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MISSION AFGHANISTAN; It's dangerous, dusty and unpleasant. Dozens of Canadian soldiers have been killed there. Of course I had to go.

PUBLICATION: The Sunday Herald

DATE: 2007.10.14

SECTION: NovaScotian

PAGE: S8

BYLINE: Story By Chris Lambie Staff Reporterphotos By ChristianLaforce Staff Photographer
A Canadian soldier, showing a mixture of sweat and tears, carries the casket of Pte. Kevin Kennedy toward the plane that will take him home to Canada. Pte. Kennedy and five other Canadian soldiers were killed by a roadside bomb on April 8.; A Canadian soldier, showing a mixture of sweat and tears, carries the casket of Pte. Kevin Kennedy toward the plane that will take him home to Canada. Pte. Kennedy and five other

ILLUSTRATION: Canadian soldiers were killed by a roadside bomb on April 8.; Sgt. Ian Croft, from Mill Village, patrols farmland in the Zhari district of Kandahar province near Patrol Base Wilson on April 18.; Cpl. Matt Elliott, 27, of Halifax shows his tattoos at Patrol Base Wilson in the Zhari district of Kandahar province.; Sgt. Peter Nitro-Hayze of India company, right, has company on a wall in Badvan village in the Panjawi district of Kandahar province on April 27.

WORD COUNT: 949

OUR DRIVER stops the sport-utility vehicle and steps out onto the dirt road to open a farm gate when the first shots ring out.

Half a dozen armed men in balaclavas run toward the vehicle from all directions, firing pistols into the air.

"Get out of the f-cking car right now," one shouts angrily.

A small group of reporters and photographers packed into the truck start to pile out. I make the mistake of being the last passenger to exit, fumbling with the latch that releases the seat in front of me. As I step down, one gunman delivers a sharp smack to the back of my head that sends me to the ground. These guys are not messing around. They swiftly pull black hoods over our heads and lead us off into the woods, prisoners of an unknown enemy.

Welcome to the first day of hostile environment first aid training, a course put on by a group of former Royal Marines who enjoy nothing more than smacking around a few scribbles before getting down to the business of teaching us how to survive a war zone.

Centurion, a British company, offers this week-long course in rural Virginia and the United Kingdom for journalists heading out on potentially dangerous assignments.

We suffer through the initial kidnapping, complete with pistols jammed in the backs of our necks, wedding rings stripped from our fingers and pockets emptied for cash and identification. They even scroll through the contact lists and photos in our cellphones, looking for any damning information or people who might be willing to pay ransoms. Even though I know this kidnapping isn't real, it's difficult not to hyperventilate while lying on the forest floor with a hood over my face.

MISSION AFGHANISTAN; It's dangerous, dusty and unpleasant. Dozens of Canadian soldiers have been killed there. Of course I had to go.

Should I try to run? Is this the point where I ought to put up a fight or risk some sort of sadistic execution that will make its way on to the Internet before my family knows I'm even missing?

The Centurion folks answer those questions and more over the next few hours as they parse our reaction to the violent incident. As it turns out, if kidnappers are wearing masks in the middle of nowhere, they most likely don't want you to be able to identify them. That means they probably also plan to let you live, should their demands be met.

That and how to dress a sucking chest wound are my favourite lessons learned over the course of the week. I'm also keen on this line from one of our instructors. When we come under attack, he tells us to return "Billy big steps" to a known, safe rendezvous point. And Negotiating Shady Military Checkpoint 101 was pretty fun, especially when the instructors posing as sketchy soldiers started shaking people down for cash.

But all of the new skills, ranging from how to crawl away from a sniper attack to probing one's way out of a minefield, are useful knowledge that made this father of two young children a little less nervous about heading to Afghanistan.

"How long could it take to get out of a minefield?" one instructor asks. "It could take the rest of your life."

How could I not go?

That's the answer I gave close friends who asked why I was heading to Afghanistan.

The Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attack that prompted the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan is arguably the defining point of this decade.

I cover the military for a newspaper headquartered in Halifax, home to the country's largest military base. For various reasons, Nova Scotia has a hugely disproportionate number of its sons and daughters in the Canadian Forces. Indeed, this province has experienced far more than its fair share of deaths in Afghanistan since 2002.

There could be no better time for this newspaper to send correspondents to Afghanistan. More than 1,100 troops based in Atlantic Canada deployed to Kandahar in early 2007 as part of the 2,500-strong contingent of Canucks sent to the war-torn country.

Hundreds of reservists from Nova Scotia are part of the rotation. Hundreds more regular force soldiers in the Canadian battle group also call this province home, even if they're based elsewhere across the country.

Our arrival coincided with the dawn of the Taliban's much-touted spring offensive. It also meshed with the harvest of Afghanistan's valuable opium poppy crop, which is said to be a major fundraiser for the insurgency.

It became immediately clear once we touched down in Kandahar that finding Nova Scotians to interview would not be a difficult task. For our first assignment outside the wire, we travelled by convoy to a small camp where Canadian military police were training their Afghan counterparts. The major in charge of the operation was from Lower Sackville and one of his instructors hailed from Truro.

It wasn't by design, but practically everywhere we travelled over the course of a month in Afghanistan produced the same results. From the tank driver to the infantry soldier to the medic to the cook, there were always Bluesosers willing to talk about their jobs, show us what they were doing, and protect our butts in one of the world's most dangerous hot spots.

The Nova Scotia soldiers we encountered throughout the month of April were, like many people from this province, courteous and eager to talk to a hometown reporter. Some liked to joke around, but they also had a

MISSION AFGHANISTAN; It's dangerous, dusty and unpleasant. Dozens of Canadian soldiers have been k

calm, professional air that made me feel as safe as humanly possible, even in the hairiest of situations.

None of this is to say there weren't plenty of times I wished I was anywhere but Afghanistan. The overwhelming heat, heavy body armour, ubiquitous swirls of fine, choking dust, and near-constant background fear that I might be injured or killed provided plenty of reasons for second-guessing the assignment.

But all of those paled in comparison to the initial rationale for heading to Afghanistan. How could I not go?

The following is an excerpt from , published by Nimbus, a collection of stories and photos from The Chronicle Herald's coverage of the Canadian mission in Afghanistan earlier this year.

MISSION AFGHANISTAN; It's dangerous, dusty and unpleasant. Dozens of Canadian soldiers have been k

Canadians treat bombing casualties

PUBLICATION: The Sunday Herald

DATE: 2007.10.14

SECTION: World

PAGE: A9

WORD COUNT: 100

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (CP) – An emergency triage unit was set up Saturday at the military base at Kandahar Airfield to treat more than 30 Afghan civilians injured in a suicide bombing.

Officials said seven people were killed and dozens wounded when a man on a motorbike detonated explosives near policemen in a crowded marketplace in Spin Boldak.

The injured, including eight Afghan officers and an eight-year-old, were taken to the Kandahar base by helicopter. Canadian soldiers in the area of Spin Boldak were sent to help local authorities with the evacuation, as were two doctors from Kandahar Airfield.

Civilians injured in suicide bombing

PUBLICATION: The Telegram (St. John's)

DATE: 2007.10.14

SECTION: International

PAGE: A8

SOURCE: The Canadian Press

DATELINE: Kandahar, Afghanistan

WORD COUNT: 168

An emergency triage unit was set up Saturday at the military base at Kandahar Airfield to treat more than 30 Afghan civilians injured in a suicide bombing near the Pakistan border.

Officials said seven people were killed and dozens wounded when a suicide bomber on a motorbike detonated his explosives near some policemen in a crowded marketplace in Spin Boldak.

Interior Ministry spokesman Zemer Bashary said two policemen and five civilians died.

Twelve people were said to be in critical condition.

The injured, including eight Afghan police officers and an eight-year-old child, were taken to the Kandahar base by helicopter. Canadian soldiers in the area of Spin Boldak were sent to help local authorities with the evacuation, as were two doctors from Kandahar Airfield.

"Our reconnaissance squadron is helping Afghan authorities over there to manage the situation," said Capt. Josee Bilodeau, a spokeswoman for Canada's Joint Task Force Afghanistan.

Such suicide attacks against Afghan police have become a trademark of Taliban suicide bombers. More than 600 police have been killed in insurgency-related violence this year, the Interior Ministry has said.

Civilians injured in suicide bombing treated at Kandahar military base

DATE: 2007.10.13
KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS
PUBLICATION: cpw
WORD COUNT: 163

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_With files from The Associated Press

Gilles Duceppe earns 95% support in Bloc Quebecois leadership vote

DATE: 2007.10.13

KEYWORDS: POLITICS

PUBLICATION: cpw

WORD COUNT: 276

TROIS-RIVIERES, Que. _ Gilles Duceppe's false start to provincial politics and rumours of his retirement did not appear to weaken his position at the helm of the separatist party.

The Bloc leader earned support from 95.4 per cent of party members who cast ballots in a confidence vote at a party conference Saturday.

Duceppe called for the vote in May, one day after removing his hat from the ring for the then-vacant Parti Quebecois leadership.

He said he was ``determined" and ``soothed" after the vote.

``When there is unity, we are more prepared to go to battle," he said.

``It's a strong tonic for the whole caucus, it's not just me in all of this."

In the party's 2005 leadership vote, Duceppe earned 96.8 per cent support.

The conference, held in Trois-Rivieres, Que., also helped the Bloc prepare for a battle that could arise in two weeks, if the Conservative government's throne speech is rejected by the three opposition parties.

In the meeting's opening address, Duceppe said he will continue to reject Canadian federalism and defend the interests, values and identity of Quebec.

He promised the 250 party members in attendance he will rally Quebecers behind the idea of separation until there is another referendum on Quebec sovereignty.

``We will return to the essence of our project, the fact that we will become a francophone nation in America," he said.

``In Ottawa, there is only one party that can do this and that is ours."

The Bloc is also trying to distinguish itself from its adversaries, with a focus on its main enemy _ the Conservative party.

Duceppe accused Prime Minister Stephen Harper of lying to and neglecting Quebecers.

``New government, old politics," he said.

``Beyond marketing, the Conservatives are not on the same wavelength as Quebec, not on foreign affairs, not on the environment, social questions or the economy."

Duceppe recently delivered an ultimatum to Harper.

The limiting of federal spending power is one of five conditions laid down by the Bloc to support Tuesday's throne speech.

Other conditions include respecting the Kyoto Protocol on climate change, the withdrawal of Canadian troops from Afghanistan in February 2009, aid for regions hit by the crisis in the forestry industry and help for the agricultural sector.

INDEX:Defence, International, Politics

DATE: 2007.10.13

KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

PUBLICATION: bnw

WORD COUNT: 118

SPIN BOLDAK, Afghanistan – Canadian doctors based in Kandahar are being sent to an area near the Pakistan border where an attack by a suicide bomber has injured dozens of Afghan civilians and police.

Officials say at least 30 people were wounded when a suicide bomber detonated a vest loaded with explosives in a crowded market in Spin Boldak.

There are no immediate reports of deaths among bystanders. However, officials say at least 12 of the wounded are in serious condition.

Beside doctors, officials say Canada is also sending a number of troops from the base at Kandahar Airfield to help evacuate the wounded.

The bombing happened on the first day of the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr. No Canadians are believed to have been in the area at the time.

Afghan–Cda–Bomber–Update (injured evacuated)

DATE: 2007.10.13

KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

PUBLICATION: bnw

WORD COUNT: 92

SPIN BOLDAK, Afghanistan _ More than two dozen Afghan civilians injured in a suicide bombing are arriving at the base at Kandahar Airfield for medical treatment.

An emergency triage unit has been set up on the base. A child and eight Afghan police officers are said to be among those injured.

There are unconfirmed reports of seven deaths.

Early this morning, a man wearing a vest packed with explosives blew himself up in a crowded market in Spin Boldak, near the Pakistan border.

Troops and doctors from the base at Kandahar were sent to help evacuate the injured.

The bombing happened on the first day of the Muslim holiday of Eid al–Fitr.

No Canadian soldiers are believed to have been in the area at the time of the explosion.

(The Canadian Press)

Canadians aid victims of suicide bomber

IDNUMBER 200710140014

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DATE: 2007.10.14

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: A5

ILLUSTRATION: Colour Photo: Finbarr O'Reilly, Reuters / A Canadian soldier from the NATO-led coalition smokes while on sentry duty Friday at Ma'sum Ghar camp in Kandahar province, southern Afghanistan. ;

DATELINE: KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan

BYLINE: Mathew Fisher

SOURCE: CanWest News Service; With files from Agence France-Presse

WORD COUNT: 314

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan — A suicide bomber killed seven people and injured another 29 yesterday as Canadians from the 12th armoured regiment organized their largest medical evacuation operation yet in Kandahar province.

The regiment frantically tried to save the lives of 36 Afghan policemen and civilians who were wounded in the attack.

The explosion took place at Spin Boldak, which is within Canada's area of military responsibility in southern Afghanistan near the Pakistan border. The Canadians, from a Quebec-based reconnaissance unit, sent 25 of the 35 wounded by air and by road from Spin Boldak to the Kandahar airfield for treatment at the Canadian-led NATO multinational hospital there. Nine people were deemed to be in critical condition and in urgent need of sophisticated surgical care.

"Five civilians and two policemen were killed," Kandahar province police chief Sayed Aqa Safed told AFP. Twenty-one policemen and eight civilians were hurt. "The suicide attacker was torn into pieces," he said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but the Taliban have stepped up the use of suicide attacks in an insurgency launched when they were driven from government in late 2001.

The troops from the 12th Armoured Regiment arrived at the scene of the attack moments after it occurred. The medical situation was so complicated and catastrophic that they requested that two military doctors be flown there immediately from the Kandahar hospital, 80 kilometres to the west, to provide immediate care at the scene.

Kandahar is the headquarters of Canada's Joint Task Force Afghanistan.

Roads were closed on some parts of the airfield as a fleet of military ambulances, with lights flashing, carried the large number of casualties to hospital. Triage teams at the hospital were waiting at the doors to assess patients as they arrived.

The attack occurred at dusk at the start of the Eid Festival to mark the end of Ramadan. It also happened as President Hamid Karzai made a short visit the provincial capital, less than 100 kilometres away.

Chrétien book rips into Martin; From Kyoto to Kandahar, ex-PM pulls no punches

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ILLUSTRATION: Photo: Jim Young, Reuters / Former prime minister Jean Chrétien, with his successor Paul Martin in 2003. In his book, My Years as Prime Minister, Chrétien paints a picture of Martin as a scheming, ambitious man ready to tell anyone anything they wanted to hear in order to get support for his leadership aspirations. ;

DATELINE: OTTAWA

BYLINE: Elizabeth Thompson

SOURCE: CanWest News Service

WORD COUNT: 872

Former prime minister Paul Martin is responsible for Canadian troops ending up in the "killing fields" around Kandahar because he took too long to make a decision, former prime minister Jean Chrétien charges in a new book.

In a memoir likely to rip open old Liberal wounds and exacerbate divisions within the party only days before a possible plunge into a federal election, the former Liberal leader attacks Martin on several fronts, from his scheming to force Chrétien out of office to Martin's handling of Canada's Kyoto environmental protocol commitments.

He also argues that Martin has only himself to blame for the grief he suffered as a result of the sponsorship scandal.

Chrétien says that manoeuvring by Martin and his supporters to push him out of the prime minister's office actually steeled his resolve to stay on.

He doesn't mince words.

"I was damned if I was going to let myself be shoved out the door by a gang of self-serving goons," Chrétien writes after describing the hurt and betrayal he felt upon learning in the spring of 2000 about a meeting Martin supporters had held in a Toronto airport hotel. "By trying to force me to go, they aroused my competitive spirit, ignited my anger, and inadvertently gave me the blessing I needed from Aline [his wife] to fight for a third term. For that, ironically, I owed Paul Martin a great deal of thanks."

Chrétien also recounts that after the Taliban government of Afghanistan was overthrown, he carefully engineered things so Canada's soldiers were stationed around the safer area of Kabul, helping to rebuild the Afghan capital.

"Later, unfortunately, when my successor took too long to make up his mind about whether Canada should extend our term with the International Security Assistance Force, our soldiers were moved out of Kabul and sent south again to battle the Taliban in the killing fields around Kandahar," Chrétien writes.

Jim Pimblett, a spokesman for Martin, said his boss did not receive an advance copy of the book and was "not in a position to react in any detail, nor is he inclined to do so today or in the foreseeable future.

"Obviously, it is disappointing to hear reports that old divisions are being revisited at a time when the Liberal party needs to stand unified behind [Liberal Leader Stephane] Dion. Pimblett acknowledged that the two men had their differences at times "but their partnership in government generated tremendous achievements."

Chrétien reveals that he contemplated removing Martin from the finance ministry, firing the conspirators on Martin's staff and cancelling the government contracts with Martin's friends and advisers at the Earnscliffe strategy and communications firm, but was talked out of it by his top advisers Jean Pelletier and Eddie Goldenberg.

In fact, Chrétien says, if Martin hadn't been in such a hurry to take over the PMO, he wouldn't have had to worry about the sponsorship scandal. Knowing auditor general Sheila Fraser's report was going to be "tough," Chrétien was prepared to receive it, thank her for her work and then say if there was evidence of theft or fraud that the police should catch the crooks and the courts should put them in jail.

But Pimblett challenged Chrétien's memory. "Undoubtedly there are clear differences in recollection between the two men — not the least of which would appear to be Mr. Chrétien's decision to prorogue Parliament, and not accept the auditor general's report on sponsorship personally," he said.

Chrétien said he had also been willing to stay in office until the end of January to deal with it, requiring only that Martin ask him officially.

"I never even had a phone call from him, with disastrous consequences for him and the Liberal party."

Chrétien's views on Martin are only one part of a wide-ranging memoir that recounts his decade as Canada's prime minister. The former prime minister describes his meetings with U.S. President George W. Bush, who was trying to overcome Chrétien's misgivings about Canada joining the planned U.S. invasion of Iraq but who, Chrétien says, didn't have enough evidence to "convince a judge of the municipal court in Shawinigan."

Chrétien says he tried, over a beer in Johannesburg, South Africa, to talk to Tony Blair, who was then British prime minister, out of invading Iraq. Chrétien pointed out that the U.S. was choosing to replace a leader like Iraq's Saddam Hussein instead of Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe because Iraq had oil and Zimbabwe didn't.

Chrétien also reveals that media baron Conrad Black, desperate to persuade the Canadian government not to block his appointment to the British House of Lords, proposed an unusual solution.

"You could allow me to become a lord in England and at the same time make me a senator in Canada," he quotes Black as saying. Black ended up renouncing his Canadian citizenship in order to be able to take the British appointment. "I'd serve in both. I'd even be willing to sit as a Liberal," Black is also quoted as saying.

THE QUEEN WAS NOT AMUSED

In his memoirs, former prime minister Jean Chrétien recounts that the Queen once took a jest seriously when she was taken in by a Quebec radio announcer who, posing as Chrétien in 1995 during the referendum campaign, got through to her on the telephone.

" 'I didn't think you sounded quite like yourself,' she told me, 'but I thought, given all the duress you were under, you might have been drunk.' "

Our role in Afghanistan really about ties with U.S.

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By appointing his new advisory panel on Afghanistan, Prime Minister Stephen Harper has inadvertently underlined what this war is about. It is not about Afghanistan. It is about the U.S.

How else to explain the membership of a body charged with determining Canada's future in Afghanistan?

None of the five on it is an expert on that country (although one, former Liberal deputy prime minister John Manley has twice visited there.) Yet four – Manley, former New York consul-general Pam Wallin, former Washington ambassador Derek Burney and former CN Rail chief Paul Tellier – have been intimately involved with the problems of Canada–U.S. relations, and in particular with the campaign to convince Americans that Canada is not soft on terror.

Of the five, only Jake Epp, a former federal Conservative cabinet minister who now chairs Ontario Power Generation, has never been directly involved in the Canada–U.S. file.

After the 9/11 attacks, it was Manley – then foreign affairs minister – who pushed his colleagues in government to meet U.S. security needs. His reason, as he explained later to authors Janice Stein and Eugene Lang, was his belief that prosperity depended on an open border.

And that, in turn, depended on Canada convincing Washington that it was serious about George W. Bush's war on terror.

In their book, *The Unexpected War*, Stein and Lang quote Manley recalling how he berated others in Jean Chretien's cabinet.

"I was saying, 'Excuse me ... have you been reading the papers lately?' while some other ministers were saying, 'Let's not be sucked in by the Americans,' I thought these people were nuts and I still do."

Meanwhile, in New York, then consul-general Wallin was handling the thankless job of explaining to Fox News why Canada wasn't joining Bush's war on Iraq.

"Post-9/11 ideological differences between our governments got in the way," she told one reporter later.

"It wasn't that we said no to Iraq, but how we said no and the name-calling."

Like Manley, Wallin still focuses on the Canada–U.S. border. "This is fundamental to Canada's future," she said in the same interview. "The north–south axis is crucial. Canada exports more to Home Depot in the U.S. than to France."

So too Burney. Chief of staff to prime minister Brian Mulroney when the original Canada–U.S. free trade agreement was signed and, later, ambassador to Washington, Burney has kept his eyes fixed firmly south.

"Canada's place in the world is defined by our relationship with the U.S. and our ability to keep the U.S. engaged in multilateralism," he told one interviewer in 2003.

As for Tellier, he has had to deal with border issues head–on. In the aftermath of 9/11, the then CN head spent his time urging Canada and the U.S. to forge a security deal that would keep traffic moving across the border.

"The time has come for Canada and the United States to give serious consideration to new measures to improve confidence in both countries that the border is secure," he said then.

But how to improve that confidence?

In 2004, Paul Martin's Liberal government decided that the best way to keep Washington happy was to commit combat soldiers to Afghanistan.

In effect, he decided to risk Canadian lives in Kandahar to keep trucks rolling across the Detroit River.

As did Harper.

Now, as he tries to finesse the political unpopularity of the Afghan war, the Prime Minister is doing his best to ensure that official discussion remains tightly focused on what he sees as our real interest there – our relationship with Washington.

Thomas Walkom's column appears Thursday and Sunday.

Showdown: Harper sets his election trap; CONSERVATIVES Election ready and confident, Stephen Harper has thrown down the throne speech gauntlet

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ILLUSTRATION: Tom Hanson cp file photo Governor General Michaëlle Jean reads the Speech from the Throne in the Senate chamber on April 4, 2006, opening the first session of the 39th Parliament. She will read the speech opening the second session Tuesday at 6:35 p.m. Tom Hanson cp file photo Governor General Michaëlle Jean reads the Speech from the Throne in the Senate chamber on April 4, 2006, opening the first session of the 39th Parliament. She will read the speech opening the second session Tuesday at 6:35 p.m. ;

BYLINE: Allan Woods

SOURCE: Toronto Star

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WORD COUNT: 1066

Since his first Speech from the Throne 20 months ago, Prime Minister Stephen Harper has made a high art of treading thin political lines and carving off even thinner wedges of territory in which he can plant the Conservative party's flag.

He has courted ethnic votes across the country, ramped up support for the military, shifted focus on the environment and championed a get-tough approach to criminal justice. This is to say nothing of the many efforts Harper has made to win over Quebec voters.

His second throne speech, which will be delivered Tuesday evening, is expected to trumpet those causes as promises both made and kept, and to build on them in small but meaningful ways. Harper has promised a tax cut, a limit on Ottawa's ability to spend money in provincial jurisdictions, more crime bills and additional initiatives to protect the environment.

But the Prime Minister's framing of the debate that begins with the throne speech also promises to kick off a frantic period of political jousting in the capital. It will ensure that MPs are never more than a phone call away from Parliament Hill. They will be keeping their flashy election signs even closer.

In his search for a stronger hold on power, Harper has laid down an aggressive ultimatum to opposition parties that puts the trigger for an election in their hands, but ensures that he remains the one directing the firing squad.

His audacious threat to make every piece of legislation that stems from the speech subject to a confidence vote – meaning a defeated bill would spark an election – appears designed to force the hand of a Liberal party in disarray that is ill-prepared for an election. It comes from an election-ready government that, as of last week, was said to be writing the throne speech, campaign platform and debate preparation all at the same time.

Showdown: Harper sets his election trap; CONSERVATIVES Election ready and confident, Stephen Harper

The question, then, is how do the Tories hasten an election without calling it, and make sure that it happens on its own terms?

Conservative insiders expect a speech that is "pesky as opposed to pugilistic" for opposition parties, meaning that the Prime Minister will plant a few landmines in the document, but nothing that could be held against the Tories by voters still nervous about the party's direction in government.

The speech, for example, will reportedly state that Canada's targets under the Kyoto protocol are "unattainable" in an attempt to antagonize Liberal Leader Stephane Dion and the other parties who have repeatedly called on the government to meet its treaty obligations. "He can't do anything that is too far afield that it could be turned into a campaign anvil by the Liberals against the Conservatives," said one backroom Conservative, who suggested that Harper has more room to antagonize the opposition in areas like crime and the economy as opposed to the environment or health care.

"We are still vulnerable, I believe, on social issues because the default mechanism of Canadian conscience is to the Liberals or NDP."

Three senior cabinet ministers from Ontario – Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, Health Minister Tony Clement and Environment Minister John Baird, who is also the political minister for the province – refused repeated requests to discuss how the government's new parliamentary agenda will address the needs of Canada's largest province.

Flaherty, through a spokesperson, sent a statement to the Star that said nothing of what Ontarians could expect other than to see the government "continue working together to build a strong Ontario in a strong Canada."

This, despite the fact that Harper himself laid out the major markers less than two weeks ago and ministers from other provinces, particularly Quebec, have made their own announcements related to upcoming initiatives:

The throne speech will contain "significant" tax cuts stemming from the recently announced \$14-billion surplus and a number of measures to boost the economy. Those are expected to come in a mini-budget later this month or early in November.

The government will reintroduce most of the crime legislation left stalled in the last Parliament and introduce a few new ones. Justice Minister Rob Nicholson laid out plans to add tougher sentences and pre-trial detention measures to the Youth Criminal Justice Act. Transport Minister Lawrence Cannon said the speech would follow through on a long-standing promise to Quebecers to restrict Ottawa's ability to spend money on programs that encroach on exclusive provincial jurisdiction, in areas like education. The Liberals and NDP oppose this. The Bloc is demanding the "elimination" of these spending powers, a request Harper says he "will not be fully satisfying."

There will be a new commitment to address Arctic sovereignty, with a possible announcement in the weeks ahead about increased monitoring of the Northwest Passage. The popular sea route is seeing increased traffic and dispute about its status as an international waterway as global warming heats up the often ice-blocked route.

The Prime Minister will also dodge opposition demands for a declaration that Canadian troops will leave Afghanistan's violent Kandahar province after February 2009. He instead launched a five-member study group to look at the future of the mission late last week.

One government official said Harper's pledges around Arctic sovereignty and Afghanistan are "part of a bigger strategy of making people proud of their country again" – something that is emerging as a pre-election

Showdown: Harper sets his election trap; CONSERVATIVES Election ready and confident, Stephen Harper

theme. Harper has ramped up this angle over the past months with the refrain that, under his rule, "Canada's back."

But it is just as likely that the government's throne speech gambit will lead Canada back to the polls.

The NDP and Bloc Quebecois are almost certain to vote against the government in a series of confidence votes starting this week. The Liberals are the most hesitant, and the party is reportedly considering having some of its MPs not show up for the votes so they can vote against the government without forcing a campaign. That sign of weakness is not lost on either the government or on other opposition parties as they try to stake out firm ground. "I call on Mr. Dion to make sure that his members are in their seats, and that they take their responsibilities to pass judgment on Stephen Harper and his government," said the NDP's Jack Layton.

"If Mr. Dion is not prepared to stand up and be the opposition to Mr. Harper and the direction that he's taking the country in, we are."

The treasures of Turquoise Mountain; Canadian-funded plan aims at breathing new life into ancient culture

IDNUMBER	200710140037
PUBLICATION:	The Toronto Star
DATE:	2007.10.14
EDITION:	Ont
SECTION:	News
PAGE:	A11
ILLUSTRATION:	Kabul artisan Ustad Abdul Hadi, 73, demonstrates the endangered Afghan art of creating a "crisp Islamic screen." ;
BYLINE:	Olivia Ward
SOURCE:	Toronto Star
COPYRIGHT:	© 2007 Torstar Corporation
WORD COUNT:	801

In Afghanistan, ragged gashes cut through the cliffs of Bamiyan, where giant Buddha statues that symbolized an age of culture and tolerance once towered.

The Taliban's bombing of the 5th-century Buddhas outraged the world and became an image of the annihilation of Afghanistan's past, as though the claws of war had reached back in time to shred the very identity of its people.

But deliberate destruction accounts for only a fraction of the losses of Afghanistan's cultural treasures. Greed, opportunism and dire poverty have propelled armies of looters through the country's museums and archaeological sites, stripping away thousands of years of cultural history.

Meanwhile, Afghanistan's artists and artisans fled decades of warfare and repression, and most of those who remained were forced to abandon their work for the art of day-to-day survival.

Former British diplomat Rory Stewart saw the sacking of Afghanistan's culture first-hand, walking through the country shortly after the 2001 rout of the Taliban. Two years ago, he returned to set up a project aimed at replacing some of the losses and rebuilding a centuries-old culture.

Last week, Stewart's Turquoise Mountain Foundation was awarded a \$3 million grant from the Canadian government to train new artists and restore Kabul's crumbling old market district of Murad Khane.

For Oxford-educated Stewart, a long love affair with Afghanistan's rich history culminated in a near-fatal odyssey through mountains and plains in the dead of winter, following a trail of destruction and dilapidation.

In west central Afghanistan, Stewart made one of his saddest discoveries: a site that may be that of the legendary Turquoise Mountain, a city built in the 12th century by the Persian-linked Ghorids, who presided over a Silk Road trading empire boasting exquisite Asian art and crafts.

In his book *The Places in Between*, Stewart lamented that it was too late to save the remains of the site, burned out by the Mongol conqueror Genghis Khan and plundered by modern villagers who sold its unique artifacts to antiquities dealers for a few dollars.

The treasures of Turquoise Mountain; Canadian-funded plan aims at breathing new life into ancient culture

But on returning to Afghanistan in 2005, he says, "I realized that the skills so triumphantly displayed at Turquoise Mountain were not entirely lost."

The Aga Khan Trust for Culture was helping to restore historic neighbourhoods of Kabul, where Stewart witnessed an Afghan craftsman, 73-year-old Ustad Abdul Hadi, carving a "crisp Islamic screen" and viewed the painstaking work of traditional calligraphers and potters.

But other areas of Kabul were in danger, including Murad Khane, which flourished in the 18th century but now is without paved roads, water or sewers, its buildings slumping precariously.

Stewart was determined to save it from total ruin.

It helped that Britain's Prince Charles was an old acquaintance who once hired him to tutor sons William and Harry.

An architecture enthusiast who shared Stewart's passion for preserving traditional Afghan arts and architecture, Charles met with President Hamid Karzai to discuss the possibilities.

For expertise he turned to Stewart, who had a plan and the background to carry it out.

Already experienced in restoration projects as a coalition deputy governor in southern Iraq, he saw the restoration of the old marketplace in the town of Amara win applause from local merchants and a carpentry school in Nasiriyah take "200 unemployed and often radical men from the streets and trained them in basic joinery.

"Almost all of them subsequently found work."

It was a blueprint for Afghanistan – and the Turquoise Mountain Foundation.

"This means that this city will be ready to welcome the citizens and artists of Afghanistan with restored buildings, improved infrastructure and a refurbished cultural centre," said International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda, as the grant was announced last week in Kabul.

The Murad Khane restoration is "a project that would honour local culture rather than attacking it," Stewart says, adding that it would be "quick, flexible and visible and would generate as much employment as possible."

When Afghans see no progress, he points out, they quickly place the blame on Western countries that present themselves as rescuers.

But Stewart's plan was also risky.

It could be dismissed as fanciful by embittered Afghans who've suffered years of trauma and destitution.

And the owners of the crumbling edifices could see more profit in "McBuildings" than in carefully restored heritage sites.

With Afghans' general loss of skills – not to mention basic literacy – rebuilding also means a large-scale crash re-education program.

The project has passed its first tests.

The treasures of Turquoise Mountain; Canadian-funded plan aims at breathing new life into ancient culture

It is regenerating the old town, saving historical buildings and setting up galleries for traditional craft businesses that could be Kabul's future Yorkville.

For now, a school and a health clinic have opened, new sewage drains have been laid and local men can find construction and garbage-clearing jobs that need no training.

Meanwhile, the foundation has attracted some of Afghanistan's greatest craft masters to teach new students almost-lost arts of woodcarving, calligraphy and ceramics at a Centre for Traditional Afghan Arts and Architecture. And it is reviving the trade in high-end Afghan products to compete on the world design market.

For Canada, which is struggling to chart a course in Afghanistan through a thorny path of bad news, Turquoise Mountain may be a peak experience.

"This is a project which can have real symbolic and political significance for the international community," Stewart says.

"It is a project that will bring a better life to poor men and women. It is also a chance for Canada to demonstrate its respect for Afghan culture and leave something that hopefully Afghans and Canadians will be able to point to with pride in 50 years' time."

Seeking cover on Afghanistan

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PAGE: A16
KEYWORDS: BYELECTIONS; CANDIDATES; POLITICAL PARTIES;
OPPOSITION; POLITICIANS; POLITICS
SOURCE: The Edmonton Journal
WORD COUNT: 885

Stephen Harper doesn't strike one as a major fan of governing by public committee. Whatever his critics may say about his final pronouncements, few would quibble with the notion that he's a take-charge kind of guy. A ditherer — or a delegator — this particular PM is most certainly not, so strikingly unlike his predecessor. In fact, among the biggest rubs against Harper are his secretive, centralized ways, in some readings just this short of the autocratic. Washington's George Bush may have lately fancied himself the decider, but his counterpart in Ottawa wrote the pamphlet.

Which is why the prime minister's Friday announcement of a panel of semi- "names" to make recommendations on our future path in Afghanistan seems so suspicious, blatantly out of character. Are we really meant to believe that the architect of the quickie parliamentary vote to extend the mission needs the likes of oh-so-yesterday people such as John Manley, Pamela Wallin and Jake Epp to help him make up his mind?

None of the panel members are experts or even particularly experienced in the region. If he was interested in a serious consultation, why wouldn't Harper first turn to talented — and current — MPs to study our options after Canada's NATO commitment ends in 2009? Choosing several whose constituents have served in Afghanistan, some making the ultimate sacrifice, might have been especially appropriate.

It doesn't say much about Manley's loyalty to his struggling (Liberal) party, which after all initiated the Afghan mission. As for the relentless tactician Stephen Harper, it speaks volumes about attempting to neutralize a tricky election issue.

redefining clout: Hawn aids Peter MACKay

Edmontonians remember wistfully the years when our region was represented at the federal cabinet table by major players such as deputy prime ministers Don Mazankowski and Anne McLellan. These days, well, that power has clearly been sucked southward to Stephen Harper's Calgary.

True, Rona Ambrose, fired from her rocky stint as environment minister, still holds a full cabinet portfolio. But with a holiday cottage in Quebec's Gatineau Hills and a job as the nearly invisible intergovernmental affairs minister that must require plenty of travel, she doesn't seem to be the same sort of local presence as her predecessors. Where's Rona? may soon replace Where's Waldo? as a popular game.

Wednesday, Edmonton MP Laurie Hawn, the giant-killer who defeated McLellan in the last election, was named the new parliamentary secretary to Peter

MacKay, minister of national defence. That's a logical appointment, given Hawn's long and rich military experience. Will he now lead the other area Tory MPs in re-establishing a definable federal government presence around town?

Standard embraces cyber reality

Calgary's Western Standard has announced the cessation of its print edition. Over its 44-month lifespan, the kooky ultra-right-wing periodical headed by Ezra Levant did its best to stir it up, but it wasn't good enough. Infamous for printing racist comments made about Colleen Klein along with publishing the radioactive Danish cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad, the Standard fell prey to the very Darwinian vagaries of commerce it so relished. In other words, not enough people bought it or advertised in it. Pity.

Levant has promised (threatened?) that the magazine will continue along online. If so, the publication will be following in the bigfoot steps of the vastly more entertaining depiction of possible realities: Weekly World News.

Durham doodles through nfl Lineup

Each week, millions of dutiful North Americans sift through endless end zones of data, stretching the stats and crunching the numbers for thousands of NFL pools and countless commercial betting opportunities. Maybe we'd be better off taking a long snooze and marking our slips so they formed an attractive picture, possibly in the shape of a dollar sign.

This is the essential advice and life example of Windsor, Ont.'s Krista Durham, a 35-year-old auto detailer who picked up a \$548,000 Pro Picks lottery cheque last week. Durham told CanWest News that she hadn't a clue "which teams are good and bad. All I did was fill in the boxes. I remember thinking what a pretty pattern it made."

She said she slept through most of last weekend's NFL games, missing the fact that all 14 of her choices were correct. In fact, Durham doesn't even particularly like football, a qualification that might provide further inspiration for legions of pigskin prognosticators.

Should we frown at leaden lipstick?

"It was thy kiss, Love, that made me immortal," wrote Margaret Witter Fuller in verse — and you'd reckon the long-departed American poet wasn't waxing literally at the time. History does not record her own makeup preferences or colour-matching strategies.

Thursday, the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics said a new study shows 61 per cent of tested popular brand-name lipsticks contain levels of lead. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration doesn't (yet!) impose lead limits for lipstick.

But one-third of the products tested contained more lead — linked to an appalling array of ailments and behavioural problems — than mandated safe levels in candy.

Pricewise, some cheaper brands such as Revlon contained no lead at all, while Dior's pricey Addict line had higher levels than others.

Beijing can breathe easy, however: not a single one was manufactured in China.

In what less elevated observers might describe as a communications kiss-off, the cosmetic industry trade association says lead was a naturally occurring element that wasn't intentionally added to cosmetics.

Seeking cover on Afghanistan

Which makes one's lips want to purse, not pucker up.

Tories have high hopes for success in Quebec; Latest polling numbers add to party confidence

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SECTION: News
PAGE: A5
KEYWORDS: POLITICIANS; POLITICAL PARTIES; QUEBEC
DATELINE: MONTREAL
BYLINE: Hubert Bauch
SOURCE: Montreal Gazette; CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 447

MONTREAL – Quebec has always been a land of high hopes for Conservatives going into federal elections, but most often it has turned out to be the boneyard of their broken dreams.

Once again, with yet another federal election looming, they fondly hope it will be different. This time they may have more reason than usual to be hopeful.

"We're better off than we've been in many, many, many years, and getting stronger," said Philippe Gervais, a senior party strategist from Quebec.

"We're going to pull some surprises."

Conservative prospects in Quebec certainly appear more promising than before last year's federal election campaign, when the Tories started from zero seats in the province and pulled off a surprising 10 riding victories on voting day. It was the party's best showing since 1988, five federal elections ago.

The breakthrough was enough to vault the Conservatives to power, but not enough for a majority in the House of Commons. It has historically taken at least twice that many Quebec seats for any party to form a majority government.

But good as it looks for the Conservatives at this point, the Quebec signals are mixed. They have good reason to believe they could pick up those seats, but also cause to worry that this could be yet another Tory pipe dream.

On the one hand, polls show Conservative support in the province stalled at roughly the 24-per-cent level they reached in the last election. The latest polling results, in a survey conducted by Ipsos Reid earlier this month, shows the Bloc Quebecois leading with 33 per cent, followed by the Conservatives with 27 per cent and the Liberals in third with 18 per cent, down three points from the last election.

If it's bang on, the Tories could be making serious headway, but given the three-point polling margin of error, both they and the Liberals could be where they were back then.

Afghanistan has been perhaps the biggest sticking point, with 70 per cent of Quebecers indicating they oppose the Canadian military mission.

Fortune, however, has granted them two blessings beyond their own making: the rampant unpopularity of Stephane Dion and the progressive corrosion of the Liberal brand in the province, and the spectacular rise of Mario Dumont and his Conservative–friendly Action democratique.

"One of their chief assets is Mr. Dion and the Liberal party," said Tasha Kheiriddin, Quebec director of the small–c conservative minded Fraser Institute.

Gervais expects the Conservatives to be seriously competitive in about 45 of the province's 75 ridings this coming election — roughly as many as the ADQ took in the provincial vote, but agrees with the pollsters who say that for now the Quebec electoral picture is a toss–up, susceptible to big change by small shifts in voting percentages. "There's a whole bunch of factors in play."

Seven die in Afghan blast

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DATE: 2007.10.14
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A4
KEYWORDS: WAR; TERRORISM; BOMBINGS; EXPLOSIONS
DATELINE: KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, AFGHANISTAN
BYLINE: Mathew Fisher
SOURCE: CanWest News Service; With files from AFP
WORD COUNT: 167

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, AFGHANISTAN – A suicide bomber killed seven people and injured another 29 Saturday as Canadians from the 12th armoured regiment organized their largest medical evacuation operation yet in Kandahar province.

The regiment frantically tried to save the lives of 36 Afghan policemen and civilians who were wounded in an attack.

The explosion took place at Spin Boldak, which is within Canada's area of military responsibility in Southern Afghanistan near the Pakistan border. The Canadians, from a Quebec-based reconnaissance unit, sent 25 of the 35 wounded by air and by road from Spin Boldak to the Kandahar airfield for treatment at the Canadian-led NATO multinational hospital there. Nine people were in critical condition and urgently needed sophisticated surgical care.

"Five civilians and two policemen were killed," Kandahar province police chief Sayed Aqa Safed told AFP. Twenty-one policemen and eight civilians were hurt.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility but the Taliban have stepped up the use of suicide attacks in an insurgency launched since they were driven from government.

Chretien book settles scores; Former PM rips Martin on war, Kyoto

IDNUMBER 200710140004
PUBLICATION: Edmonton Journal
DATE: 2007.10.14
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A1 / FRONT
ILLUSTRATION: Colour Photo: "I was damned if I was going to let myself beshoved out the door by a gang of self-serving goons." From Jean Chretien's memoirs ; Colour Photo: "My successors succumbed to the fears and threats of the anti-Kyoto forces and did serious damage to Canada's progress and our reputation in the process." Jean Chretien ;
KEYWORDS: POLITICIANS; POLITICAL PARTIES; GOVERNMENT; CANADA
DATELINE: OTTAWA
BYLINE: Elizabeth Thompson
SOURCE: Montreal Gazette; CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 1071

OTTAWA – Former prime minister Paul Martin is responsible for Canadian troops ending up in the "killing fields" around Kandahar because he took too long to make a decision, former prime minister Jean Chretien charges in a new book.

In a memoir likely to rip open old Liberal wounds and exacerbate divisions within the party before a possible plunge into a federal election, the former Liberal leader attacks Martin on several fronts, from his scheming to force Chretien out of office to Martin's handling of Canada's Kyoto environmental protocol commitments. He also argues that Martin has only himself to blame for the grief he suffered as a result of the sponsorship scandal.

And the former prime minister offers intriguing tidbits about such figures as former media baron Conrad Black and the Queen.

But Chretien, long described as a political brawler, takes off the gloves when it comes to Martin. He says manoeuvring by Martin and his supporters to push him out of the prime minister's office actually steeled his resolve to stay on.

He doesn't mince words.

"I was damned if I was going to let myself be shoved out the door by a gang of self-serving goons," Chretien writes.

Chretien describes the betrayal he felt upon learning in the spring of 2000 about a meeting Martin supporters had held in a Toronto airport hotel.

"By trying to force me to go, they aroused my competitive spirit, ignited my anger, and inadvertently gave me the blessing I needed from Aline (his wife) to fight for a third term. For that, ironically, I owed Paul Martin a great deal of thanks." Chretien also recounts that after the Taliban government of Afghanistan was overthrown, he carefully engineered things so Canada's soldiers were stationed around the safer area of Kabul,

helping to rebuild the Afghan capital.

"Later, unfortunately, when my successor took too long to make up his mind about whether Canada should extend our term with the International Security Assistance Force, our soldiers were moved out of Kabul and sent south again to battle the Taliban in the killing fields around Kandahar," Chretien writes.

Chretien was scheduled to launch his memoirs in person in Ottawa on Monday, but is currently recovering from emergency heart bypass surgery earlier this month.

Although the tension between the two men was one of the worst-kept secrets in Ottawa when they served together in cabinet, Chretien has, since leaving office, maintained a low profile, generally keeping to himself his thoughts about the man who took his place as Liberal leader and prime minister in November 2003.

However, in *Jean Chretien: My Years as Prime Minister*, Chretien blasts Martin's handling of the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol on greenhouse gas reduction and accuses him of lying to the Liberal caucus.

Chretien says when he left office, Canada was on track to meet its commitments under the Kyoto accord.

"Unfortunately, whether for political or ideological reasons, my successors succumbed to the fears and threats of the anti-Kyoto forces and did serious damage to Canada's progress and our reputation in the process." Chretien reveals that he contemplated removing Martin from the finance ministry, firing the conspirators on Martin's staff and cancelling the government contracts with Martin's friends and advisers at the Earncliffe strategy and communications firm, but was talked out of it by his top advisers, Jean Pelletier and Eddie Goldenberg.

"Both were to regret their advice, and I soon regretted my decision to keep him." Chretien deals briefly with the reasons for setting up the sponsorship program in the wake of the 1995 Quebec referendum on sovereignty and blames the scandal on a few bad apples, who, unbeknownst to him, decided to line their own pockets. Chretien also points out that of three people charged with crimes to date, Paul Coffin and Charles Guité had ties to the Conservatives and Jean Brault is described as a Parti Quebecois supporter.

Chretien admits that in earlier drafts of the book he planned to write "at some length" about Martin's decision to launch the inquiry into the sponsorship scandal, but decided against it because the matter was still before the courts.

Instead, Chretien quotes a newspaper columnist's assessment that the sponsorship scandal was "a mouse of an affair" and that Martin reacted like an elephant panicked by the sight of a mouse, creating havoc in all directions.

Chretien's views on Martin are part of a wide-ranging, 412-page memoir that recounts his decade as Canada's prime minister. Passages include observations on the 1995 referendum and his conviction that Canada would be pulled into the United States if Quebec were to separate, as well as his government's nervousness about introducing the Clarity Act.

Chretien also reveals some of his behind-the-scenes conversations with international leaders. He describes his meetings with U.S. President George W. Bush, who was trying to overcome Chretien's misgivings about Canada joining the planned U.S. invasion of Iraq, but who, Chretien says, didn't have enough evidence to "convince a judge of the municipal court in Shawinigan." Chretien says he tried, over a beer in Johannesburg, South Africa, to talk Tony Blair, who was then British prime minister, out of invading Iraq. Chretien pointed out that the U.S. was choosing to replace a leader like Iraq's Saddam Hussein instead of Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe because Iraq had oil and Zimbabwe didn't.

Chretien also reveals that media baron Conrad Black, desperate to persuade the Canadian government not to block his appointment to the British House of Lords, proposed an unusual solution.

"You could allow me to become a lord in England and at the same time make me a senator in Canada," the book says, quoting Black, who ended up renouncing his Canadian citizenship in order to be able to take the British appointment.

Chretien reveals he had an opportunity to enter the media business in October 2003 when CanWest founder Izzy Asper told him, a week before Asper's death, that he wanted the prime minister to become chairman of his media empire once Chretien got out of politics.

"I took it as a jest, but he made the statement at a dinner table in front of other people, and his family later told me he had been serious." Chretien recounts that Queen Elizabeth, however, once took a jest seriously when she was taken in by a Quebec radio announcer who, posing as Chretien in 1995 during the referendum campaign, got through to her on the telephone.

" 'I didn't think you sounded quite like yourself,' she told me, 'but I thought, given all the duress you were under, you might have been drunk.' "

New leadership prepares reservists for Afghanistan; Regiment remembers historic battle

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PUBLICATION: Calgary Herald
DATE: 2007.10.14
EDITION: Final
SECTION: City & Observer
PAGE: B7
ILLUSTRATION: Colour Photo: Ted Jacob, Calgary Herald / Lt.-Col. Michael Vernon, centre, takes over as commanding officer of the Calgary Highlanders from Lt.-Col. Tom Manley, right, as Col. Art Wriedt presides over the ceremony at Mewata Armoury on Saturday. ; Colour Photo: Irene Bakker, honorary consul of the Netherlands, inspects the Calgary Highlanders at Mewata Armoury on Saturday. ;
KEYWORDS: 0
BYLINE: Jamie Komarnicki
SOURCE: Calgary Herald
WORD COUNT: 314

As members of a local reserve infantry regiment held a ceremony Saturday remembering a fierce historic battle, several of their own are preparing to fight Canada's new battles in Afghanistan.

The Calgary Highlanders held a change of command ceremony at Mewata Armoury on Saturday, incorporating a memorial service for the Battle of Walcheren Causeway during the Second World War.

The Battle of Walcheren Causeway took place during the liberation of the Netherlands, with the Calgary Highlanders suffering 64 casualties.

Today, Canada's Afghanistan mission is focusing new attention on the role of reservists, said incoming commanding officer Lt.-Col. Michael Vernon.

"At this time in history, the reserves have never been more involved," said Vernon, who works as a television journalist.

About 90 reservists from Calgary will be deployed to Afghanistan this January among some 2,000 Armed Forces soldiers from across Canada participating in a new tour of duty.

Members of the Calgary Highlanders regiment who are part of the deployment are training in Wainwright.

It will be important for those soldiers — and their families left behind — to have the support they need for the mission, said the outgoing commanding officer, Lt.-Col. Tom Manley.

"We have over 60 soldiers training for Afghanistan. Supporting them and their families and reintegrating the soldiers when they come back is an important challenge," he said.

The reserves face many of the same recruitment issues as police forces and fire departments, said Vernon.

But Canada's mission in Afghanistan is a motivating factor that attracts new soldiers, he said.

"We have a definite role, a definite need for reservists to serve overseas," said Vernon.

"That really focuses your attention."

Still, the recent death of Cpl. Nathan Hornburg in Afghanistan is a reality check for reservists back home, said Cpl. Desmond Chan, 25.

"It makes you think twice," he said.

"We're all susceptible to it. It does make us think a little more."

But he's often considered serving overseas and is waiting for the right opportunity.

Master Cpl. Alexandra Lange, 34, went to 33 ramp ceremonies for fallen soldiers during her nine months in Afghanistan last year, including one for a good friend.

"That was a really tough one," she said.

"It really hits home and becomes more real."

But she's eager to return to Afghanistan and rally for causes such as better education for younger generations.

Reservists come from all walks of life, but all have a desire to somehow serve their country, often at great cost, she said.

"I think there's a strain of that running with all of us," said Lange.

"(We) know what's going on; we might die. We're all all wanting to be part of the risk, to be part of something bigger."

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Taliban claims arms bought with ransom

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EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A4
KEYWORDS: WAR; TERRORISM; FOREIGN AID; AFGHANISTAN; GREAT BRITAIN; UNITED STATES
SOURCE: The Telegraph
WORD COUNT: 188

Kila Abdullah, Pakistan – Millions of dollars handed over to secure the release of South Korean hostages in Afghanistan have been used to buy weapons deployed against British and American forces in the country, the Taliban claims.

Maj. Alexis Roberts, 32, Prince William's former platoon commander at Sandhurst, was one of the victims of the Taliban offensive funded by the hostage money.

According to Taliban fighters interviewed by The Telegraph, the money has also been used to train recruits to carry out terrorist attacks in Britain and America.

South Korea has repeatedly denied claims by Afghan officials that it paid cash to secure the release in August of 21 Christian volunteers who were held for nearly six weeks. But in a rare interview, three Taliban fighters involved in the conflict with the British in Helmand province said that \$10 million cash handed over in two instalments had been used to boost operations in Afghanistan and abroad.

"It was a God-sent opportunity," said Mullah Hezbollah, 30. "It has helped us to multiply our stockpile of weapons and explosives to wage battle for at least a year or so."

Seven die, 29 injured in suicide attack

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PUBLICATION: Calgary Herald
DATE: 2007.10.14
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A4
KEYWORDS: WAR; TERRORISM; BOMBINGS; SUICIDE
DATELINE: KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, AFGHANISTAN
BYLINE: Mathew Fisher
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 253

A suicide bomber killed seven people and injured another 29 on Saturday as Canadians from the 12th Armoured Regiment organized their largest medical evacuation operation yet in Kandahar province.

The regiment frantically tried to save the lives of 36 Afghan policemen and civilians who were wounded in an attack.

The explosion took place at Spin Boldak, which is within Canada's area of military responsibility in southern Afghanistan near the Pakistan border.

The Canadians, from a Quebec-based reconnaissance unit, sent 25 of the 35 wounded by air and by road from Spin Boldak to the Kandahar airfield for treatment at the Canadian-led NATO multinational hospital there.

Nine people were deemed to be in critical condition and in urgent need of sophisticated surgical care.

"Five civilians and two policemen were killed," Kandahar province police chief Sayed Aqa Safed told AFP. Twenty-one policemen and eight civilians were hurt. "The suicide attacker was torn into pieces," he said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but the Taliban have stepped up the use of suicide attacks in an insurgency launched since they were driven from government in late 2001.

The troops from the 12th Armoured Regiment arrived at the scene of the attack moments after it occurred. The medical scene was so complicated and catastrophic that they requested that two military doctors be flown immediately there from the Kandahar hospital, 80 kilometres to the west, to provide immediate care at the scene.

Kandahar is the headquarters of Canada's Joint Task Force Afghanistan.

The attack occurred at dusk at the start of the Eid Festival to mark the end of Ramadan. It also happened as President Hamid Karzai made a short visit to the provincial capital, less than 100 kilometres away.

Canadian troops scramble to save injured Afghans; Regiment conducts largest medical evacuation after suicide attack kills at least 7, injures 29

IDNUMBER 200710140025
PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Citizen
DATE: 2007.10.14
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A9
DATELINE: KANDAHAR AIRFIELD
BYLINE: Matthew Fisher
SOURCE: The Ottawa Citizen; With files from Agence France–Presse
WORD COUNT: 288

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD – A suicide bomber killed seven people and injured another 29 yesterday as Canadians from the 12th Armoured Regiment organized their largest medical evacuation operation in Kandahar province.

The regiment frantically tried to save the lives of 36 Afghan police officers and civilians who were hurt in the attack.

The explosion took place at Spin Boldak, which is within Canada's area of military responsibility in southern Afghanistan near the Pakistan border. The Canadians, from a Quebec–based reconnaissance unit, sent 25 of the 35 wounded by air and by road from Spin Boldak to the Kandahar Airfield for treatment at the Canadian–led NATO multinational hospital there. Nine people were deemed to be in critical condition and in urgent need of sophisticated surgical care.

"Five civilians and two policemen were killed," said Kandahar province police Chief Sayed Aqa Safed. Twenty–one police officers and eight civilians were hurt. "The suicide attacker was torn into pieces."

There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but the Taliban have stepped up the use of suicide attacks.

The troops from the 12th Armoured Regiment arrived moments after the attack occurred. The medical scene was so complicated and catastrophic that they requested that two military doctors be flown in immediately from the Kandahar hospital, 80 kilometres away, to provide immediate care.

Kandahar is the headquarters of Canada's Joint Task Force Afghanistan.

Roads were closed on some parts of the airfield as a fleet of military ambulances, with lights flashing, carried the large number of casualties to hospital. Triage teams at the hospital were waiting at the doors to assess patients as they arrived.

The attack occurred at dusk at the start of the Eid Festival to mark the end of Ramadan. It also happened as President Hamid Karzai made a short visit the provincial capital, about than 100 kilometres away.

Jean's version; In a memoir of his days as prime minister, political brawler Jean Chrétien takes a few swings at political rivals, but he drops the gloves for his successor, Paul Martin

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PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Citizen
DATE: 2007.10.14
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PAGE: A6
ILLUSTRATION: Colour Photo: (See hard copy for photo description);
BYLINE: Elizabeth Thompson
SOURCE: The Montreal Gazette
WORD COUNT: 2199

Former prime minister Paul Martin is responsible for Canadian troops ending up in the "killing fields" around Kandahar because he took too long to make a decision, former prime minister Jean Chrétien charges in a new book.

In a memoir, likely to rip open old Liberal wounds and exacerbate divisions within the party only days before a possible plunge into a federal election, the former Liberal leader attacks Mr. Martin on several fronts, from his scheming to force Mr. Chrétien out of office to Mr. Martin's handling of Canada's Kyoto environmental protocol commitments. He also argues that Mr. Martin has only himself to blame for the grief he suffered as a result of the sponsorship scandal.

And the former prime minister offers intriguing tidbits about such figures as former media baron Conrad Black and the Queen.

But Mr. Chrétien, long described as a political brawler, drops the gloves when it comes to Mr. Martin. He says manoeuvring by Mr. Martin and his supporters to push him out of the prime minister's office actually steeled his resolve to stay on.

He doesn't mince words.

"I was damned if I was going to let myself be shoved out the door by a gang of self-serving goons," Mr. Chrétien writes after describing the hurt and betrayal he felt upon learning in the spring of 2000 about a meeting Mr. Martin's supporters had held in a Toronto airport hotel. "By trying to force me to go, they aroused my competitive spirit, ignited my anger, and inadvertently gave me the blessing I needed from Aline (his wife) to fight for a third term. For that, ironically,

I owed Paul Martin a great deal of thanks."

Mr. Chrétien also recounts that after the Taliban government of Afghanistan was overthrown, he engineered things so Canada's soldiers were stationed around the safer area of Kabul, helping to rebuild the Afghan capital.

Jean's version; In a memoir of his days as prime minister, political brawler Jean Chrétien takes a few swings

"Later, unfortunately, when my successor took too long to make up his mind about whether Canada should extend our term with the International Security Assistance Force, our soldiers were moved out of Kabul and sent south again to battle the Taliban in the killing fields around Kandahar," Mr. Chrétien writes.

Jim Pimblett, a spokesman for Mr. Martin, said his boss did not receive an advance copy of the book and was "not in a position to react in any detail, nor is he inclined to do so today or in the foreseeable future."

"Obviously, it is disappointing to hear reports that old divisions are being revisited at a time when the Liberal Party needs to stand unified behind (Liberal leader Stéphane) Dion." Mr. Pimblett acknowledged that the two men had their differences at times, "but their partnership in government generated tremendous achievements."

Mr. Chrétien was originally scheduled to launch his memoirs in person in Ottawa tomorrow, but is currently recovering from emergency heart bypass surgery earlier this month.

Although the tension between the two men was one of the worst kept secrets in Ottawa when they served together in cabinet, Mr. Chrétien has, since leaving office, maintained a low profile and kept to the high road, generally keeping his thoughts about the man who took his place as Liberal leader and prime minister in November 2003 to himself.

However, in *Jean Chrétien, My Years as Prime Minister*, Mr. Chrétien blasts Mr. Martin's handling of the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol on greenhouse-gas reduction and accuses him of lying to the Liberal caucus.

Mr. Chrétien says when he left office, Canada was on track to meet its commitments under the Kyoto accord.

"Unfortunately, whether for political or ideological reasons, my successors succumbed to the fears and threats of the anti-Kyoto forces and did serious damage to Canada's progress and our reputation in the process."

Mr. Chrétien reveals that he contemplated removing Mr. Martin from the finance ministry, firing the conspirators on Mr. Martin's staff and cancelling the government contracts with Mr. Martin's friends and advisers at the Earncliffe strategy and communications firm, but was talked out of it by his top advisers Jean Pelletier and Eddie Goldenberg.

"Both were to regret their advice, and I soon regretted my decision to keep him."

In his memoirs, Mr. Chrétien paints a picture of Mr. Martin as a scheming, ambitious man ready to tell anyone anything they wanted to hear in order to get support for his leadership aspirations. For example, when the minister of agriculture asked for an extra billion dollars in 2002 to help Western farmers cope with a serious drought, Mr. Martin offered less than \$500 million. Mr. Chrétien says when he ordered a compromise of \$700 million, Mr. Martin then told farmers and members of caucus it was Mr. Chrétien's fault they didn't get the full billion.

"It was irresponsible behaviour on his part and it made the government increasingly difficult to manage," Mr. Chrétien writes.

In fact, Mr. Chrétien says, if Mr. Martin hadn't been in such a hurry to take over the PMO, he wouldn't have had to worry about the sponsorship scandal.

Knowing Auditor General Sheila Fraser's report was going to be "tough," Mr. Chrétien was prepared to receive it, thank her for her work and then say if there was evidence of theft or fraud that the police should catch the crooks and the courts should put them in jail.

Jean's version; In a memoir of his days as prime minister, political brawler Jean Chrétien takes a few swings

"Of course, I expected to have to take some hits in the press for a couple of weeks, but that hadn't frightened me in the past and it didn't frighten me now. By the time Mr. Martin was to take over, the whole issue would have been history and he could have begun his mandate without that albatross around his neck."

But Mr. Pimblett challenged Mr. Chrétien's memory. "Undoubtedly there are clear differences in recollection between the two men -- not the least of which would appear to be Mr. Chrétien's decision to prorogue Parliament, and not accept the auditor general's report on sponsorship personally," he said.

Mr. Chrétien said he had also been willing to stay in office until the end of January to deal with it, requiring only that Mr. Martin ask him officially.

"I never even had a phone call from him, with disastrous consequences for him and the Liberal Party."

Mr. Chrétien deals briefly with the reasons for setting up the sponsorship program in the wake of the 1995 Quebec referendum on sovereignty and blames the scandal on a few bad apples, who, unbeknownst to him, decided to line their own pockets. Mr. Chrétien also points out that of three people charged with crimes to date, Paul Coffin and Charles Guité had ties to the Conservatives and Jean Brault is described as a Parti Québécois supporter.

Mr. Chrétien admits that in earlier drafts of the book he planned to write "at some length" about Mr. Martin's decision to launch the inquiry into the sponsorship scandal presided by Justice John Gomery, the commission's work, its findings and its ramifications, however it was not included because the matter was still before the courts.

Instead, Mr. Chrétien quotes a newspaper columnist's assessment that the sponsorship scandal was "a mouse of an affair" and that Mr. Martin reacted like an elephant panicked by the sight of a mouse, creating havoc in all directions.

Mr. Chrétien's views on Mr. Martin are only one part of a wide-ranging, 412-page memoir that recounts his decade as Canada's prime minister. Passages include observations on the 1995 referendum and his conviction that Canada would be pulled into the U.S. if Quebec were to separate, as well as his government's nervousness about introducing the Clarity Act.

Mr. Chrétien also reveals some of his behind the scenes conversations with international leaders -- particularly former U.S. President Bill Clinton.

He also describes his meetings with U.S. President George W. Bush, who was trying to overcome Mr. Chrétien's misgivings about Canada joining the planned U.S. invasion of Iraq, but who, Mr. Chrétien says, didn't have enough evidence to "convince a judge of the municipal court in Shawinigan." Mr. Chrétien says he tried, over a beer in Johannesburg, South Africa, to talk to Tony Blair, who was then British prime minister, out of invading Iraq. Mr. Chrétien pointed out that the U.S. was choosing to replace a leader like Iraq's Saddam Hussein instead of Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe because Iraq had oil and Zimbabwe didn't.

Mr. Chrétien also reveals that media baron Conrad Black, desperate to persuade the government not to block his appointment to the British House of Lords, proposed an unusual solution.

"You could allow me to become a lord in England and at the same time make me a senator in Canada," he quotes Mr. Black as saying. Mr. Black ended up renouncing his Canadian citizenship in order to be able to take the British appointment. "I'd serve in both. I'd even be willing to sit as a Liberal," Mr. Black is also quoted as saying.

Mr. Chrétien reveals he had an opportunity to enter the media business in October 2003 when CanWest

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founder Izzy Asper told him, a week before Mr. Asper's death, that he wanted him to become chairman of his media empire once he got out of politics.

"I took it as a jest, but he made the statement at a dinner table in front of other people, and his family later told me he had been serious."

Mr. Chrétien recounts that the Queen, however, once took a jest seriously when she was taken in by a Quebec radio announcer who, posing as Mr. Chrétien in 1995 during the referendum campaign, got through to her on the telephone.

" 'I didn't think you sounded quite like yourself,' she told me, 'but I thought, given all the duress you were under, you might have been drunk'."

— — —

Chrétien on ...

From Jean Chrétien's memoir 'My Years as Prime Minister,' published by Knopf Canada:

PAUL MARTIN

— I find it ironic that I practically had to force him to take the job that would launch his reputation and help make him party leader and then prime minister.

— And though I was annoyed enough for a day or two to think of removing him from Finance, firing the conspirators on his staff, and cancelling the government contracts with his friends and advisors at Earnsccliffe, I was talked out of it by Jean Pelletier and Eddie Goldenberg, who were concerned about the financial community's reaction. Both were to regret their advice, and I soon regretted my decision to keep him.

BRIAN MULRONEY

— There was, as I saw it, three fundamental priorities facing the government as a result of the Mulroney legacy: to reduce our horrendous deficit and prevent the International Monetary Fund from coming into Canada to fix our finances; to reassert our independence and protect Canada from being seen as the fifty-first state of the United States; and, in the face of the separatist threat in Quebec and the sense of alienation in other parts of the country, to keep Canada united.

PIERRE TRUDEAU

During the intense discussion I had with Pierre Trudeau about Mulroney's constitutional reforms over dinner in the Toronto hotel room in 1992, he even accused me of having weakened the Charter of Rights by surrendering to the premiers' demand for the "notwithstanding" clause. "You gave them that," he said.

"Sorry, Pierre," I countered. "I recommended it. You gave it."

THE QUEEN

Her Majesty and I also shared a laugh about a prank that had taken place a couple of weeks before, when a radio comedian managed to get through to her on the phone by pretending to be me ... the Queen herself wasn't quite so amused, though she had handled the incident graciously. "I didn't think you sounded quite like yourself," she told me, "but I thought, given all the duress you were under, you might have been drunk."

Jean's version; In a memoir of his days as prime minister, political brawler Jean Chrétien takes a few swings

CONRAD BLACK

Instead, after suing me for \$25,000 for "abuse of power" and losing in the courts twice, he decided that becoming Lord Black of Crossharbour was more important than remaining a Canadian citizen. It wasn't the choice I would have made myself — and, for him, it may have been a serious error in judgement in light of his subsequent troubles with the U.S. justice system — but it really had very little to do with me.

BILL CLINTON

— Though Clinton was obviously exhausted by his long day of travel, I found him easy to talk to and quick to laugh. Still, I was leery about establishing the sort of coziness Mulroney had cultivated with Ronald Regan and George Bush.

HIMSELF

— My reputation as a defender of the little guy helped get me elected at the age of twenty-nine, no doubt about it, as did my down-to-earth, fun-loving, optimistic personality.

— One promise I never made was to abolish the 7 per cent federal Goods and Services Tax ... What we were promising to do was clear enough in my own mind — replace, not abolish, the GST — but I made a mistake by trying to be a bit too clever with the nuanced argument.

THROTTLING A PROTESTER

And though the English-language coverage wasn't quite so wild, the TV clips and newspaper photographs looked pretty damaging, not least because the sunglasses I had been wearing at the time made me look like a mobster. My relatives phoned, some in tears, asking what had happened to me. Poor Aline was upset. She was always the one who had to manage the bad news with friends and family, and there's often bad news when you're married to the prime minister.

THE INTRUDER AT 24 SUSSEX

The man didn't say anything but gave a strange smile and looked down the long knife he was holding in his right hand. Later he told the police, "I didn't want to harm Madame Chrétien, I just wanted to cut her husband's throat."

Quebec unit helps injured after blast

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PUBLICATION: Montreal Gazette
DATE: 2007.10.14
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A8
KEYWORDS: BOMBINGS; WAR
DATELINE: KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghan-Istan
BYLINE: MATTHEW FISHER
SOURCE: CanWest News Service; AFP contributed to this report
WORD COUNT: 228

A suicide bomber killed seven people and injured 29 yesterday and Canadians from the 12th Armoured Regiment organized their largest medical evacuation operation yet in Kandahar province.

The regiment frantically tried to save the lives of Afghan policemen and civilians who were wounded.

The explosion took place at Spin Boldak, which is within Canada's area of military responsibility in southern Afghanistan near the Pakistan border.

The bomber was on a motorbike and blew himself up in a crowded part of the town as people were shopping, Kandahar province police chief Sayed Aqa Safed said.

The Canadians, from a Quebec-based reconnaissance unit, sent 25 of the wounded by air and by road from Spin Boldak to the Kandahar airfield for treatment at the Canadian-led NATO multinational hospital there. Nine people were deemed to be in critical condition.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility but the Taliban have stepped up the use of suicide attacks in an insurgency launched since they were driven from government in late 2001.

The troops from the 12th Armoured arrived at the scene of the attack moments after it occurred. The scene was so catastrophic that they requested two military doctors be flown immediately there from the Kandahar hospital, 80 kilometres to the west, to provide immediate care.

Roads were closed on some parts of the airfield as a fleet of military ambulances, with lights flashing, carried the large number of casualties to the hospital. Triage teams at the hospital were waiting at the doors to assess patients as they arrived.

Chretien's Revenge; Wide-ranging book rips into Martin over Kyoto, Afghanistan

IDNUMBER 200710140001

PUBLICATION: Montreal Gazette

DATE: 2007.10.14

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: A1 / FRONT

ILLUSTRATION: Colour Photo: Jean Chrétien; Colour Photo: JIM YOUNG, REUTERS / When they were teammates Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin put up a united front at a news conference on Nov. 18, 2003, only weeks before Chrétien announced he would step down as prime minister. According to Chrétien's memoirs, all had not been well between him and Martin. ;

KEYWORDS: POLITICIANS; POLITICAL PARTIES; GOVERNMENT; CANADA

DATELINE: OTTAWA

BYLINE: Elizabeth Thompson

SOURCE: The Gazette

WORD COUNT: 1403

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In a memoir likely to rip open old Liberal wounds and exacerbate divisions within the party only days before a possible plunge into a federal election, the former leader attacks Martin on several fronts, from his scheming to force Chrétien out of office to Martin's handling of Canada's Kyoto Protocol commitments.

He also argues that Martin has only himself to blame for the grief he suffered as a result of the sponsorship scandal.

And the former prime minister offers intriguing tidbits about such figures as former media baron Conrad Black and Queen Elizabeth II.

But Chrétien, long described as a political brawler, takes off the gloves when it comes to Martin. He says manoeuvring by Martin and his supporters to push him out of the prime minister's office actually steeled his resolve to stay.

He doesn't mince words.

"I was damned if I was going to let myself be shoved out the door by a gang of self-serving goons," Chrétien writes after describing the hurt and betrayal he felt on learning in the spring of 2000 of a meeting Martin supporters had held in a Toronto airport hotel.

"By trying to force me to go, they aroused my competitive spirit, ignited my anger, and inadvertently gave me the blessing I needed from Aline (his wife) to fight for a third term. For that, ironically, I owed Paul Martin a great deal of thanks."

Chrétien also recounts that after the Taliban were overthrown in Afghanistan, he carefully engineered things so Canada's soldiers were stationed around the safer area of Kabul, helping to rebuild the Afghan capital.

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Pimblett acknowledged the two men had their differences at times "but their partnership in government generated tremendous achievements."

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The ex-PM also describes his meetings with President George W. Bush, who was trying to overcome Chrétien's misgivings about Canada joining the planned U.S.-led invasion of Iraq but who, Chrétien says, didn't have enough evidence to "convince a judge of the municipal court in Shawinigan."

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ethompson@thegazette.canwest.com

Proud of London

SOURCETAG: 0710140374
PUBLICATION: The London Free Press
DATE: 2007.10.14
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Editorial/Opinion
PAGE: A18
BYLINE: MARJORY MOONEY
DATELINE: London
COLUMN: Letters to the Editor
WORD COUNT: 59

I'm undecided about our position in Afghanistan, but I do support our troops, wherever they are, so I fly yellow ribbons from my balcony.

My late husband, who served for almost 30 years in the Canadian army (Europe and Korea) would want me to do so. He would be proud that London shows its support by yellow ribbons on its public vehicles.

Civilians injured in bombing

SOURCETAG 0710140354
PUBLICATION: The London Free Press
DATE: 2007.10.14
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A13
BYLINE: SUN MEDIA NEWS SERVICES
DATELINE: KANDAHAR, AFGHANISTAN
COLUMN: News Digest
WORD COUNT: 103

An emergency triage unit was set up yesterday at the military base at Kandahar Airfield to treat more than 30 Afghan civilians injured in a suicide bombing near the Pakistan border. Officials said seven people were killed and dozens wounded when a suicide bomber on a motorbike detonated his explosives near some policemen in a crowded marketplace in Spin Boldak. Interior Ministry spokesperson Zemer Bashary said two police officers and five civilians died. Twelve people were said to be in critical condition.
KEYWORDS=WORLD

Bombing injured treated at airfield

SOURCETAG 0710140775
PUBLICATION: The Edmonton Sun
DATE: 2007.10.14
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: 31
BYLINE: CP
DATELINE: KANDAHAR, Afghanistan
WORD COUNT: 101

An emergency triage unit was set up yesterday at the military base at Kandahar Airfield to treat more than 30 Afghan civilians injured in a suicide bombing near the Pakistan border.

Officials said seven people were killed and dozens wounded when a suicide bomber on a motorbike detonated his explosives near some police officers in a crowded marketplace in Spin Boldak.

Interior Ministry spokesman Zemer Bashary said two police officers and five civilians died.

Twelve people were said to be in critical condition.

The injured, including eight Afghan police officers and an eight-year-old child, were taken to the Kandahar base by helicopter.

Canadian soldiers near Spin Boldak were sent to help local authorities with the evacuation, as were two doctors from Kandahar Airfield. KEYWORDS=WORLD

Military history a must: Hawn

SOURCETAG 0710140756
PUBLICATION: The Edmonton Sun
DATE: 2007.10.14
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: 12
BYLINE: RENATO GANDIA, SUN MEDIA
WORD COUNT: 252

Canadian schools must do a better job teaching the country's military history to kids, says the newly appointed parliamentary secretary to the minister of national defence.

"Very little of Canada's military history is taught and Canada has a proud military tradition," Laurie Hawn told Sun Media yesterday before he attended the 25th anniversary of Edmonton's Korean Veterans Association Unit 21.

"It's not celebrating war for war sake," said Hawn, MP for Edmonton Centre. "It's to celebrate the fact that Canadians have the courage to stand up when standing up is right."

Hawn said it is important not to forget that almost 27,000 Canadians served and fought in the Korean War, which ended in 1953.

"They gave their lives for a good cause and they should not be forgotten."

If the Allied forces did not intervene in the Korean War, the Asian country would not be as prosperous as it is now, the politician said.

Jean Pierre Van Eck, a Korean war veteran, is proud of his role in liberating the country, but he said the experience was "no fun at all."

"When I came back from the war, I wanted to come out of the army as fast as I could," said the 73-year-old retired oilfield engineer. "That's how bad it was. It was no fun at all. You lived like a rat."

That's why for him it's important to remember the veterans because of the sacrifices they made.

About four years ago, Van Eck met other veterans in Seoul during the 50th anniversary of its liberation. He said he didn't recognize the city.

"It's unbelievable. It was like Chicago down there."

Nothing was left on the ground when he left Korea more than five decades ago, he said.

But Van Eck's feelings about armed combat have changed. He said he doesn't think the Canadian military should be in Afghanistan.

"I feel sorry for the folks who are in Afghanistan right now. We knew who we were fighting in Korea. The guys in Afghanistan, they don't know who they're fighting. It's horrible. I feel sorry for them."

Last night 24 Korean war veterans and 16 other guests, celebrated the association's anniversary at the Wellington Community Hall, 13440 132 St. KEYWORDS=CANADA

Sunday Letters Column

SOURCETAG 0710140645
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DATE: 2007.10.14
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Editorial/Opinion
PAGE: 33
COLUMN: Sunday Letters
WORD COUNT: 1347

DOGGONE ANNOYED

Does anyone want to donate to put a muzzle on Rick ("Big Oil") Bell?

Brent Dolan

(Gee, we thought everyone in Canada had a right to state their opinion.)

REMEMBERING THE NEP

Did Ken Campeau (Letters, Oct. 6) actually go through the NEP in Alberta or was he on the sidelines watching from Quebec or Ontario as the Liberals put the boots to Alberta? Like many Albertans at the time, I lost my job when the economy went sour. Luckily I was a recent graduate so I didn't lose as much as those with families to feed. Anyone who lived through those times will never forget them.

Barry Banek

(The whole country suffered from the fallout.)

HEALTHY SUGGESTION

Re: Choi Gi Rok's letter on the health-care system. The supply cannot keep up with the demand. Regardless of how many doctors, hospitals and walk-in clinics are provided to the public it would never be enough. This sends a strong message. We must take responsibility for our own health by prevention rather than treatment. I rarely require medical care and see my physician once a year for an annual check-up. I take full responsibility to make sure I take care of my health so I do not have to rely on the already overtaxed, overworked, understaffed health-care system. If everyone participated in moderate exercise, ate a healthy diet, drank in moderation and didn't smoke, our health-care system would be prospering as well as our Canadian dollar is now.

Leigha Watson

(Good advice, but not all illnesses are preventable.)

GET IT RIGHT

It is apparent the royalty review recommendations were made based on inaccurate data. The result of implementing the program as proposed will have a negative and far-reaching impact on the Alberta economy. While the time has come to adjust the royalty regime, it's extremely important to get it right!

Pat Rollock

(Right.)

BRONCO RUNS SHOW

The Support our Troops decals would have been OK'd if it had been Bronco's proposal. Bronco runs city hall, but hopefully that will change on Oct. 15 — Election Day! We will either have a new democratic mayor and/or some new aldermen with backbones.

Marg Zankl

(Backbones are useful.)

UNMERRY CELEBRATION

Two days ago, a neighbour put up their Halloween decorations. They consist of front lawn ornaments which are unpleasant to view out my front window. The worst is these ornaments scream in terror every 60 seconds. Not having the courtesy to shut them off at night, my daughter ended up sleeping in my room because the sound scares her. Why is it OK for people who celebrate this event to intrude on our lives and routines, but people create such an uproar over saying Merry Christmas? I can't believe people can be so petty over what is said, and force others to have to deal with grotesque images, saying they have the right to celebrate and decorate how they want. Do those rules not apply to a Christian holiday like Christmas?

S. Andrews

(They certainly do.)

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

I noticed an obit recently titled "Cyprus 67" which reminded me of the uselessness of our forces overseas. My brother was killed in Cyprus in '57 by a terrorist using explosives whilst doing peacekeeping duties. Fifty years later we are still in Cyprus trying to keep the peace. If we can't achieve a solution there in 50 years, how do we expect to do anything in Afghanistan, which is so much bigger and has many more problems. I still think about my brother almost every day and his young son who grew up without a father. I am so sorry for the grief caused to so many families because bully powers like the U.S. and U.K. cannot keep their fingers at home where they belong.

Jill van Tol

(But what would have happened if the peacekeepers weren't in Cyprus?)

TOONED OUT

Why do cartoonist Susan Dewar's caricatures of Prime Minister Stephen Harper always show him in a tall fur hat, complete with horns and long flowing robes? Dewar's constant and apparently only, image of the PM in this attire is not only tiresome and boring, but speaks of a lack of imaginative genius prevalent in many of her peers. I have great admiration for those cartoonists who poke fun and even ridicule those who have power over our lives, but Dewar needs a refresher in political cartooning 101.

R.L. Schmidt

(Dewar says she thought Harper's politics were from the stone age, so, boom, Flintstone hat.)

HAVE A HEART

Only the Sun would stoop to the low level of publishing letters that turn a man's (Jean Chretien) open heart surgery into some stupid political debate. Disgusting, but typical. Had it been Brian Mulroney, Stephen Harper, or Preston Manning, politics would never have entered into the discussion.

Oscar Owens

(Read on for a different view.)

TWO HEALTH SYSTEMS

I was provoked by a recent news item. It seems former prime minister Jean Chretien was golfing with his physician when he relayed a concern over his health to the doctor. Within two days he was in hospital undergoing a multiple bypass. My sister-in-law who lives in Saskatchewan was diagnosed in early September with a life-threatening heart condition. She was booked for emergency surgery. This will take place in late November. Anyone who thinks there is not a two-tier system, one for the rich and famous and one for the rest of us, is delusional.

Gary Barnes

(We sympathize with your skepticism.)

MOVING ELECTION ISSUE

Buses, buses everywhere and not a spot to stop. With the election coming up, politicians offer more and more buses, but how practical is it really? Those who ride transit up Centre St. know. More buses are added all the time, but because there are more buses than stops, we wait and wait and wait. We all cook in the heat, only to be dropped off in the middle of the road by a double-parked bus, since the terminal is full again. After the agonizing wait, we're stuck again. The bus is blocked by a new "bendy" bus, which is, by the way, longer than most stops, that just pulled in. More buses help in theory, but until there are enough places to stop, or even drivers to drive them, it's not really doing much good. Do the election candidates actually ride the bus? If they did, I'm sure election platforms would be a lot less superficial.

Jeff Lo

(Maybe taking transit should be made mandatory for civic politicians.)

SHOW SOME RESPECT

Re: "Newfie premier keeps fed fight," Sept. 10.) A more appropriate and respectful title would be "Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador vows to keep federal fight." Most Newfoundlanders and Labradorians have no issue with "Newfie" when used in the right forum and context. I guess the Sun does not enjoy "Steve Harper" being taken on by a much superior politician, Danny Williams, who is on the correct side of the fight. I guess the idea of Newfoundland becoming a "have" province is threatening. Imagine the labour shortage issue you would have in Alberta when that happens.

Glenn St. Croix

Mount Pearl, Nfld.

(We wish Newfoundlanders and Labradorians nothing but success.)

TYRANNY OF MINORITY

Regarding the contentious issue about suggested changes to the voting system making it to the ballot box in Ontario, isn't it strange the referendums in Quebec about separation only needed 50% plus one for either side to win while the Ontario referendum requires at least a 60% majority. With the pitiful voter turnout for just about any election in this country, we can see why the tyranny of the minorities will always prevail unless Canadians get some backbone and do their duty when given an opportunity.

Doug Witherspoon

(It's our responsibility as citizens in a democracy.)

IT'S GAS, GAS, GAS

From Edmonton south, Alberta is mainly gas producing. There are thousands of service companies and many more thousands of employees, not to mention the producers and their employees. We all spend our money here. These are low-profit wells that still have many years of viability, pending the direction we take on the royalty review. My mortgage broker from down east has been here 10 years, doing very well. He figures "Bah! The oil companies are ripping us off!" I explain a little about seeing a forest but for some trees. For practically everyone's sake, don't bite the hand that feeds.

Glenn Schneider

(The hand you bite could be your own.)

Leader sizes up Afghan dangers

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ILLUSTRATION: photo by Brett Gundlock, Sun Media Lt.-Col. Michael Vernon inspects the troops yesterday at the Mewata Armoury during the Calgary Highlanders Change Command ceremony. Vernon, who took command of an army reserve unit yesterday, is preparing his troops for deployment to Afghanistan in February.

BYLINE: TARINA WHITE, SUN MEDIA

WORD COUNT: 224

While assuming leadership yesterday of a Calgary army reserve unit preparing to head to Afghanistan, Lt.-Col. Michael Vernon said the recent death of a local soldier is top of mind.

Nathan Hornburg, a reservist with the King's Own Calgary Regiment who died during fierce fighting in Afghanistan Sept. 24, likely won't be the last local soldier killed, said Vernon.

And that is a worrying thought, said Vernon, now responsible for 60 Calgary soldiers preparing to go to Afghanistan in February for a six-month deployment.

"The odds would say, from a practical perspective, that something could happen to some of those soldiers," he said after a ceremony at the Mewata Armoury, 801 11 St. S.W., that signified the handing over of command from Lt.-Col. Tom Manley.

"That weighs on my mind a great deal now that I've assumed command."

Hornburg, the driver of an armoured recovery vehicle, was killed by an anti-tank round during a 12-hour battle, while he charged forward to help a disabled Leopard tank.

Vernon, a member of the military for two decades and a CBC television reporter, said he's proud to lead a group of reservists at a time when the military's role is of great significance to Canada.

"The reserves have never been more relevant ... probably since the Second World War or (war in) Korea," he said. "Canada's army is at war ... and it's our job to recruit those people and to train them and to support them when they go overseas."

Vernon, with the Calgary Highlanders since 1999, said his troops will provide security around Kandahar airfield. **KEYWORDS=ALBERTA**

Chretien book skewers Martin

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CNS Elizabeth Thompson OTTAWA -- Former prime minister Paul Martin is responsible for Canadian troops ending up in the "killing fields" around Kandahar because he took too long to make a decision, former prime minister Jean Chretien charges in a new book.

In a memoir likely to rip open old Liberal wounds and exacerbate divisions within the party only days before a possible plunge into a federal election, the former Liberal leader attacks Martin on several fronts, from his scheming to force Chretien out of office to Martin's handling of Canada's Kyoto environmental protocol commitments.

He also argues that Martin has only himself to blame for the grief he suffered as a result of the sponsorship scandal.

Chretien, long described as a political brawler, takes off the gloves when it comes to Martin. He says manoeuvring by Martin and his supporters to push him out of the Prime Minister's Office actually steeled his resolve to stay on.

He doesn't mince words.

"I was damned if I was going to let myself be shoved out the door by a gang of self-serving goons," Chretien writes after describing the hurt and betrayal he felt upon learning in the spring of 2000 about a meeting Martin supporters had held in a Toronto airport hotel. "By trying to force me to go, they aroused my competitive spirit, ignited my anger, and inadvertently gave me the blessing I needed from Aline (his wife) to fight for a third term. For that, ironically, I owed Paul Martin a great deal of thanks." Chretien also recounts that after the Taliban government of Afghanistan was overthrown, he carefully engineered things so Canada's soldiers were stationed around the safer area of Kabul, helping to rebuild the Afghan capital.

"Later, unfortunately, when my successor took too long to make up his mind about whether Canada should extend our term with the International Security Assistance Force, our soldiers were moved out of Kabul and sent south again to battle the Taliban in the killing fields around Kandahar," Chretien writes.

Jim Pimblett, a spokesman for Martin, said his boss did not receive an advance copy of the book and was "not in a position to react in any detail, nor is he inclined to do so today or in the foreseeable future.

"Obviously, it is disappointing to hear reports that old divisions are being revisited at a time when the Liberal party needs to stand unified behind (Liberal Leader Stephane) Dion." Pimblett acknowledged that the two men had their differences at times "but their partnership in government generated tremendous achievements." Chretien reveals that he contemplated removing Martin from the finance ministry, firing the conspirators on Martin's staff and cancelling the government contracts with Martin's friends and advisers at the Earnsccliffe strategy and communications firm, but was talked out of it by his top advisers Jean Pelletier and Eddie Goldenberg.

"Both were to regret their advice, and I soon regretted my decision to keep him." In fact, Chretien says, if Martin hadn't been in such a hurry to take over the PMO, he wouldn't have had to worry about the sponsorship scandal.

Knowing auditor general Sheila Fraser's report was going to be "tough," Chretien was prepared to receive it, thank her for her work and then say if there was evidence of theft or fraud that the police should catch the crooks and the courts should put them in jail.

"Of course, I expected to have to take some hits in the press for a couple of weeks, but that hadn't frightened me in the past and it didn't frighten me now. By the time Martin was to take over, the whole issue would have been history and he could have begun his mandate without that albatross around his neck." But Pimblett challenged Chretien's memory. "Undoubtedly there are clear differences in recollection between the two men — not the least of which would appear to be Mr. Chretien's decision to prorogue Parliament, and not accept the auditor general's report on sponsorship personally," he said.

Chretien said he had also been willing to stay in office until the end of January to deal with it, requiring only that Martin ask him officially.

"I never even had a phone call from him, with disastrous consequences for him and the Liberal party." Chretien reveals he had an opportunity to enter the media business in October 2003 when CanWest founder Izzy Asper told him, a week before Asper's own death, that he wanted the prime minister to become chairman of his media empire once Chretien got out of politics.

"I took it as a jest, but he made the statement at a dinner table in front of other people, and his family later told me he had been serious." — CanWest News Service

Expect this 'long war' to last a generation

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None World War IV The Long Struggle Against Islamofascism By Norman Podhoretz Doubleday, 224 pages, \$32 Reviewed by Rebecca Walberg THE ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, episodes of terrorism worldwide, and the anti-Americanism so prevalent in Europe and the Muslim world — to prolific American political scientist Norman Podhoretz, these are all different fronts in the same war.

World War IV, to be precise. His argument, that the ever-expanding fighting in the wake of 9/11 is the fourth existential war since the beginning of the 20th century (the Cold War being the third), is ultimately well defended, even if concrete solutions aren't forthcoming.

Islamofascism, according to Podhoretz, is the ideological heir of fascism, Nazism and communism. Some of its adherents are persuaded by a religious agenda, and some by secular and political motives.

It is also, however, the ideology of choice for anti-Americans, as (he claims) Nazism and communism were in their heydays. Ultimately, he concludes, it will be defeated only by spreading liberal democracy as widely as possible.

The editor of the political magazine Commentary from 1965 to 1995, Podhoretz is also famous for being on the vanguard of the U.S. neo-conservative movement.

But World War IV is decidedly not a soft-sell for the Bush Doctrine, emphasizing as it does the likelihood that this war will last for a generation or more, and will be fought on diverse fronts.

Nor is Podhoretz, a Zionist, particularly partisan. Although he continues to support U.S. President George W. Bush's mission of bringing democracy to the Middle East, he is unsparing in his criticism of both Democrat and Republican presidents since the opening shots of this "Long War," which he dates to the seizing of U.S. hostages in Iran in 1979.

Falters The book falters in that so-called Islamofascism is never explicitly defined. Clearly national boundaries are less meaningful today than in earlier decades.

But any plausible attempt to plot a course for defeating this threat must rest upon a clear understanding of the nature of the threat itself. Initial fighting in Afghanistan at the end of 2001, in which al-Qaida and its direct supporters were the primary target, can easily be connected to the aftermath of 9/11.

The connection between Islamofascism, threats against the West, and the current insurgency in Iraq, at this point characterized largely by sectarian violence, is much more tenuous.

Nor is the end goal of this war properly defended. Podhoretz advocates the creation of democratic states in the Middle East and more broadly in the Muslim world.

The first objection to this is pragmatic. Clearly, imposing democracy in another country is not something accomplished easily, if at all.

The second is thornier. More democracy in Gaza, Lebanon and Egypt has resulted in increased popularity for, and representation of, Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Muslim Brotherhood, respectively.

There is no reason to suppose that a free Iraq would not elect a similar group. Podhoretz acknowledges this, and counters only, and weakly, that any democracy is better than none, even if the results are ugly.

Podhoretz recognizes that the political and cultural response to the current threat is as important as the ongoing military and political efforts to "bring the fight to" the terrorists. And if nothing else, World War IV clarifies why this response has yet to materialize.

Rebecca Walberg is a Winnipeg writer and policy analyst.