues; Former cabinet minister's career studded with gaffes

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**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Star  
**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
**EDITION:** Ont  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A21  
**BYLINE:** Les Whittington  
**SOURCE:** Toronto Star  
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**WORD COUNT:** 537

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## OTTAWA

Never predictable, often controversial, John Manley has again confounded his fellow Liberals by accepting an appointment from Prime Minister Stephen Harper to head a bipartisan panel to review the future of Canada's military mission in Afghanistan.

As a Liberal cabinet minister during the Chretien years, Manley, 57, was anything but a smooth operator, and he appeared very ill at ease yesterday as he stood with Harper explaining that he had spent hours wondering if the Conservatives were using him as a political pawn.

Insiders said Manley feels he should put his experience on the international stage to good use. He served as Liberal foreign affairs minister from 2000 to 2002 and has visited Afghanistan twice, most recently as a director of the aid group CARE Canada.

As has happened in the past, Manley's move had Liberals shaking their heads. This was a man, after all, who chose to return to private law practice rather than accept former prime minister Paul Martin's offer of the coveted post of Canadian ambassador to Washington.

Liberal Leader Stephane Dion publicly welcomed Manley's attempt to contribute to the divisive Afghanistan debate, but was privately fuming over what many Liberals saw as a betrayal that would help Harper build a case for prolonging the Afghan military mission contrary to the wishes of all three opposition parties.

"It seems to be a pretty dangerous game," said Scarborough-Guildwood MP John McKay. "It's seems like a variation on the Wajid Khan exercise." Khan, a Liberal MP, sparked anger in his caucus when he accepted a role from Harper as an adviser on the Middle East. Khan (Mississauga-Streetsville) later switched to the Tories.

McKay said Manley's move wasn't that surprising for those who know him. "John speaks his mind. It doesn't always line up with the ideological or political realities of the day."

Manley's decade in the Liberal cabinet was studded with gaffes and curious episodes.

One of the best known came in 2000, when in the face of fierce public criticism, he was forced to reverse a planned bailout for Canadian National Hockey League teams. That was compounded a few years later when it emerged that he discussed the then-near-bankrupt Ottawa Senators' financial woes with one of the team's creditors.

In 2002, Manley set off an uproar by repeating his preference for scrapping the monarchy the very day the Queen touched down in Canada for a Royal visit.

In 2003, he stirred controversy by saying during the Liberal leadership campaign that former cabinet minister Sheila Copps wasn't being taken seriously by "anyone" as a leadership contender.

And he annoyed many in his own party by saying that Canadians who were worried about United States domination "need to grow up."

In fact, Manley has often seemed more in tune with the Americans than many of his Liberal colleagues. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in the United States in 2001, he worked closely with U.S. officials in the rapid push to upgrade continental security – an effort that won him TIME Canada magazine's "Newsmaker of the Year" title.

And those who believe Harper designed the Afghanistan panel to buttress his intention to keep troops in Afghanistan beyond the current 2009 deadline may find support for that view in Manley's public position on the war there.

In a recent article in the journal Policy Options, Manley writes that in Afghanistan there is "no possible way to separate the development or humanitarian mission from the military one."

# Dion promises to cut taxes; After election–style address, Liberal leader dodges questions about throne speech tactics

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**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Star

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**EDITION:** Ont

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** A23

**ILLUSTRATION:** Tony Bock toronto star Janine Kriebler applauds her husband, LiberalLeader Stephane Dion, after his speech to The Economic Club of Toronto at the Delta Chelsea Inn yesterday. ;

**BYLINE:** Linda Diebel

**SOURCE:** Toronto Star

**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation

**WORD COUNT:** 410

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Federal Liberal Leader Stephane Dion yesterday gave an election–style speech in Toronto, promising to cut corporate taxes and accusing the Conservative government of ignoring poverty in Canada.

He said next week's Speech from the Throne "must include" a plan to fight poverty, adding: "I tell you, it will be at the heart of a Liberal agenda."

But later, Dion dodged questions about whether his caucus would vote against the throne speech if Prime Minister Stephen Harper ignores the Liberal list of priorities.

In his speech to the Economic Club of Toronto, Dion accused Harper of forgetting about Canada's "weakest and most vulnerable," asserting that poverty today is "a reality that mocks the prosperity known by most of our people."

More than a million children live in poverty, he said, and "we cannot waste a generation."

Further, more than half a million seniors are poor and the "men and women who build this country deserve better."

While a business crowd of about 400 applauded his remarks, they saved their cheers for his pledge to lower the corporate tax rate from the current 18.5 per cent, if elected prime minister.

"The world does not owe Canada a living. For a richer, fairer, greener Canada, we need to create a Canadian corporate advantage," Dion said, speaking amidst buzz of a potential fall election.

"We need a more competitive Canada," he concluded to a standing ovation.

The Liberal leader, relaxed and joking, told his audience he doesn't think they want a fall election.

"Three federal elections in three and a half years, on top of all the provincial elections ... would be unreasonable."

Dion promises to cut taxes; After election–style address, Liberal leader dodges questions about throne speech tactics 100

Dion said he hopes Harper will present "a reasonable" throne speech "befitting a minority government."

In a scrum following his speech, Dion defined reasonable as meeting four Liberal priorities: fighting poverty; clarifying the Canadian role in Afghanistan; and setting strong economic and environmental policy. He said Harper's announcement yesterday of a special panel to study Canada's role "should not stop the Conservatives from informing NATO that our combat mission on Kandahar will end in February 2009."

Pressed on how his caucus will vote on measures in the throne speech, Dion would say only he will have to study it.

He declined to say what the new corporate tax rate might be, noting he's saving that announcement for an election campaign. Canada's rate is already some 20-points lower than in the U.S., where the corporate tax rate stands at 39 per cent.

The presence of Dion's wife, Janine Kriber, and several Liberal MPs from the GTA added to the event's election feel.

"Some would say that a cut in corporate taxes is a right-wing policy," he said. "I'm sure my friend (NDP Leader) Jack Layton will say this." But, he continued, "to believe this is to believe that Sweden, with its low corporate tax rate, is a hot bed of neo-conservatism, while the United States, with its very high corporate taxes, is a socialist paradise."

# Naming of Manley sparks controversy; Senior Liberal the focus of criticism that Harper is trying to delay debate on Afghanistan mission

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**IDNUMBER** 200710130195  
**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Star  
**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
**EDITION:** Ont  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A21  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Chris Wattie Reuters Prime Minister Stephen Harper and former Liberal minister John Manley arrive on Parliament Hill yesterday. ;  
**BYLINE:** bruce campion-smith and allan woods  
**SOURCE:** Toronto Star  
**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation  
**WORD COUNT:** 628

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Canada's role in Afghanistan is too important to be caught up in political games in Ottawa, former Liberal cabinet minister John Manley says.

But the former deputy prime minister yesterday found himself at the centre of a canny political move crafted by Prime Minister Stephen Harper to defuse opposition criticism and put off a divisive public debate about Canada's future in Kandahar. In a surprise move, Harper announced that Manley would head a five-member panel of high-profile Canadians to recommend a future role for the Kandahar mission when the current commitment expires in February, 2009.

"What the government wants to do is make sure we have a rational and considered debate about all of the facts and all of the implications," Harper said. "This is not an easy question.

"I think we would all be well advised to take a deep breath and to take a look at the facts before we rush to judgment."

But critics view the panel as a delaying tactic to put off the thorny issue until after a possible fall federal election.

"I've been around Ottawa long enough to know that when there's an important issue and a party wants to get around it, they create a committee," said Bloc Quebecois Leader Gilles Duceppe.

Harper has asked the panel to report by the end of January. He said all options are on the table, but he asked the panel to consider four specific scenarios for Canada's future in Afghanistan:

Continue training the Afghan army and police so Canada can begin withdrawing its forces in February 2009.

Focus on reconstruction and have forces from another country take over security in Kandahar.

Shift Canadian security and reconstruction effort to another region in Afghanistan.

Withdraw all Canadian military except a minimal force to protect aid workers and diplomats.

Naming of Manley sparks controversy; Senior Liberal the focus of criticism that Harper is trying to delay debate

The other panel members are: Derek Burney, former Canadian ambassador in Washington; broadcaster Pamela Wallin, who served as consul-general in New York; Paul Tellier, former clerk of the privy council and Jake Epp, a former Mulroney cabinet minister.

Harper pledged to take the recommendations "seriously," but said the choices must "respect" the sacrifices Canadians have made already in Afghanistan. "We have made considerable progress in improving the lives of the Afghan people at great expense to our troops and our treasury."

He also noted that Parliament will still vote on the mission's future.

Manley, who twice yesterday made mention of the fact he was a Liberal, admits he thought hard about accepting the post, wondering whether Harper's offer was a genuine effort to take a serious, non-partisan look at the future of the Afghan mission.

In the end, he said he decided that the question of what Canada does next in the war-torn country "really transcends partisan politics."

"It's an issue for our country and when called upon to serve it's not only an honour for me, but it's my responsibility to do so to the best of my ability," Manley said.

Publicly, Liberals, who are demanding an end to the combat mission, put a brave face on Harper's political coup. Though there were grumblings that Manley had sold his party short, Liberal Leader Stephane Dion said Manley will "moderate the views" of the panel.

Dion said that while he does not oppose the Afghan study group, he sees no reason why a debate in Parliament should be delayed until the panel completes its work. "It should not be a pretext for the government to postpone the clarity we need about the length of the combat mission," he said in Toronto.

Manley, who has twice visited Afghanistan, said he's been deeply touched by the humanitarian needs there and suggested Canada should not withdraw prematurely.

"Afghanistan represents an enormous opportunity for Canada to play a meaningful role in a globally significant arena. But it also represents an enormous challenge to our resources and our capabilities," he said. "And Canadians rightfully ask whether our sacrifices are making a lasting difference."

Manley said yesterday that he hopes Dion is open to hearing the panel's advice on an "appropriate role" for Canada in Afghanistan.

Duceppe said the Bloc will bring a motion at the foreign affairs committee for MPs to conduct their own study of Canada's role in the country post-2009.

NDP Leader Jack Layton said the decision to appoint a panel rather than leave the study to MPs, is "another example of Mr. Harper's disrespect for elected representatives."

The federal New Democrats have demanded an immediate withdrawal of the troops.

Naming of Manley sparks controversy; Senior Liberal the focus of criticism that Harper is trying to delay debate

# When will Harper speak out for Burma?

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Protest leader dies in detention

Oct. 11

I find it a huge embarrassment that Prime Minister Stephen Harper hasn't gone on record to state that the human rights abuses presently taking place in Burma are utterly unacceptable.

Not only has their democratically elected leader been under house arrest for more than a decade, not only were peaceful protests broken up viciously by the generals' armed forces, not only has at least one prisoner been tortured to death, but the crackdown on the population is getting stronger daily.

Just how many human rights is this Prime Minister willing to overlook if they don't happen to be in Afghanistan?

Fiona Hammond–Vincent, Ottawa



# Security is Job One in Kandahar; In a country where insurgents strike at random, the challenge of covering your flank dwarfs virtually every other military activity

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**IDNUMBER** 200710130169  
**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Star  
**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
**EDITION:** Met  
**SECTION:** World And Comment  
**PAGE:** AA01  
**ILLUSTRATION:** BRUCE CAMPION–SMITH toronto star A battle–ready soldier from theRoyal 22nd Regiment keeps watch as members of the Provincial Reconstruction Team meet with Afghan shopkeepers during a patrol in Bazar–E–Panjwaii. FINBARR O'REILLY REUTERS A Canadian soldier keeps a sharp eye while on sentry duty at Ma'sum Ghar camp in Kandahar province. FINBARR O'REILLY REUTERS A Canadian soldier keeps a sharp eye while on sentry duty at Ma'sum Ghar camp in Kandahar province. ;  
**BYLINE:** Bruce Campion–Smith  
**SOURCE:** Toronto Star  
**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation  
**WORD COUNT:** 1127

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The sharp crack of a rifle shot breaks the mid–morning quiet and stops Capt. Michel Larocque in mid–sentence as he chats with the headmaster of the school in a Panjwaii district town.

Up the street, a Canadian soldier has fired a warning shot at an Afghan driver who refused his commands to stop. The single shot – and its implied threat of more serious shooting to come – does the trick. The car stops in its tracks

"They are my security," Larocque says, referring to the cordon of troops around him.

On his stroll through the town of Bazar–E–Panjwaii, Larocque, a member of Canada's provincial reconstruction team, is the man in the bubble. Like a prime minister or president, he moves nowhere without a ring of security, in this case provided by soldiers from the Royal 22nd Regiment, the Van Doos.

The soldiers have taken over the street, ahead of and behind Larocque, stopping traffic, watching pedestrians, scanning rooftops for any threats.

Troops in Afghanistan, including Canadians, do more than just chase insurgents and keep the peace. A huge amount of military resources goes into just protecting what they're got on the ground, from camps to convoys.

In a country where there is no true frontline and insurgents strike at random, the challenge of "force protection" – covering your flank – dwarfs virtually every other military activity on the ground.

The daily task of ensuring security makes life complicated; a commander's trip across town for a hour–long meeting becomes a full–fledged combat patrol, with a convoy of armoured vehicles and a squad of troops and their firepower should things go sour.

Security is Job One in Kandahar; In a country where insurgents strike at random, the challenge of covering your

At forward operating bases, set in the middle of areas where insurgents are active, "force protection" is even more important. Troops sleep in revetments dug into the soil and tall, earth-filled containers serve as walls.

The importance of force protection was driven home last fall when the provincial reconstruction team lost its security detail, because troops were redeployed to take part in a big offensive against insurgents.

It crippled the team's ability to go out and do development work.

That changed when a sizeable contingent of Van Doos were assigned to act as bodyguards for the members of the reconstruction team, protecting their base in Kandahar City and accompanying them on outings.

"I can't imagine doing without them. They are an integral part of the PRT," said Lt.-Col. Bob Chamberlain, commander of the reconstruction team.

Maj. Jason Langelier heads the regiment attached to the PRT and says his squad's job is to give the team "freedom of movement and security.

"A lot of force protection is all based on good battle procedure, good threat analysis and vigilance with regard to threat indicators," he said.

"It requires a lot of situational awareness and judgment. They're always working in the grey zone, in close proximity to population, close proximity to vehicles.

"No matter how secure you may feel you still have to be on your game day every time you go out."

"Rocket, rocket, rocket." The urgent radio call sends British troops scrambling. Insurgents have fired one, possibly two rockets at the sprawling international military base at the Kandahar airfield.

A squad, on a night patrol north of the airfield, where more than 1,000 Canadian troops shelter in this supposedly impregnable military base, have been dispatched to root out the attackers.

As the soldiers close in on the area, flares are launched into the air, casting the surrounding grape fields and mud-walled compounds in harsh relief.

Searchlights stab at the darkness as the soldiers begin a laborious – and dangerous – search for the insurgents on foot.

"We got reports of two rockets fired," says Cpl. Mel Messenger, of the 15 Squadron, Royal Air Force Regiment, as he readies his gear for the ground search.

The troops plunge through grape fields and over mud walls in their pursuit. But apart from some local Afghans smoking pot in a grape-drying hut, their search comes up empty. The insurgents have fired and fled into the darkness.

These British troops, members of the RAF Regiment, are part of an international coalition of soldiers that handle the defence of the Kandahar base, responsible for keeping the airfield and its more than 9,000 occupants – from Canada and other coalition countries – safe from all kinds of attack.

But of all the coalition troops, the RAF Regiment is unique – they actually go outside the wire to hunt down insurgents and ensure a vast area around the base – some 400 square kilometres – is kept secure.

"The regiment does all the work outside the wire to provide a bigger buffer. ... We're operating amongst

Security is Job One in Kandahar; In a country where insurgents strike at random, the challenge of covering y

enemy lines. We just don't know who the enemy is," said Flight-Lieut. Joe Duhan, deputy commander of 15 Squadron.

Patrolling such a vast area is essential to security, said Wing Commander Mark Wheeler, who heads the 7th Royal Air Force force protection wing and serves as the airfield's deputy commander in charge of the base's defence.

"My mission requires us to dominate the ground beyond the establishment because the threats to the establishment emanate from outside the wire as well as clearly inside the wire," he said.

One goal is to deter what the military calls "indirect fire attacks" – mortars and rockets lobbed at the base by insurgents from as much as five kilometres away. As well, Wheeler says the British troops have to "deny" attackers the ability to fire a surface-to-air missile at departing and arriving aircraft.

But while the British troops have scored some successes in deterring rocket attacks, they've found themselves in the crosshairs as insurgents plant roadside bombs to target their patrols. A British soldier and an Afghan interpreter were killed in late August when their jeep hit a buried bomb.

Think of Capt. Yvon Voyer and his group of Canadian reservists as sentries at a busy border crossing. But rather than intercepting illicit cartons of cigarettes or one too many bottles of booze, Voyer's team is trying to stop a far more dangerous cargo from being smuggled onto the base: bombs and weapons.

Voyer and other soldiers staff the main gate at the Kandahar airfield. It's a job that requires them to screen and search up to 2,000 visitors a day – Afghans who work on the base – as well as upwards of 300 vehicles, usually trucks laden with cargo.

"We have different measures in order to ensure there aren't any type of explosives that come on base. We have explosive sniffing dogs that verify vehicles coming in. We have physical searches," Voyer said.

The local workers line up soon after dawn, waiting their turn to be processed. Cellphones are confiscated, visitors are searched.

The workers are searched on the way out too, to ensure they haven't taken batteries, wiring or anything else that could be used to make a bomb.

But soldiers also check to make sure sensitive documents or drawings of the layout of the base that could assist an attack aren't being smuggled out.

It's all part of what Wheeler calls the "layered" defence of the airfield.

"We dominate the ground outside ... the next layer in the defence is the perimeter security," he said.

That includes rows of fencing, sensors and watchtowers, carefully placed to ensure "crossing arcs of fire if we need to engage an enemy coming close in," Wheeler said.

He said insurgents are always watching the base and its entry gates, looking for any weakness they might be able to exploit.

"We can't afford to take any chances so every individual is considered to be a threat until it's proved to the contrary," Wheeler said.

That's why the Canadians, responsible for screening everyone who comes on the base, are the "very first line

Security is Job One in Kandahar; In a country where insurgents strike at random, the challenge of covering y

of defence.

And it's dangerous work, too, with the "daily" threat of a suicide bomb, he said. "It's hugely busy. People back in Canada need to realize the good job these guys are doing."

# Germany stays in Afghanistan

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**BYLINE:** David McHugh  
**SOURCE:** ASSOCIATED PRESS  
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The German government has won a crucial parliamentary vote to keep its troops in Afghanistan for another year, despite polls indicating a majority of Germans want them to come home.

The lower house yesterday approved extension of the military force by a convincing margin, 453–79, with 48 members abstaining. The vote allows the German military to keep as many as 3,500 troops and six Tornado reconnaissance jets in Afghanistan, as part of a larger NATO force of roughly 41,000 there.

The proposal was expected to pass, but the sizable margin of victory was a powerful signal of the government's ability to sustain the Afghan mission even in the face of strong opposition.

At the same time, it was largely a status–quo vote and does not expand the mission.

NATO allies have privately pressed Germany to allow its troops to be sent into southern Afghanistan to take part in heavier fighting there.

"It's a relief to the Dutch, to the Canadians, to everyone who has troops on the ground," said Julianne Smith, director of the Europe program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

"Nobody wants to take the blame for being the first country to roll back its commitment and start talking about the evil two words: exit strategy."

New York Times

# Dutch gird reluctantly for renewal of Afghan mission

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**IDNUMBER** 200710130163  
**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Star  
**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
**EDITION:** Met  
**SECTION:** World And Comment  
**PAGE:** AA01  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Hennie Keeris AFP getty images file photo The remains of a F-16pilot who crashed in Afghanistan, one of 11 Dutch casualties in the Afghan mission, arrive home in the Netherlands last year. ;  
**BYLINE:** Mitch Potter  
**SOURCE:** Toronto Star  
**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation  
**WORD COUNT:** 1376

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THE HAGUE, Netherlands

Canadians would do well to watch closely as Holland juggles the hot political potato of whether or not to withdraw from Afghanistan. Because the scalding question, according to Dutch military and political insiders, will soon be burning holes in Ottawa's lap.

Although it is not yet official, it is now clear the Dutch cabinet is girding reluctantly for the renewal of its controversial military deployment to fractious southern Afghanistan. The decision is expected to be made public later this month, sources tell the Toronto Star, despite the widespread misgivings of the Dutch public, only 30 per cent of whom favour the extension.

The final formula for renewal remains unclear, as Dutch politicians scramble to claim at least symbolic support from NATO allies thus far unwilling to tread the increasingly dangerous Uruzgan sector. But an extension is taking shape – and once the decision is made, Canada is expected to begin feeling the full intensity of international pressure the Netherlands has withstood these past months.

"The Dutch are going to buy time," said Sico van der Meer, a security expert at the Netherlands Institute for International Relations.

"They will perhaps be able to announce a slight reduction in troops, something symbolic from Australia or Slovakia. But we are looking at continuing in Afghanistan for another year with most of the troops we have there, much to the disappointment of the general public, where the main question is, 'Is this a mission impossible?'"

At face value, the Dutch extension will come as welcome news to Canadian soldiers slogging it out in neighbouring Kandahar province, where misery clearly loves the hard-to-find company of NATO compatriots.

But the underlying political connotations of the decision mean that the hot potato will bounce eventually to Ottawa, where judgments will be made on what to do when the present Canadian mission comes up for renewal.

The passing of the geostrategic buck to Canada is pure coincidence, Dutch military experts say, especially considering Canadian soldiers have proven themselves a rare and reliable partner in Kandahar.

Dutch analysts are mindful that Canada's casualty count, at 71 dead, far exceeds the 11 the Netherlands has lost. They are mindful too that beneath Dutch soil are the graves of the nearly 4,000 Canadian soldiers who died liberating the Netherlands from Nazi occupation in the waning months of World War II.

But in the end, Dutch pragmatism will prevail, assessing the moral and political price of pulling its finger from the Afghan dike as altogether too high. For now, at least.

"The Netherlands is in the very unlucky position of being the first that must take the decision on whether or not to extend. And the agony of that is that we realize the question is bigger than Afghanistan itself," said Frank van Kappen, a senior analyst with the Hague Centre for Strategic Studies and a security consultant to NATO.

"The fear, the worry, is that the country that is first to walk away will become the scapegoat, with a huge mark on the debit side. Because if Holland leaves, it could trigger a process where Canada pulls out, and then Australia pulls out. And then, in the void, basically NATO fails. And if NATO fails, the United Nations fails," he said.

"Those are the stakes, because we are not talking just about Afghanistan but also about the model for conflicts to come. If this mission fails, you damage the capacity of the international community to deal with the future because the only instruments we have will be seen to have failed."

Van Kappen spoke with surprising candour about the depth of Holland's disappointment with its NATO partners. The Dutch undertook the difficult mission in Uruzgan province under the firm proviso that replacements would come at the two-year mark.

"You have all kinds of countries lining up to be in northern Afghanistan, where their soldiers will hand out oranges and schoolbooks and spare tires," he said.

"Only a few are willing to stick out their necks, politically, militarily, morally, to really take risks in the south. I'm proud of my country for taking this most dangerous role, just as Canada, Britain and Australia have done. But now we have doubts about NATO solidarity. We were counting on it and it doesn't appear to be there."

On many levels, the Dutch debate on Afghanistan mirrors the one playing out in Canada.

Both countries have small armed forces whose energies have been almost wholly dedicated to peacekeeping since the 1970s, and the sudden shift to a significantly more aggressive role in Afghanistan has been difficult for many to absorb.

Both governments have had considerable difficulty winning and sustaining public support for a mission so far from home, and so far from achieving its goals.

But there are significant differences, as well. For many in the Netherlands, the angst over Afghanistan awakens the grim emotional debris of Srebrenica, where Dutch peacekeepers stood alone – and eventually, aside – as Serb forces waged a campaign that culminated in the massacre of 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys.

There are many interpretations as to the Dutch role in the 1995 tragedy. For analyst van Kappen, the perspective is that then, and now, NATO allies are conspicuous in their absence just when the Dutch need them most.

"It is a raw nerve for the Dutch. There are so many differences between Afghanistan and Bosnia you can barely begin to count," said van Kappen.

"But perception is more powerful than the truth, and in the Netherlands there is a perception that this underlying lack of solidarity today is a repeat of Srebrenica, where it hurt us very badly."

If the ghosts of Srebrenica followed the Dutch to Uruzgan, they were put to rest five months ago, when Dutch forces, together with fledgling Afghan National Army recruits, stood firm through three days of fierce fighting in the village of Chura, where hundreds of Taliban fighters descended from the mountains to ambush Dutch positions.

The deadly showdown seemed out of character for the Dutch forces, who by then had cultivated a reputation for a softer, more subtle approach to winning over tribal leaders in the region. But Chura proved a bloody turning point.

"Many Dutch look at Chura as a defining moment. It was really the first real battle for our country since Srebrenica and I think some people wondered, 'Can they still fight?'" said Noel van Bommel, who as defence editor for the Dutch daily de Volkskrant has made three reporting trips to Afghanistan.

"I think there was a kind of relief in the Netherlands as people realized they were up to the task. People look at the army and they realize, 'They are just regular Dutch guys. But when they are pushed up against a wall, they can do it.'

"But for many people, the bigger shock is that our soldiers find themselves in a place with so much metal flying through the air. People thought this mission would be about reconstruction. They wonder why it isn't."

Notwithstanding the bloody fight for Chura, Dutch military thinkers say the major debate within army circles here is whether the enemy kill count contributes in any way to the goals of the overall mission.

"The biggest questions today are, 'Are we shooting the right guys?'" said van Kappen.

"Look, the Dutch are not soft. Don't ever make that mistake. Our approach has been to avoid firefights unless someone shoots at us first. We don't go after the locals because we realize it is a formula for losing the trust of the population.

"But in Chura, there was a direct challenge, and the Dutch made a conscious decision to hit back and hit back hard, with everything we had.

"It is the nature of Afghanistan, where you have tribes that have protected their gene pool for 5,000 years by knowing when to switch sides. So, when someone new enters the ring, you have to show at least once that you are able and capable and willing to hit back.

"The amazing thing was that on the last day of the fight in Chura, 200 Afghan militia joined the Dutch side. That was significant because they do not want to join a losing side."

The average Dutchman, however, remains skeptical. When the Star went asking for opinion about Afghanistan on the streets of The Hague and Amsterdam this week, the common response was, "We've done our share – now it is somebody else's turn."

Erik Gerritsen, 45, a municipal worker for the city of Amsterdam, said: "It is a bit of a game of chicken because everyone knows we can't just pull out. Otherwise, what happens to the Afghans we've been working with?"



"But, pragmatically speaking, how much can people expect of a small country like the Netherlands? Show us light at the end of the tunnel and maybe people would feel differently about Afghanistan. But where is the light?"

# Things are better in Afghanistan

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**IDNUMBER** 200710130098  
**PUBLICATION:** Montreal Gazette  
**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Editorial / Op-Ed  
**PAGE:** B6  
**KEYWORDS:** 0  
**SOURCE:** The Gazette  
**WORD COUNT:** 214

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Re: "Kandahar is no place for politics" (Editorial, Oct. 10).

You said that during my recent trip to Afghanistan, I "declared, contrary to the evidence, that insurgent attacks have been declining in number in Kandahar province."

Your readers deserve to know that an August UN security report on Afghanistan notes the Taliban are shifting "from large-scale armed clashes in the field to asymmetric or terror-style attacks."

This shift is occurring for several reasons. As the report notes, one is that "the Afghan National Army has been improving throughout 2007." Another reason explored in the report is the significant degradation of the Taliban command structure, partly in response to the success of international and Afghan security operations, including last year's Operation Medusa and similar subsequent actions.

By dislodging as many Taliban as possible we have helped to reduce the security threat posed by massed Taliban formations to Kandahar City, as well as in the western part of the province.

Despite persistent danger, the changing nature of insurgency attacks points toward a situation that is improving. This is the point I made in my remarks.

As I observed during my visit, Canadians working in the Provincial Reconstruction Team and our diplomats are now better able to help rebuild, in partnership with Afghans and the international community. More development, in turn, leads to improvements in security.

Maxime Bernier

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Ottawa

# Non-partisan panel to weigh Afghan role; PM moves to defuse election issue

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**IDNUMBER** 200710130034

**PUBLICATION:** Montreal Gazette

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** A12

**ILLUSTRATION:** Colour Photo: FINNBARR O'REILLY REUTERS / Canadian soldiers are enveloped in a dust cloud created by a helicopter lifting off from Ma'sum Ghar camp in Kandahar province yesterday. ;

**KEYWORDS:** POLITICIANS; POLITICAL PARTIES; GOVERNMENT; CANADA

**DATELINE:** OTTAWA

**BYLINE:** ANDREW MAYEDA AND JULIET O'NEILL

**SOURCE:** CanWest News Service

**WORD COUNT:** 507

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Prime Minister Stephen Harper took a step toward defusing an election-triggering showdown over Afghanistan yesterday, appointing a non-partisan panel, chaired by former Liberal cabinet minister John Manley, to review Canada's role in the war.

The panel will advise Parliament on how to proceed after the current deployment expires in February 2009, an issue that has caused vicious sniping among the federal parties.

But Harper struck a more statesmanlike pose yesterday, calling for a "full, open and informed" debate on the country's options.

"This is not an easy question," the prime minister said at a news conference to announce the panel. "I think we would all be well advised to take a deep breath and to take a look at the facts before we rush to judgment." The appointment of Manley, once a leading contender to succeed former prime minister Paul Martin as Liberal leader, will be seen by some as a strategic coup for Harper and a sign of division within the ranks of the official opposition party.

But the move could also be an unexpected boon for the Liberals, giving them time to work through recent party infighting under leader Stéphane Dion.

Dion cautiously welcomed the panel's input, although he warned it should not be used as "a pretext to postpone the clarity we need on the combat mission." But other party leaders remained suspicious of the prime minister's motives.

New Democratic leader Jack Layton suggested the panel would undermine the role of MPs, who were elected by Canadians to make decisions about government policies.

"It's a delay tactic with a partisan edge," Layton said. "The House of Commons should be the place where these discussions happen." Bloc Québécois leader Gilles Duceppe did not budge from his demand the government clarify in its coming Throne Speech that the mission will end in February 2009.

"Harper wants to gain time and to create a problem for the Liberals," he said in an interview.

The government will deliver its Speech From the Throne on Tuesday, laying out its priorities for the new parliamentary session. The Throne Speech is considered a matter of confidence in the government, so its defeat in a parliamentary vote would trigger an election.

The prime minister stoked speculation last week he will try to force a fall vote after he challenged the opposition to "fish or cut bait" on the speech.

Should Harper decide not to push the envelope, the panel gives him a safety valve, allowing him to argue his government is awaiting independent advice. The panel will report back to Parliament before the end of January.

The committee's mandate appears to confirm that a continuation of Canada's present mission in Afghanistan is no longer in the cards. The panel has been asked to focus on four options: n Continue training the Afghan army and police so Canada can begin withdrawing its forces in February 2009; n Focus on reconstruction and have forces from another country take over security in the volatile southern province of Kandahar; n Shift Canadian security and reconstruction to another region in Afghanistan; or n Withdraw all Canadian military except a minimal force to protect aid workers and diplomats.

Ottawa Citizen

# Mission under review

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**IDNUMBER** 200710130001  
**PUBLICATION:** Montreal Gazette  
**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A1 / FRONT  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Colour Photo: As Prime Minister Stephen Harper appoints prominent Liberal John Manley to review Canada's role in Afghanistan, NDP leader Jack Layton challenges Stéphane Dion to reject next week's Throne Speech. Details, Page A12 ;  
**KEYWORDS:** 0  
**SOURCE:** The Gazette  
**WORD COUNT:** 4

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NO TEXT

# PM names panel to review Canada's role in Afghanistan; Continuation of current mission not among options on table

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**IDNUMBER** 200710130017

**PUBLICATION:** Edmonton Journal

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** A6

**ILLUSTRATION:** Photo: Reuters / Prime Minister Stephen Harper is seen at a news conference Friday with former Liberal cabinet minister John Manley, who will chair the new review of Canada's Afghan mission. ;

**KEYWORDS:** POLITICIANS; POLITICAL PARTIES; GOVERNMENT; CANADA

**DATELINE:** OTTAWA

**BYLINE:** Andrew Mayeda and Juliet O'Neill, Ottawa Citizen

**SOURCE:** Ottawa Citizen; CanWest News Service; with files from National Post

**WORD COUNT:** 447

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OTTAWA – Prime Minister Stephen Harper has appointed a non-partisan panel, chaired by former Liberal cabinet minister John Manley, to review Canada's role in Afghanistan — and he appeared to rule out a continuation of the current mission.

The panel will advise Parliament on how to proceed after the current deployment ends in February 2009, an issue that has caused vicious sniping among the federal parties.

Harper called for a "full, open and informed" debate on the country's options.

"This is not an easy question," the prime minister said at a news conference to announce the panel. "I think we would all be well-advised to take a deep breath and to take a look at the facts before we rush to judgment."

The panel's mandate appears to confirm that an extension of Canada's current mission is no longer in the cards. It has been asked to focus on four options:

- Continue training the Afghan army and police so Canada can begin withdrawing its forces in February 2009;
- Focus on reconstruction and have forces from another country take over security in the volatile southern province of Kandahar;
- Shift Canadian security and reconstruction to another region in Afghanistan; or
- Withdraw all Canadian military except a minimal force to protect aid workers and diplomats.

The panel will report back to Parliament before the end of January.

Harper suggested Friday the first option represents an extension of the present mission. But Canada is effectively the lead NATO nation in charge of security in Kandahar province, and the military has only recently ramped up training of Afghan security forces.

The panel has been instructed to consider a number of factors, including the "sacrifices Canadians have made to date in Afghanistan, the potential for deterioration in security and development, Canada's obligations to NATO and the United Nations, and the implications for Canada's international reputation."

Manley will be joined on the panel by Derek Burney, former Canadian ambassador to the United States and chief of staff to Brian Mulroney; former Privy Council clerk and Bombardier CEO Paul Tellier; former Progressive Conservative cabinet minister Jake Epp; and Pamela Wallin, former broadcaster and consul general in New York.

Liberal Leader Stephane Dion cautiously welcomed the panel's input, although he warned it should not be used as "a pretext to postpone the clarity we need on the combat mission."

But other party leaders remained suspicious of the prime minister's motives.

NDP Leader Jack Layton suggested the panel would undermine the role of MPs, who were elected by Canadians to make decisions about government policies.

"It's a delay tactic with a partisan edge," Layton said. "The House of Commons should be the place where these discussions happen."

Bloc Quebecois Leader Gilles Duceppe did not budge from his demand that the government clarify in its throne speech on Tuesday that the mission will end in February 2009.

The prime minister stoked speculation last week that he will try to force a fall vote after he challenged the opposition to "fish or cut bait" on the throne speech. Should he decide not to push the envelope, the panel allows him to argue that his government is awaiting independent advice.

# Taliban boast Afghans forced to negotiate

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**IDNUMBER** 200710130010  
**PUBLICATION:** Edmonton Journal  
**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A4  
**COLUMN:** World Digest  
**KEYWORDS:** WAR; TERRORISM; FOREIGN AID; AFGHANISTAN  
**DATELINE:** WASHINGTON  
**SOURCE:** CanWest News Service  
**WORD COUNT:** 128

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WASHINGTON – Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar said on Thursday the Afghan government had been forced to negotiate with his insurgency, as the group called the release this week of five Taliban prisoners a "great victory," according to a U.S.-based monitoring service.

Addressing Muslims as they mark the end of the fasting month of Ramadan, Omar said in an online statement that Afghans were suffering at the hands of "invaders" but that resistance had led the U.S.-backed government to negotiate with the Taliban, the SITE monitoring service said.

"It is the effect of Afghans' jihad (sic) and resistance, who obliged the invaders and coalition to negotiate with Emarate Islami (the Taliban)," said the group's statement in flawed English, relayed by the monitoring service.



# Grit heads war panel Afghan mission transcends politics: Manley

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**SOURCETAG** 0710130329

**PUBLICATION:** The Winnipeg Sun

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** 12

**ILLUSTRATION:** photo by Tom Hanson, the Canadian Press Former Liberal cabinet minister and Deputy Prime Minister John Manley, right, looks on as Prime Minister Stephen Harper announces he'll be the head of a review panel to review Canada's mission in Afghanistan.

**BYLINE:** KATHLEEN HARRIS, NATIONAL BUREAU

**COLUMN:** National Affairs

**WORD COUNT:** 407

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Prime Minister Stephen Harper has tasked a blue-ribbon team to study Canada's future role in Afghanistan — a move hailed as politically shrewd by some but assailed by others as a stalling ploy on the eve of a new session of Parliament.

Former Liberal deputy prime minister John Manley will chair the five-member group of "eminent Canadians" who will begin their task by meeting with troops and development workers on the ground in Kandahar. The panel is expected to report back in February.

## 4 OPTIONS

Harper urged members to keep at top of mind those soldiers who have died while serving in the war zone.

"Whatever future path we choose in Afghanistan, it must respect the sacrifices Canadians have made there," he said.

"We have made considerable progress in improving the lives of the Afghan people at great expense to our troops and our treasury. We must also be cognizant of the risk of a return to chaos in Afghanistan and of the potential regional and international implications."

Joining Manley are former broadcaster and diplomat Pamela Wallin, ex-U.S. ambassador Derek Burney, Montreal business executive Paul Tellier and Jake Epp, a former federal cabinet minister who now chairs a non-profit organization providing medical aid in Afghanistan.

The group will probe four options for the mission: To continue training the Afghan army and police with the goal of creating a self-sufficient, indigenous security force so Canadian troops can begin to withdraw when the current mission expires in February 2009; to focus on reconstruction and let other countries take over Canada's security role; to shift security and reconstruction work to another region in Afghanistan and to withdraw all Canadian military forces after February 2009 except a small contingent to secure remaining aid workers and diplomats.

Harper stressed Parliament will have final say on the fate of the mission, but said the independent advisers

will sap partisanship from the issue.

Insisting he remains a loyal Liberal, Manley said the Afghanistan mission transcends partisan politics.

"It's an issue for our country and when called upon to serve, it's not only an honour for me, but it's my responsibility to do to the best of my ability," he said.

#### DELAY TACTIC

Liberal foreign affairs critic Bob Rae welcomed the panel but said it must not trump open discussions in the House of Commons.

NDP Leader Jack Layton blasted Harper for showing contempt for elected MPs by striking an advisory panel of unelected officials. He took direct aim at Manley's appointment, since he was part of the Liberal cabinet that initially signed Canada up for the mission.

"It's a delay tactic with a partisan edge. It is going to slow down the decision which should be made sooner rather than later if this is the wrong mission for Canada," he said. KEYWORDS=CANADA

# PM does Dion a favour

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**SOURCETAG** 0710130323  
**PUBLICATION:** The Winnipeg Sun  
**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Editorial/Opinion  
**PAGE:** 10  
**BYLINE:** LICIA CORBELLA  
**COLUMN:** Editorial  
**WORD COUNT:** 299

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By striking a Liberal-led, non-partisan panel to explore the future of Canada's military mission in Afghanistan Prime Minister Stephen Harper has provided beleaguered Liberal Leader Stephane Dion with a face-saving option.

Dion — who has waffled on his support of Canada's role in Afghanistan — has repeatedly said he would vote against the Conservative government's Oct. 16 throne speech unless Harper vowed to pull out of the war-torn country when the mission ends in February 2009.

Of course, Dion made that threat before his party's embarrassing showing in three Quebec byelections, internal party questioning of his leadership and his plunging popularity in the polls. Forcing an election now would almost certainly be political suicide for Dion.

Parliamentary pundits have been prognosticating that Harper really wants an election even though he says he doesn't. As is often the case, they are wrong. The establishment of this panel proves that Harper wants to remain PM of this minority government as long as possible.

Withdrawal of the troops is just one of four options open to the panel headed by former Liberal deputy prime minister John Manley.

Other options include shifting the mission to focus on reconstruction in Kandahar rather than security, move the troops to another region of Afghanistan and, to keep training Afghan troops and police to be self-sustaining.

Besides Manley, the other panel members are: Derek Burney, former ambassador to Washington and one-time chief of staff to Brian Mulroney; Jake Epp, a former Mulroney cabinet minister; Paul Tellier, a former clerk of the privy council and Pamela Wallin, a long-time broadcaster and Liberal-appointed former consul-general in New York.

Harper says once the panel reports on the best option, he wants a non-partisan, "full, open and informed" debate in Parliament.

"Whatever future path we choose in Afghanistan, it must respect the sacrifices we have made there" and "the risks of a return to chaos in Afghanistan," said Harper.

By striking this panel Harper has diminished the chance of a fall election and improved the chance for reasonable debate on this vital issue.

# It's really all about us Leaders should be honest on Afghanistan motives

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**SOURCETAG:** 0710130310

**PUBLICATION:** The Winnipeg Sun

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** 5

**ILLUSTRATION:** file photo by Stephen Thorne, the Canadian Press When former prime minister Chretien committed troops to Afghanistan, the aim of the mission was to fight terrorism, and win.

**BYLINE:** TOM BRODBECK

**WORD COUNT:** 337

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I wish politicians, including Prime Minister Stephen Harper, would be straight with Canadians about why our troops are in Afghanistan.

Harper announced yesterday the creation of an independent panel that will make recommendations on Canada's future role in Afghanistan — a sound move that will hopefully take some of the partisan politics out of this debate.

But if we're going to have a real debate about Afghanistan, politicians have to start being honest with Canadians about why we have troops there.

There's a false perception in this country that we're in Afghanistan to keep peace and to bring Afghans freedom and democracy.

We're not.

We're there for one reason and one reason only: to prevent terrorist regimes from rebuilding their forces in order to reduce the risk of another terrorist attack against a North American target.

We're not there to bring equality to women and we're not there to open schools or liberate anybody.

Those may be side benefits. But those aren't the chief objectives.

We're in Afghanistan to protect our own hides from a future attack.

It was in Afghanistan that al-Qaida forces — led by Osama bin Laden and supported by the former Taliban government — organized terrorist factions that flew commercial planes into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon and hijacked a plane that went down in Pennsylvania.

We responded by joining forces with our U.S., British, Australian and other allies in toppling the Taliban government and capturing as many al-Qaida leaders as we could find.

## COMMITTED TROOPS

This is what former prime minister Jean Chretien said in a 10-minute television address six years ago when he committed Canadian troops to Afghanistan:

It's really all about us Leaders should be honest on Afghanistan motives

"I cannot promise the campaign against terrorism will be painless, but I can promise that it will be won," said Chretien.

"We must remain strong and vigilant. We must insist on living to our terms, according to our values, not on terms dictated from the shadows."

Six years later, we're still in Afghanistan because we fear that if we and our allies leave, terrorist groups may flood back into the country, rebuild their forces and come after us again.

I'm not certain we've won anything, as Chretien guaranteed in 2001.

There are still terrorist groups all over the world and many have simply relocated from Afghanistan, including bin Laden.

But we did accomplish what we set out to do -- remove a pro-terrorist government from power, capture some key al-Qaida operatives and frustrate their operations.

Have we reduced the risk of another 9/11 as a result? Of course we have.

Al-Qaida is more fractured and less organized now than it was prior to Sept. 11, 2001.

The challenge today is to try to train Afghan security forces so they can, on their own, prevent terrorist groups from reforming.

No one knows if that's possible. But that's why we're still there.

And it's probably not prudent to leave until we think those measures are in place.

That's the real debate.

The rest is just political noise.

We should at least stick to the real reasons we're in Afghanistan when we debate what our next move should be. KEYWORDS=WORLD

# Soldier to face court martial in comrade's shooting

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**SOURCETAG** 0710130309  
**PUBLICATION:** The Winnipeg Sun  
**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** 5  
**ILLUSTRATION:** photo of ROBBIE FRASER Member of 2 PPCLI from Shilo  
**BYLINE:** CHRIS MORRIS, THE CANADIAN PRESS  
**DATELINE:** FREDERICTON  
**WORD COUNT:** 355

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A Canadian soldier charged in the shooting death of a fellow soldier in Afghanistan will face a court martial on charges of manslaughter and negligent performance of duty, the Canadian Forces director of military prosecutions confirmed yesterday.

Master Cpl. Robbie Fraser, a member of the 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Regiment, based in Shilo, will face a military trial on charges related to the death of Master Cpl. Jeff Walsh, who was also based at Shilo, during a patrol on an Afghan road on Aug. 9, 2006, said navy Capt. Holly MacDougall.

The decision comes despite the fact members of both the Walsh and Fraser families have expressed doubt about the need for prosecution. The families say that the two men were friends, as well as comrades.

Fraser, 30, was originally charged in March. Under military law, several subsequent stages had to be completed before a decision was made on whether to go ahead with a military trial.

"Military prosecutors consider two main issues when deciding whether to prosecute a charge at court martial: whether the evidence is sufficient to provide a reasonable prospect of conviction and whether the public interest requires a prosecution be pursued," MacDougall said in the statement.

The charges against Fraser were reviewed by his battalion commander and the prosecution service. Both could have halted legal proceedings if it was deemed in the interest of the Canadian Forces and the public.

Kevin Fraser of South Rustico, P.E.I., Robbie Fraser's father, said it is his understanding the shooting was the result of an accidental discharge of a weapon.

"I'm very disappointed with the decision and very disappointed that they (military investigators) dragged it out so long," he said in an interview.

"It has been over a year now. My son is off on a course now and they couldn't even wait until Monday to break this."

The Canadian military considers the accidental discharge of a weapon an inexcusable error for a soldier, and charges of this type usually proceed to trial by court martial.

The victim's father, Ben Walsh, relayed his support to the Fraser family yesterday.

"Our sympathy goes out to all of the Fraser family," Walsh said in an interview from his Regina home. "I guess two wrongs don't make a right."

Walsh was married with three children.

Family members say they were told Walsh was seated beside the driver of a cramped, G-wagon armoured vehicle patrolling a bumpy road near Kandahar when another soldier's gun discharged inside the vehicle.

Walsh, 33, died from a single gunshot.

No date for the court martial has been set, but it will be held at CFB Shilo. KEYWORDS=CANADA

# THE AFGHAN MISSION: BLUE-RIBBON PANEL PM's choice of Manley catches Liberals off guard

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**PUBLICATION:** GLOBE AND MAIL

**IDN:** 072860271

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**PAGE:** A1

**BYLINE:** BRIAN LAGHI AND ALAN FREEMAN

**SECTION:** National News

**EDITION:** Metro

**DATELINE:** Ottawa ONT

**WORDS:** 1423

**WORD COUNT:** 1439

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BRIAN LAGHI AND ALAN FREEMAN With a report from Campbell Clark in Ottawa and Caroline Alphonso in Toronto OTTAWA Stephen Harper moved yesterday to defuse the issue of Afghanistan before a potential fall election and drove a wedge into the Liberal Party by appointing former deputy prime minister John Manley to lead a blue-ribbon study group.

The Prime Minister's appointment of Mr. Manley as head of a five-member group on Canada's future role in the war-torn country beyond February of 2009 prompted deep anger among Mr. Manley's fellow Liberals.

"What gives, John?" one of his former advisers asked. "This was one area of weakness of the Conservatives. And he's just thrown Stephen Harper a lifeline in the form of himself." One e-mail circulating among the party said simply, "Et tu Manley?" The panel is to report to Parliament by the end of January. So if there were a fall election, the Prime Minister could sidestep questions on the government's position on the Afghan mission by saying he would wait for the panel's recommendations.

"One has to wonder what criticism the Liberal Party can levy against the government on Afghanistan now," said a senior Tory who asked not be identified.

Asked directly whether it was his intent to take the issue off the table, Mr. Harper told reporters it would be impossible to clear it from the public consciousness, but that he does want a "rational and considered debate about all of the facts and all of the implications." Rudyard Griffiths, co-founder of the Dominion Institute, which has been pressing for Ottawa to appoint such a panel, said the process buys time not only for the Tories, but also for the Liberals.

He called the move by Mr. Harper "a brilliant piece of politics and brilliant piece of public policy." The panel has been asked to examine four options including the status quo; complete withdrawal from Afghanistan; a transfer to another region of the country; or refocusing efforts on reconstruction that would allow for a new military contingent from another country to take the Canadian combat role.

"Whatever future path we choose in Afghanistan, it must respect the sacrifices Canadians have made there," Mr. Harper said.

Mr. Manley made it clear he wouldn't be restricted to the four broad policy options enumerated by the Prime Minister.



"Everything is on the table," Mr. Manley said.

Mr. Manley said the panel would canvass a cross-section of specialists on foreign relations, defence and foreign aid. He said the panel would visit Afghanistan and meet with Canada's partners in the Afghan mission.

Liberal Leader Stephane Dion said in Toronto he welcomes the striking of the panel, providing it has not been set up to allow the government to sidestep a decision.

He added that he hopes Mr. Manley "will have a positive influence to moderate the views in this panel." Mr. Manley said he remains a strong Liberal.

"I'm a supporter of the Liberal Party, but I have some history in Afghanistan in my two visits that have touched me very deeply," he said. Mr. Manley did not seek Mr. Dion's permission to sit on the panel. He said he informed the Liberal Leader of his decision on Thursday, the day before the announcement was made.

Mr. Harper said that continuation of the current mission was still a possibility.

NDP Leader Jack Layton called the panel "highly partisan," noting that there were no New Democrats on the group.

"It's contemptuous of Parliament. . . . Parliament is the place to have this discussion." In addition to Mr. Manley, the panel's members include former clerk of the Privy Council Paul Tellier, former Tory cabinet minister Jake Epp, former Canadian consul-general in New York Pamela Wallin and Derek Burney, a long-time adviser to previous prime ministers and a former ambassador to the United States.

Meanwhile, the German parliament yesterday approved a one-year extension for the country's 3,000-strong force in Afghanistan despite public opinion which is strongly opposed to continuing participation in the NATO-led mission.

Who are the panel members and what have they said about Afghanistan? John Manley Lawyer with McCarthy Tetrault firm in Toronto. MP for Ottawa South 1988–2004. Cabinet minister 1993–2003 (Industry, Foreign Affairs, deputy prime minister with special responsibility for national security, then Finance). Ran for Liberal leadership in 2003, but withdrew and endorsed Paul Martin.

"Whenever we asked Afghans what they thought ISAF [the International Security Assistance Force] or Canada should do, they did not hesitate to say we must stay. Without the presence of the international forces, chaos would surely ensue. . . . We often seek to define Canada's role in the world. Well, for whatever reason, we have one in Afghanistan.

Let's not abandon it too easily. But let's use our hard-earned influence to make sure the job is done." – October, 2007, issue of Policy Options.

Derek Burney Chairman of Global CanWest Communications. Former diplomat (ambassador to Korea, Japan and the United States). Chief of staff to Prime Minister Brian Mulroney 1987–93. Headed Mr. Harper's transition team in 2006.

"Until very recently, Canadians were essentially unaware of the reasons for our involvement in Afghanistan. The initial decision was taken in the immediate wake of 9/11, ostensibly as a commitment against global terrorism. But, when Canada accepted, almost by stealth, a much larger, more risky role more than a year ago to take charge of the multinational force in the volatile Kandahar region, there was little explanation, debate, or leadership at the time. Some suspected that it was meant primarily to help temper U.S. criticism of our decision not to engage in Iraq. Whatever the rationale, a leadership gap became more apparent. Not

surprisingly, polls confirmed some confusion and growing apprehension about what we are doing in Afghanistan and why. Canadians may be proud of the role we used to play as blue-bereted peacekeepers but they seemed less certain and less proud of the more dangerous role we are taking on as peacemakers and nation builders." – April 11, 2006, Arthur Kroeger College Awards Dinner, Ottawa.

Paul Tellier Director of Alcan Inc. and BCE Inc. Trained as a lawyer. Joined federal civil service in the 1970s and rose to become Clerk of the Privy Council, the country's top civil servant, 1985–1991 under Mr. Mulroney. He left in 1992 when Mr. Mulroney appointed him president and CEO of CN Rail. In 2003, he took a three-year posting as president and CEO of Bombardier.

"Many Americans don't know that Canadian soldiers are fighting the war in Afghanistan, and are paying a dear price, some with their lives. Americans have a lot to learn about Canada, but the reverse is true as well." – Sept. 28, 2006, keynote address at the second Annual CN Forum on Canada–U.S. Relations, Michigan State University.

Jake Epp Chairman of the board of Ontario Power Generation and chairman of Health Partners International, a non-profit group providing medical aid in Afghanistan. The former school history teacher from Steinbach, Man., was a Conservative MP from 1972–1993. Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in the short-lived Joe Clark government in 1979 and Health and Energy Minister under Mr. Mulroney.

"Most Afghan doctors don't have medicine at all and when they do, it is often low quality and perhaps not what the bottle indicates.

When an Afghan hospital received an impressive shipment of assorted medicines from HPIC, a doctor commented to our staff that now he had medicine that actually works." – Nov. 14, 2006, at Beyond Our Borders signing ceremony in Toronto.

Pamela Wallin Chancellor of the University of Guelph. Former TV journalist (co-host of Canada AM, CTV Ottawa bureau chief, co-host of CBC Prime Time News, host of Pamela Wallin Live). Consul-General in New York 2002–2006.

"From the U.S. perspective, the inability of the UN to act left the U.S. with no option but to protect itself from the future possibilities of another terrorist attack, aided and abetted by a rogue government in Iraq. And agree or not, for Americans the reality is that this war began on September 11. It's part of a continuum that runs through to the routing of the Taliban from Afghanistan, and moves forward to the war in Iraq – just another step along the path to remove terrorist threats around the globe." – April 28, 2003, to a joint meeting of The Empire Club of Canada and The Canadian Club of Toronto.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Canada; Afghanistan

SUBJECT TERM: government; foreign policy; defence; political; statements

PERSONAL NAME: Stephen Harper; John Manley

ORGANIZATION NAME: Liberal Party; Conservative Party of Canada

# CANADA'S FUTURE IN AFGHANISTAN 'Boy Scout' Manley is helping Harper, Liberals moan Naive, or simply altruistic, the former cabinet minister's love of public policy has drawn him to the limelight

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**PUBLICATION:** GLOBE AND MAIL

**IDN:** 072860270

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**PAGE:** A4 (ILLUS)

**BYLINE:** CAMPBELL CLARK

**SECTION:** National News

**EDITION:** Metro

**DATELINE:** Ottawa ONT

**WORDS:** 704

**WORD COUNT:** 636

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CAMPBELL CLARK OTTAWA Privately, many Liberals were cursing John Manley yesterday for aiding Stephen Harper. What made it worse, many said, was Mr. Manley's solid credibility.

He has been a politician who has exuded reassurance. He was boring as an opposition critic because his attacks were so evenhanded, reliably managerial as industry minister through most of the 1990s, but he hit the right, concerned-but-in-charge tone as foreign affairs minister after 9/11.

All that made him Jean Chretien's only choice to reassure the markets as finance minister when Paul Martin left his cabinet in 2002.

The silver-haired Mr. Manley, 57, has established himself post-politics as a kind of statesman emeritus, feeding his love for playing a role in public policy.

Now, some Liberals are defending him as a man who puts good policy ahead of partisanship, and others are saying he was tempted by the limelight, and naive.

"The Boy Scout in John shows up every now and then," one former adviser said with a sigh.

Mr. Manley is certainly a public figure who grew up working hard and playing by the rules.

His father, John Sr., came home from the Second World War with tuberculosis and spent his son's early years in a sanatorium, while his family lived on his disability cheque. His upbringing was modest, but he not only made it to university and law school but clerked for Supreme Court chief justice Bora Laskin.

He gave up law to enter politics at 38 as an Ottawa MP in 1988, becoming a respected but not especially combative opposition critic.

In government, Mr. Manley spent seven years as the influential but unflashy industry minister, translating government to business leaders, and vice-versa.

He was whip-smart, but not a risk taker, and that was suited to the times, one former aide said: "John effectively managed the Industry portfolio, which is complex, and nothing blew up. In the Chretien model of management, that's a success." Mr. Manley saw more of the limelight after 2000, however, when he became foreign affairs minister. After the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, when Mr. Chretien's unflappable style struck many as too sleepy, Mr. Manley seemed to find the public's mood with a tone that was a little more in-charge, and a little combative.

"Let's make no mistake about it," he told reporters. "Canada does not have a history as a pacifist or a neutralist country. Canada has soldiers that are buried all over Europe because we fought in defence of liberty. And we're not about to back away from a challenge now because we think somebody might get hurt." His role as 9/11 spokesman was expanded to North American security czar, where part of his job was to reassure U.S. counterparts. And when Mr. Chretien was forced to shuffle his cabinet in early 2002, he became the deputy prime minister, too. Six months later, when Mr. Martin left, John Manley was the predictable choice to reassure the public and the markets.

Despite his plain-vanilla, straight-arrow image, he has a deadpan wit, and has seethed with sarcasm at opponents.

When he quit cabinet, he rejected Mr. Martin's offer of a job as Canada's ambassador to Washington, in part, former aides say, because he believed he would not have the influence he would need.

Since politics, he has returned to the law and become a company director, but has played a role in public policy – notably heading a tri-nation commission that called for a common North American security perimeter.

Some admirers call him a straight talker, someone who cannot be swayed. "There's nothing malleable about John Manley," former cabinet colleague Brian Tobin said.

Four policy options The panel will examine four main options, while not excluding others: 1) Continue training the Afghan army and police so Canada can begin withdrawing its forces in February, 2009.

2) Focus on reconstruction and have forces from another country take over security in Kandahar.

3) Shift Canadian security and reconstruction effort to another region in Afghanistan.

4) Withdraw all Canadian military except a minimal force to protect aid workers and diplomats.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Afghanistan; Canada

SUBJECT TERM: government; foreign policy; defence; political

PERSONAL NAME: John Manley; Stephen Harper

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

# THE AFGHAN MISSION Soldier charged in shooting death of comrade to face court martial

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**PUBLICATION:** GLOBE AND MAIL

**IDN:** 072860212

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**PAGE:** A7

**BYLINE:** CHRIS MORRIS

**SECTION:** National News

**SOURCE:** CP

**EDITION:** National

**DATELINE:** Fredericton NB

**WORDS:** 708

**WORD COUNT:** 633

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CHRIS MORRIS The Canadian Press FREDERICTON A Canadian soldier charged in the shooting death of a fellow soldier in Afghanistan will face a court-martial on charges of manslaughter and negligent performance of duty, the Canadian Forces director of military prosecutions confirmed yesterday.

Master Corporal Robbie Fraser will face a military trial on charges related to the death of MCpl. Jeff Walsh during a patrol on an Afghan road on Aug. 9, 2006, said navy Captain Holly MacDougall.

Members of both the Walsh and Fraser families have expressed doubt about the need for prosecution. The families say that the two men were friends as well as comrades.

MCpl. Fraser was originally charged in March. Under military law, several subsequent stages had to be completed before a decision was made on whether to go ahead with a military trial.

"Military prosecutors consider two main issues when deciding whether to prosecute a charge at court-martial: whether the evidence is sufficient to provide a reasonable prospect of conviction and whether the public interest requires a prosecution be pursued," Capt. MacDougall said in the statement.

The charges against MCpl. Fraser were reviewed by his battalion commander and the prosecution service. Both could have halted legal proceedings if it was deemed in the interest of the Canadian Forces and the public.

Kevin Fraser of South Rustico, PEI, MCpl. Fraser's father, said it is his understanding that the shooting was the result of an accidental discharge of a weapon.

"I'm very disappointed with the decision and very disappointed that they [military investigators] dragged it out so long," he said in an interview. "It has been over a year now. My son is off on a course now and they couldn't even wait until Monday to break this." The Canadian military considers the accidental discharge of a weapon an inexcusable error for a soldier, and charges of this type usually proceed to trial by court-martial.

The victim's father, Ben Walsh, relayed his support to the Fraser family yesterday. "Our sympathy goes out to all of the Fraser family," Mr. Walsh said in an interview from his Regina home. "I guess two wrongs don't make a right." MCpl. Fraser, 30, is a member of the 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Regiment, based at Canadian Forces Base Shilo in Manitoba.

MCpl. Walsh was also based at CFB Shilo. He was married with three children.

Family members say they were told MCpl. Walsh was seated beside the driver of a cramped G–wagon armoured vehicle patrolling a bumpy road near Kandahar when another soldier's gun discharged inside the vehicle.

MCpl. Walsh, 33, died from a single gunshot.

No date for the court–martial has been set, but it will be held at CFB Shilo.

It was not immediately known how many soldiers have been convicted of negligence in accidental discharges of their weapons since Canada first sent regular troops to Afghanistan early in 2002.

Some have been fined, others have been sentenced to labour and a few have received both penalties, usually meted out during summary trials in–theatre. The Canadian military follows the civilian Criminal Code in defining manslaughter as "culpable homicide" that falls short of murder. The maximum penalty is life imprisonment.

Negligent performance of duty is a violation of the National Defence Act with a maximum penalty of disgraceful dismissal from the Canadian Forces.

MCpl. Walsh's widow, Julie Mason, declined to be interviewed yesterday, but she has said in the past that she doesn't agree with the action the military has taken.

"Rob was a good friend of Jeff, and what is taking place right now I don't agree with," she said in an interview several months ago.

MCpl. Walsh's father said that while he doesn't want to see anyone prosecuted for what happened to his son, he does want to see accountability.

Earlier this year, another Canadian soldier was killed by an apparent accidental discharge, this one inside his tent on the base in Kandahar.

Cpl. Kevin Megeney was a 25–year–old reservist from Stellarton, N.S.

Weapons are usually fully loaded when soldiers are on patrol in Kandahar province, the scene of many insurgent attacks on NATO forces, including suicide car bombings.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Afghanistan; Canada

SUBJECT TERM: strife; defence; deaths; manslaughter; accidents

PERSONAL NAME: Robbie Fraser; Jeff Walsh

ORGANIZATION NAME: Armed Forces

# For country, not Queen

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**PUBLICATION:** GLOBE AND MAIL

**IDN:** 072860202

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**PAGE:** A26

**BYLINE:** J.E. MARION

**SECTION:** Letter to the Edit

**EDITION:** Metro

**DATELINE:** Toronto ONT

**WORDS:** 73

**WORD COUNT:** 105

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J.E. Marion Toronto You report that Prince Edward, "noting that Canadian troops are ultimately serving the Queen . . . said it's important that the link between the troops and the monarchy continues" (Troops' Link With Monarchy Important, Prince Says – Oct. 12). I hate to disabuse a foreign guest of his colonial sentiments, but I have yet to hear one family of our 71 soldiers killed in Afghanistan say that their son gave his life for the Queen.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Canada; Great Britain

SUBJECT TERM:foreign policy

PERSONAL NAME: Prince Edward; Queen Elizabeth II

ORGANIZATION NAME: Armed Forces

# Avoidance by committee?

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**PUBLICATION:** GLOBE AND MAIL  
**IDN:** 072860197  
**DATE:** 2007.10.13  
**PAGE:** A26  
**BYLINE:** ERIC LANGSHAW  
**SECTION:** Letter to the Edit  
**EDITION:** Metro  
**DATELINE:** Canmore, Alta.  
**WORDS:** 85  
**WORD COUNT:** 88

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Eric Langshaw Canmore, Alta.

Stephen Harper has fobbed off the controversial issue of Canadian troops in Afghanistan to a five-person panel "to decide on the future of Canada's presence . . . after the 2009 deadline for the current mission to expires" (Manley To Lead Afghan Mission Review – Oct.

12).

Last time I checked, we had a democratically elected Parliament to decide how long our troops would be deployed and in what capacity.

We expect our government to make these decisions, not to avoid them by hiding behind a committee.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Afghanistan; Canada

SUBJECT TERM:foreign policy

PERSONAL NAME: Stephen Harper; John Manley

ORGANIZATION NAME: Armed Forces



# Museums of war and peace

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**PUBLICATION:** GLOBE AND MAIL

**IDN:** 072860195

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**PAGE:** A26

**BYLINE:** ROBIN BREON

**SECTION:** Letter to the Edit

**EDITION:** Metro

**DATELINE:** University of Toronto

**WORDS:** 158

**WORD COUNT:** 200

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Robin Breon Museum Studies Program University of Toronto \* A decade ago, the Smithsonian Institution attempted to mount an exhibit detailing the mission of the bomber crew of the Enola Gay in the nuclear attack against Hiroshima at the conclusion of the Second World War but was thwarted by veterans organizations who derailed the project in what one curator described as "the most controversial exhibit never to be mounted." The Canadian War Museum's revised panel describing the Dresden bombing campaign of civilian populations in Germany now runs to 203 words, substantially more than the museum devoted to the Holocaust panel, which comes in at 63 words total. In addition, the current special exhibit, Afghanistan: A Glimpse of War , is nothing more than pro-war propaganda that flies in the face of public opinion polls concerning our military mission in that country.

Perhaps it's time to dedicate an institution to the other side of the story, as others have done, and create the Canadian Peace Museum.

**ADDED SEARCH TERMS:**

**GEOGRAPHIC NAME:** Canada; Germany

**SUBJECT TERM:**world war ii; war museums; veterans

**ORGANIZATION NAME:** Canadian War Museum

# Is this a non-partisan panel, or is the PM trying to outflank the Grits?

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**PUBLICATION:** GLOBE AND MAIL

**IDN:** 072860191

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**PAGE:** A25 (ILLUS)

**BYLINE:** LAWRENCE MARTIN

**SECTION:** Comment Column

**EDITION:** Metro

**DATELINE:**

**WORDS:** 694

**WORD COUNT:** 707

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LAWRENCE MARTIN The night before the announcement that he was chairing the Afghan war committee, John Manley attended an Ottawa reception to mark the release of Richard Gwyn's impressive new book on Sir John A.

Macdonald.

As Mr. Gwyn sat on a couch signing books, and Bank of Canada Governor David Dodge and other dignitaries roamed the room, Mr. Manley rhymed off the names of those who would be on his panel.

"Derek Burney, Paul Tellier, Jake Epp . . ." A listener interrupted.

"Sounds like it's pretty stacked on the pro-war side." Mr. Manley's face went expressionless. While not dismissing the suggestion, he reminded the listener that he, John Manley, would be chair. Indeed, and a strong chair at that – one that will be necessary if this committee is to avoid the impression of bias.

For his five-member panel, Prime Minister Stephen Harper has appointed a somewhat hawkish Liberal, three distinguished Canadians who fit under the conservative rubric and the popular Pamela Wallin, who, as consul-general in New York, took exception to Canadians bashing the abysmal Bush administration.

In addressing the news media yesterday, Mr. Harper did a nice job of trying to place the war issue above politics and of casting his panel as non-partisan. But all had to be taken with a grain of salt. With the Liberal Party committed to withdrawing from combat in Afghanistan to begin 2009, the PM knows what a lovely fix he could leave them in if an exalted committee headed by a Liberal recommends to the contrary.

At the book signing, it was suggested to Mr. Manley that the Prime Minister was making a crafty strategic move. He pondered that thought for a while and said, "I hope Stephane [Dion] won't be offended that I am doing this. But when the Prime Minister comes calling . . ." The highly credible Mr. Manley, who could have made a strong Liberal leader, hasn't lost any of his Grit blood. He was out campaigning in the Ontario election for Dalton McGuinty. But the PM has chosen carefully here, realizing that he was one of the more conservative-leaning members of the Chretien cast, frequently coming down on the side of the Department of National Defence.

As Mr. Manley recalled at the book signing, he took exception to Liberal foreign affairs minister Lloyd Axworthy's stand in favour of soft power. "Soft power is okay," Mr. Manley reminded, "as long as it is backed

up with hard power." Mr. Harper knows this history as well as the history of the others he has appointed. Mr. Burney, Canada's former ambassador to Washington under Brian Mulroney, headed up Mr. Harper's transition team after he won the election. Mr. Tellier, clerk of the Privy Council under Mr. Mulroney, served under Liberals in prior years but has increasingly taken on corporate small-c credentials. Mr. Mulroney, who supports both the invasion of Iraq and the Afghan mission, heaps unreserved praise on both men in his memoirs.

Jake Epp served in Mulroney cabinets. Neither he nor Ms. Wallin has much experience in the world beyond North America. In the space of a few months, they are being asked to become authorities on something as complex as the Afghan dynamic.

All this is not to say that any of the minds of the committee members are made up or that a decision to continue the Afghan mission would not be in Canada's best interests. These are highly accomplished individuals. But to judge from their backgrounds and ties, few will be placing bets that they will weigh in with a decision distressing for the governing party.

Perception of non-bias is obviously important on a committee charged with such a significant responsibility. This committee lacks that perception. If Mr. Harper wanted an impartial panel, he would have divided it between people with governing party biases and opposition party inclinations. He hasn't done that because, expert chess player that he is, he would like to outmanoeuvre the Liberals on Afghanistan the way he did the Bloc Quebecois with his nation-status resolution on Quebec.

lmartin@globeandmail.com

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Afghanistan; Canada

SUBJECT TERM:foreign policy; government; defence; statements; political

PERSONAL NAME: John Manley; Stephen Harper

ORGANIZATION NAME: Armed Forces

# AFGHAN MISSION Just the right job for John Manley

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**PUBLICATION:** GLOBE AND MAIL

**IDN:** 072860169

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**PAGE:** A26

**BYLINE:**

**SECTION:** Editorial

**EDITION:** Metro

**DATELINE:**

**WORDS:** 404

**WORD COUNT:** 445

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The appointment of former MP John Manley to head the panel exploring the future of the mission in Afghanistan is a tactical masterstroke by Prime Minister Stephen Harper. Mr. Manley is clearly qualified for the assignment. His background, as foreign minister at the time of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States and as chairman of a cabinet committee on public security and anti-terrorism established after 9/11, give him virtually unequalled insight into the origins of the mission. By appointing a prominent Liberal in Mr. Manley, and a largely non-partisan panel of eminences, the Conservative government has demonstrated a belated but welcome willingness to look beyond party lines in the fashion of the United States' bipartisan Iraq Study Group. The likelihood that Mr. Manley's appointment will also cause some discomfort among Liberals surely hasn't escaped Mr. Harper either.

When announcing the formation of the independent panel yesterday, the Prime Minister said he wanted a full, open and informed debate.

He did add one caveat, however: "Whatever future path we choose in Afghanistan, it must respect the sacrifices we have made there . . . we must also be cognizant of the risks of a return to chaos in Afghanistan." In that respect, the appointment of Mr. Manley represents little risk for the government. Not only is Mr. Manley considered a Liberal hawk, but he is on record as saying there can be no meaningful progress in Afghanistan without improved security.

That would seem to affirm the need for combat troops as part of our ongoing multinational commitment. Mr. Harper's decision to appoint the panel could well serve the overdue need to build bipartisan support for what was, after all, originally a Liberal-mandated mission.

Liberal Leader Stephane Dion responded to the announcement by echoing the calls for an "open, public and thoughtful debate." But he promptly sought to stifle that debate by declaring that the creation of the panel "should not stop the Conservatives from informing NATO that our combat mission on Kandahar will end in February, 2009." Mr. Dion was at the cabinet table when the Liberals first sent Canadian troops to Afghanistan, and later when they approved the deployment to Kandahar. But he has gone wobbly on the mission. There is a real possibility, then, that the Manley report will not only take heat off the government but serve as a rebuke of Mr. Dion.

**ADDED SEARCH TERMS:**

**GEOGRAPHIC NAME:** Afghanistan; Canada

**SUBJECT TERM:**foreign policy; defence; government; political; strife

PERSONAL NAME: John Manley; Stephen Harper; Stephane Dion

ORGANIZATION NAME: Armed Forces

# AFGHAN POLITICS Mullah's death leaves Kandahar exposed Tribal strongman was a key buffer between Taliban territory in the north and Canadian-guarded south

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**PUBLICATION:** GLOBE AND MAIL

**IDN:** 072860121

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**PAGE:** A22 (MAP)

**BYLINE:** OMAR EL AKKAD AND GRAEME SMITH

**SECTION:** International News

**EDITION:** Metro

**DATELINE:** Kandahar AFGHANISTAN

**WORDS:** 673

**WORD COUNT:** 650

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OMAR EL AKKAD AND GRAEME SMITH KANDAHAR Thousands of people mourned one of the most powerful men in southern Afghanistan yesterday, and voiced fears about how they can stand against the Taliban without the renowned tribal elder Mullah Naqib.

The jovial, grey-bearded strongman died of a heart attack on Thursday night, his tribesmen said. He had suffered months of poor health after a suspected Taliban bombing that hospitalized him in March.

His passing leaves a dangerous gap in Kandahar city's defences, according to local officials and Western analysts. Mr. Naqib ruled the Arghandab district, a key buffer zone between the urban areas under government control and the increasingly hostile districts to the north.

"This is really, really bad news," said Sarah Chayes, an American author who lives in Kandahar city. "Arghandab was the finger in the dike. Now you have a wall of water bearing down on the city." Canadian military officials have been worrying about their northern flank for months, as Mr. Naqib's influence waned and the Taliban focused on his territory as a route for attacking the city that once served as their seat of government.

The entire Canadian battle group is devoted to protecting the fertile river valley that leads toward Kandahar city from the southwest, but the Arghandab district could provide the same kind of corridor for insurgents, with plentiful hiding places among its trees and grape fields.

"Mullah Naqib protected Kandahar," said Abdul Rahim Jan, a tribal elder from Panjwai. "This is a big loss. It's like a thousand people died." The Canadian military must quickly set up permanent posts in Arghandab to fill the power vacuum, Ms. Chayes said, estimating that perhaps 200 soldiers will be necessary to keep the peace.

Even before his death, however, Mr. Naqib's grip on Arghandab appeared to be slipping. He controlled the region since his rise to power as an anti-Soviet commander in the 1980s, when his success on the battlefield made him leader of the Alokozais, a populous and powerful tribe.

When interviewed by The Globe and Mail last month, however, the old warrior looked tired and sounded worried. In sharp contrast with his previously confident statements, Mr. Naqib warned that district centres would fall to the Taliban if the Canadian forces withdraw as scheduled in 2009.

"The locations the government holds now will be captured by the Taliban" if the Canadians leave, he said at the time.

On the night before his death, Ms. Chayes sat with him on the veranda of his home on the north side of the city, a comfortably appointed compound with lush gardens. He spoke disconsolately about the deteriorating security in Kandahar province, and seemed deeply saddened by it.

"He could not believe the situation now," she said. "He died of a broken heart." Mr. Naqib, who was in his fifties, was buried yesterday in his home village in the Arghandab district. Several notable Afghan politicians rushed to Kandahar to attend his funeral, and his death was announced during Friday prayers at the city's biggest landmark, the blue mosque on the northwestern edge of the city.

A tribal council, or shura, is expected to decide the next leader of the Alokozai tribe. The government's favoured candidate will be Haji Agha Lalai, a provincial council member from Panjwai district who also serves as head of Peace Through Strength, a program intended to help Taliban to switch sides in the war.

Other leading candidates will be Malim Akbar, the brother of slain Kandahar police chief Zabib Akram Khakrezwal; and Abdul Hakim Jan, a relatively uneducated police commander in Arghandab.

"I am ready to serve, but it's a decision for the people," said Mr. Lalai, reached by telephone last night.

The process of finding a new leader may take two or three months, Mr. Lalai said. While disparaging his competitors for the position, he suggested that together they might even do a better job than Mr. Naqib at protecting Arghandab.

"We can make the district even cleaner of Taliban than it is now," he said.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Afghanistan; Kandahar; Canada

SUBJECT TERM: strife

PERSONAL NAME: Mullah Naqib

ORGANIZATION NAME: Armed Forces; Taliban

# MILITARY HONOURS Returning soldiers awarded medals

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**PUBLICATION:** GLOBE AND MAIL

**IDN:** 072860036

**DATE:** 2007.10.13

**PAGE:** A5 (ILLUS)

**BYLINE:** KEVIN BISSETT

**SECTION:** National News

**SOURCE:** CP

**EDITION:** National

**DATELINE:** OROMOCTO, N.B.

**WORDS:** 440

**WORD COUNT:** 372

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KEVIN BISSETT The Canadian Press OROMOCTO, N.B.

More than 600 Canadian soldiers who recently served in Afghanistan were honoured and officially welcomed home to their New Brunswick base yesterday, but many of them said their thoughts were still with the soldiers killed during the deployment.

Eighteen members of the battle group were killed during the six-month tour that ended in August, including five from Canadian Forces Base Gagetown, near Fredericton.

Private Brennan Leslie of Cole Harbour, N.S., was the driver of a vehicle that hit a roadside bomb on Easter Sunday, killing six soldiers.

He told reporters it was as though his fallen comrades were with him at yesterday's ceremony. "I was holding back the tears," he said.

Pte. Leslie was among more than 400 soldiers who were presented Campaign Star medals by Defence Minister Peter MacKay and Lieutenant-General Andrew Leslie.

The Second Battalion, Royal Canadian Regiment Group was also honoured with its General Campaign Star.

Mr. MacKay said the soldiers' work has resulted in significant improvements for Afghanistan's people. "A free country is being reborn because of your contributions," he said.

The minister thanked the soldiers and their families, and made specific mention of those who have lost loved ones in Afghanistan.

"And I hope that you will find some comfort in the knowledge that, as in previous struggles in which Canada has been present, the freedoms and privileges that Canadians enjoy today are a direct result of those who have sacrificed to defend our country." Lt.-Gen. Leslie spent time speaking individually to the soldiers, and said while the medals are made only of a bit of metal and cloth, they are symbols of their teamwork and sacrifice.

"It doesn't cost a lot to make, but by golly the price to wear it can be high," he said.



The hundreds of soldiers attending the ceremony stood shoulder to shoulder, row on row, filling the perimeter of a huge drill hall on the training base in central New Brunswick.

All stood at attention with eyes forward for the two-hour ceremony.

Afterwards, as the soldiers relaxed and mingled outside with family and friends, much of the conversation was about their fallen comrades, whose families were presented with medals at funerals rather than at yesterday's ceremonies.

Warrant Officer Brad Rogers of Canning, N.S., said his medal will always be a reminder of colleagues who were killed.

"There's no way of looking at that medal without being reminded of these soldiers that we lost, and the soldiers that are taking their place," he said.

At Rideau Hall in Ottawa, Governor-General Michaëlle Jean awarded another series of medals.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Canada; Afghanistan

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# Germans extend Afghan mission; Despite public opinion, 3,500 troops will remain

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BERLIN (Reuters) — Germany's parliament voted on Friday to renew the deployment of its troops in Afghanistan for another year, defying public opinion which is strongly against the mission.

The Bundestag (lower house) agreed to extend the mandate for up to 3,500 German troops to participate in NATO's 40,000-strong International Security Assistance Force and for the deployment of six Tornado reconnaissance jets.

The mandate is controversial in Germany, which has only gradually expanded its role in overseas military missions since The Second World War.

The deaths of 26 German soldiers in Afghanistan have further eroded public support and an OmniQuest poll for the Koelner Stadt-Anzeiger newspaper showed only 29 per cent of Germans backed the extension. However, final figures showed 453 deputies voted for the extension with just 79 against and 48 abstentions.

Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, a Social Democrat, said Germany was committed to helping Afghanistan.

"If we give up, the opponents of the civilized world have won. We don't want to let that happen. We will stand by the people of Afghanistan and help them to continue along the mapped-out path," he told parliament.

Many Social Democrats, partners in conservative Chancellor Angela Merkel's ruling coalition, are uneasy about the mission but no major revolt against the party's leadership, which backs the mission, transpired.