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[TORONTO– Here are the top 10 hardcover fiction and non–fiction books in Canada compiled by Maclean's magazine. The Nova Scotia list is from Coles...]

PUBLICATION: The Sunday Herald

DATE: 2007.10.21

SECTION: Books

PAGE: S12

WORD COUNT: 105

TORONTO – Here are the top 10 hardcover fiction and non–fiction books in Canada compiled by Maclean's magazine. The Nova Scotia list is from Coles at Halifax Shopping Centre.

1 (3) A Thousand Splendid Suns Khaled Hosseini

2 (8) The Assassin's Song M.J. Vassanji

3 (–) World Without End Ken Follett

4 (1) October Richard B. Wright

5 (5) Run Ann Patchett

6 (6) Divisadero Michael Ondaatje

7 (2) The Uncommon Reader Alan Bennett

8 (10) Late Nights on Air Elizabeth Hay

9 (4) Friend of the Devil Peter Robinson

10 (7) Exit Ghost Philip Roth

1 (3) The Age of Turbulence Alan Greenspan

2 (–) Emperor of the North James Raffan

3 (2) Memoirs Brian Mulroney

4 (5) John A: The Man Who Made Us Richard Gwyn

5 (–) My Years as Prime Minister Jean Chretien

6 (–) Clapton: The Autobiography Eric Clapton

7 (1) The Shock Doctrine Naomi Klein

[TORONTO– Here are the top 10 hardcover fiction and non–fiction books in Canada compiled by Maclean's

8 (–) I Am America (And So Can You!) Stephen Colbert

9 (7) A Secular Age Charles Taylor

10 (4) The World Without Us Alan Weisman¹ Lexicon Vol. 8 Theresa Williams² Maritimer's Miscellany
Clary Croft³ Buddy MacMaster Sheldon MacInnes⁴ On Assignment in Afghanistan The Chronicle Herald⁵
Nova Scotia Phrase Book Dan Soucoup

Canada in Afghanistan long term, says general

PUBLICATION: The Sunday Herald
DATE: 2007.10.21
SECTION: World
PAGE: A9
SOURCE: The Canadian Press
BYLINE: Dene Moore
WORD COUNT: 370

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan – The decision to remain in a combat role in Afghanistan will be up to politicians but Canada will have a role to play in the central Asian nation for a long time to come, military or not, says Canada's top army general.

Lt.-Gen. Andrew Leslie declined comment on the throne speech suggestion that Canada's mission should be extended to 2011.

"We're all soldiers, we're all professionals," he told reporters at Kandahar Airfield on Saturday. "We're all mature enough to understand that the decision to keep us here or to pull us out, that's purely political. We'll do that which the government of Canada tells us to do."

But Leslie, who spent several days visiting troops throughout Kandahar province, said Canada will have a presence in the country for some time.

"A long time after Canadian soldiers leave, there will still be Canadian money, Canadian interest coming to areas such as Afghanistan because it's got such a long way to go to recover," he said.

Leslie said the military focus right now is on building the capacity of Afghan national security forces. "Then, tucked in right behind that, you develop," he said.

Leslie, who served in Afghanistan in 2003 and returns every few months as commander of the army, said he has seen for himself that progress is being made by Canadian troops in Afghanistan. "Afghanistan is still a dangerous place and it's going to remain so for the foreseeable future," he said. "(But) there are more people out in the Panjwaii. There are more people in the subdistricts. The markets are open."

He said there are signs of progress "in the heart of (Taliban leader) Mullah Omar's place of birth," the Zhari district, where Canadians have established police substations that are being manned by Afghan national police and Canadian military mentors.

The Conservatives want to extend the mission in some form to 2011 but the Liberals and the Bloc Quebecois want troops out when the current combat mandate expires in February 2009.

The mission will be the subject of intense debate in the months to come but Leslie, like other military officials, has avoided comment. "There will come a time when we have to leave and the Canadian army will probably go somewhere else, equally dangerous, equally complicated, and do an equally good job."

Author applauds delayed release of 'Kite Runner'; Safety of child actors in Afghanistan raises concerns

PUBLICATION: The Telegram (St. John's)

DATE: 2007.10.21

SECTION: Republic of words

PAGE: B4

SOURCE: AP

DATELINE: San Francisco

ILLUSTRATION: Khaled Hosseini

WORD COUNT: 241

"The Kite Runner" author Khaled Hosseini is commending the delayed release of the film adaptation of his novel over fears for the actors' safety.

Movie distributor Paramount Vantage delayed the debut for six weeks, until Dec. 14, after three of its adolescent male stars said they could be targeted for their participation in a homosexual rape scene.

The studio – the art-house label of Viacom Inc.'s Paramount Pictures – is moving the boys and their families from socially conservative Afghanistan, possibly until next spring.

"I applaud the studio for delaying the release of the film even though it goes against whatever commercial wisdom there is," the 43-year-old San Jose resident said last week at a media event in San Francisco.

"Afghanistan has become a pretty violent place within the last year," said the Kabul native, who immigrated to San Jose in 1980. "If the boys and their families think there is a reasonable risk of threat to them, then you have to take all of the steps that you can to make sure they are OK."

The scene in which the 12-year-old protagonist witnesses the brutalization of his friend – but does nothing to stop it – is one minute of a two-hour film and two pages of a 380-page novel. It plays on ethnic tensions that pervade the book, pitting an upper-class Pashtun bully against a lower-class ethnic Hazara boy.

Hosseini defended keeping the scene in the film as a pivotal moment of character development.

"Without that moment, the tower of cards really falls apart," he said.

If the mud fits wear it

PUBLICATION: The Telegram (St. John's)

DATE: 2007.10.21

SECTION: Editorial

PAGE: A6

WORD COUNT: 441

They're two of the hottest titles in Canadian book publishing right now, and you can find them in the non-fiction section, filed under P for politics, and cross-referenced under the letters M and N, for mean and nasty.

They're the autobiographies of former prime ministers Brian Mulroney and Jean Chretien, and while both books are full of political intrigue, it's their nasty tone which has gained them notoriety.

Mulroney's tome was first off the press this autumn, and its sharpest barbs were aimed at Pierre Trudeau.

Titled "Memoirs, 1939–1993," the book details Trudeau's opposition to Mulroney's Meech Lake Accord, along with other battles the two fought during the 1980s.

The nastiest bits deal with Trudeau's life decades earlier – in the 1940s – when Mulroney was a babe-in-arms, and Trudeau was a young radical out protesting against armies fighting the Second World War. Mulroney drew a picture of Trudeau as anti-Semite, telling CTV in an interview about his book, "This is a man who questioned the Allies when the Jews were being sacrificed and when the great extermination program was on, he was marching around Outremont (Montreal) on the other side of the issue."

The next blast came from Jean Chretien, whose memoir of his time as PM was published this month.

His biography also pillories a former prime minister, but at least Chretien's attack was against someone still living: Paul Martin.

Chretien paints Martin as a power-hungry politician who sabotaged the last months of his administration by plotting a coup.

Hard to dispute that – Martin made his prime ministerial ambitions plain for all to see.

Things get nasty, though, when Chretien suggests Martin's inability to make a decision is to blame for the death of Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan.

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

Mee-oww. Cat fight.

Whatever the words of Chretien and Mulroney reveal about their respective enemies, they reveal just as much about the men who penned them.

The image that appears of both Chretien and Mulroney is remarkably similar: pugnacious, scrappers, men who don't mind fighting dirty when it comes to defending their reputations.

And both with a chip on their shoulder – guys who came from blue-collar mill towns in Quebec, who rose to the top of their respective parties, who led the nation, yet who felt they never received the respect they deserved.

One saw his national dream shattered by an interfering member of the Quebec elite; the other saw his last days in office dogged by an ambitious son of the Canadian business aristocracy.

Each has sought retribution by smearing their nemeses with mud. And each, as is the fate of all who engage in public mud-slinging, have ended up smelling of the same stuff they've hurled at their opponent.

Welcome home; Reception held at Government House for Newfoundland soldiers who served in Afghanistan

PUBLICATION: The Telegram (St. John's)

DATE: 2007.10.21

SECTION: Provincial

PAGE: A3

BYLINE: Alisha Morrissey

ILLUSTRATION: Capt. Richard J. Nolan and new wife Tonya attended a welcome-home reception at Government House for soldiers who served in Afghanistan over the last six months. The couple was married a week after Richard returned. – Photo By Rhonda Hayward/The Telegram

WORD COUNT: 356

When asked if he had any near misses during his six-month stint in Afghanistan, Capt. Richard Nolan inhales, pauses, looks at Tonya, his wife of just a few weeks, and says no.

She says he wouldn't tell her if there were.

Tonya Nolan says no one understood what it was like to have her husband in Afghanistan for the last six months.

"I had people say to me, 'But my husband goes to Fort MacMurray for six months of the year,' and it was like, you really don't get it at all."

Richard says living in Afghanistan was all about making it day to day.

"You have your ups and your downs because one bad day ... and it's like you had a bad tour and then the next day, you have a good day and you had a good tour. At the end of it, when you look back the overall was very positive."

When Richard left, his son was just five weeks old. When he returned, his baby was 17 months old.

Tonya says she videotaped everything and made herself believe that Nolan was simply off training.

"I tried to videotape everything. It was hard on me that our son was missing out on so much," she says.

On the other side of the world, Nolan was thinking about his baby.

"I had a young son at home and I took a lot of risks and I had a lot of confidence in my training when I was over there. ... I was confident that I was going to come home safe and sound, but still guys didn't and I'm sure they were confident as well," he says, adding that he would go back, but not unless the security situation improved.

Nolan and other soldiers who served in Afghanistan were welcomed home along with their families at a reception at Government House Saturday night, hosted by Lt.-Gov. Governor Ed Roberts and his wife Eve.

Roberts and MHA Shawn Skinner welcomed the soldiers back in a formal statement and gave a service medal to Cpl. Richard Buckley, but the ceremony felt more like a cocktail party than an official event.

The reception was followed by a dinner held in the soldiers' honour at City Hall.

Col. Anthony Stack from St. John's, but serving as leader to nine Atlantic Canadian reservist military groups in Moncton, N.B., was thrilled to have the party at Government House. He says it's a huge morale booster for the soldiers to be able to say that the premier and lieutenant governor sent them off with a similar event six months ago and welcomed them back.

"The fact that they're all back is a cause for celebration."

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Man who says he saw Arar in Afghanistan has questionable credibility: Globe

DATE: 2007.10.20
KEYWORDS: JUSTICE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS
PUBLICATION: cpw
WORD COUNT: 421

TORONTO _ Maher Arar's denials that he ever went to Afghanistan are contradicted by a man convicted of immigration fraud who says he spotted him there in the early 1990s, according to classified American documents seen by the Globe and Mail.

The intelligence documents are said by U.S. sources to be key to understanding Washington's argument that, even though Arar has been cleared of any wrongdoing, he should remain on a no-fly list and remain barred from entering U.S. territory as an alleged security threat, the newspaper reported Saturday.

Until now, the files have been accessible only to those with security clearance.

In Minnesota, Mohamed Kamal Elzahabi, a Lebanese-born U.S. resident who once led training-camps in Afghanistan, has been jailed for three years.

Earlier this year he was convicted of immigration fraud and still faces outstanding charges of lying to the FBI.

His case is obscure and his credibility is very much at issue.

Elzahabi once told the FBI that he had served as a sniper instructor at the Khalden training camp in Afghanistan.

The information seen by the Globe indicates Elzahabi said he didn't train Arar and didn't know what kind of training he may have taken.

Elzahabi's statements, under seal, have never been tested in court, nor have they been made public before Friday.

They stem from FBI interviews that arose almost two years after Arar's U.S. arrest and were outside the scope of the Canadian inquiry led by Justice Dennis O'Connor.

O'Connor investigated only the Canadian files that led to the CIA rendition flight to Syria.

On Thursday, Arar told the U.S. Congress that he has been given "no explanation whatsoever" as to why his attempts to clear his name in the United States have stalled.

Arar gave his testimony to Congress via video link from the University of Ottawa.

He reiterated that he never travelled to Afghanistan and that his connections to alleged al Qaida-linked figures have been overstated.

This spring, Arar's Canadian lawyer, Lorne Waldman, told The Globe that Arar doesn't recall ever meeting the man held in Minneapolis and only had his car fixed by Elzahabi's brother, who once ran a garage in Montreal.

The U.S. Centre for Constitutional Rights, U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy, and other U.S. officials are urging Washington to follow Ottawa's lead _ apologize, launch a commission, and cease the blacklisting of Arar.

Arar, a Syrian-born Canadian citizen, was detained by Homeland Security agents on Sept. 26, 2002, as he stopped over in New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport en route home from a vacation. Days later, he was flown by private jet to Syria where he was interrogated and tortured, according to Canadian officials and Arar himself. After nearly a year in a Syrian prison, he was released without charges and returned to Canada.

Back in Canada, the inquiry headed by Justice O'Connor concluded that Arar had no link to terrorism.

The Canadian government has apologized to Arar and agreed to pay him C\$10.5 million in compensation.

(The Globe and Mail with files from the Canadian Press)

Top army general says Canada's role in Afghanistan long-term, military or not

DATE: 2007.10.20
KEYWORDS: INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE
PUBLICATION: cpw
WORD COUNT: 319

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan _ The decision to remain in a combat role in Afghanistan will be up to politicians but Canada will have a role to play in the central Asian nation for a long time to come, military or not, says Canada's top army general.

Lt.-Gen. Andrew Leslie declined comment on the throne speech suggestion that Canada's mission should be extended to 2011.

“We're all soldiers, we're all professionals,” he told reporters at Kandahar Airfield on Saturday.

“We're all mature enough to understand that the decision to keep us here or to pull us out, that's purely political. We'll do that which the government of Canada tells us to do.”

But Leslie, who spent several days visiting troops throughout Kandahar province, said Canada will have a presence in the country for some time.

“A long time after Canadian soldiers leave, there will still be Canadian money, Canadian interest coming to areas such as Afghanistan because it's got such a long way to go to recover,” he said.

Leslie said the military focus right now is on building the capacity of Afghan national security forces.

“Then, tucked in right behind that, you develop,” he said.

Leslie, who served in Afghanistan in 2003 and returns every few months as commander of the army, said he has seen for himself that progress is being made by Canadian troops in Afghanistan.

“Afghanistan is still a dangerous place and it's going to remain so for the foreseeable future,” he said.

“(But) there are more people out in the Panjwaii. There are more people in the subdistricts. The markets are open.”

He said there are signs of progress “in the heart of (Taliban leader) Mullah Omar's place of birth,” the Zhari district, where Canadians have established police substations that are being manned by Afghan national police and Canadian military mentors.

The Conservatives want to extend the mission in some form to 2011 but the Liberals and the Bloc Quebecois want troops out when the current combat mandate expires in February 2009.

The mission will be the subject of intense debate in the months to come but Leslie, like other military officials, has avoided comment.

“There will come a time when we have to leave and the Canadian army will probably go somewhere else, equally dangerous, equally complicated, and do an equally good job,” he told reporters.

Liberals use election reprieve to regroup, redefine Dion

DATE: 2007.10.20

KEYWORDS: POLITICS

PUBLICATION: cpw

WORD COUNT: 727

OTTAWA _ Liberals are taking solace from the old maxim that he who fights and runs away lives to fight another day.

Stephane Dion's decision last week to run away from an election over the Harper government's throne speech, has bought the demoralized Grits some precious time to regroup.

However brief it turns out to be _ and some Liberals believe it may be as little as a few weeks _ the leader is hoping to use the hard-won reprieve to get the party back in fighting form.

Among the measures planned, insiders say Dion will:

_ Begin selectively unveiling platform planks, giving Canadians a better idea of what he and the Liberals stand for.

_ Ensure the party is election ready through the continued shakeup of his inner circle, party brass and campaign team, and by intensified candidate recruitment.

_ Make better use of unscripted, interactive forums _ including daily question period in the House of Commons and townhall-style encounters with voters _ to demonstrate that Dion, the sober policy wonk, also has a scrappy, feisty side.

But if any of those tactics are to be successful, Liberals concede they must first develop some discipline.

Discipline to weather the inevitable bumps in the road without panicking. Discipline to deliver a clear message in a unified way. Discipline to keep the focus resolutely on the deficiencies of Prime Minister Stephen Harper, rather than publicly musing about their own failings.

“We have to be disciplined and we have to stand behind our leader and I think we understand that,” said Ajax-Pickering MP Mark Holland.

Since the Liberals' humiliating defeat in three Quebec byelections last month, including their longtime bastion of Outremont, Dion and his party have been in a tailspin.

Quebec Liberals, including some MPs, openly expressed doubts about the leader and his team. Key players quit, including the party's national director and the executive director of the Quebec wing. And several Quebec candidates announced they won't run for the party after all, although former astronaut Marc Garneau changed his mind and rejoined the team Friday.

Just hours before the throne speech was unveiled, Dion was even left briefly without a Quebec lieutenant when MP Marcel Proulx quit and two Montreal MPs, Denis Coderre and Pablo Rodriguez, refused invitations to step into the breach.

Amid that chaos, Dion had little choice but to take a dive on the throne speech, despite his personal preference to defeat the government. The party and the leader emerged weakened from the whole episode and many MPs are now determined to avoid a repeat performance.

“I think the last two caucus meetings we've had, the very, very strong consensus was around the need to show more discipline and discretion,” said New Brunswick MP Dominic LeBlanc.

Still, opinion is split over how Dion should handle those who air the party's dirty laundry in public. Privately, some MPs are grumbling about Dion's efforts to give prominent roles to Garneau, Coderre and Rodriguez. They see it as rewarding bad behaviour.

But others, like Toronto MP John Godfrey, argue that the leader has to be understanding of the special challenges faced by Quebec Liberals, whose ranks were devastated by the sponsorship scandal.

Still others suggest that self-preservation will eventually silence the malcontents more effectively than any slap on the wrist.

“Sometimes a bit of a cold shower helps unite people. I sense that's what's been happening the last few days,” said Senator David Smith, the veteran party war horse recruited recently by Dion to co-chair the national campaign.

While Dion intends to offer voters an alternative vision, many Liberals believe their best hope lies in exploiting lingering discomfort among voters with the Tories' “far-right” agenda and Harper's “bullying” style of leadership, as Grits have characterized it.

Hence, Liberals used last week's resumption of Parliament to zero in on alleged ethical lapses (campaign financing irregularities, patronage in judicial appointments) and Harper's preremptory refusal to accept any amendments to his crime package, on threat of a snap election.

In allowing the government to survive a confidence vote on the throne speech, Godfrey says Liberals “bought time to remind people of why question period is so useful to opposition parties.”

Harper inevitably ends up demonstrating his “petty, mean” side and thus, Godfrey predicts: “The longer we keep reminding people of that through daily contact in the House of Commons, the sooner the free run the government's had over the summer comes to an end.”

If that seems like wishful thinking, Liberals note that as little as four months ago, just before Parliament broke for the summer, the Tories were on the ropes. They'd seemingly run out of policy initiatives, had lost control of the parliamentary agenda and were beset by conflicting messages, particularly on the Afghanistan mission.

More than 12 Taliban fighters die in battle with U.S.-led troops in Afghanistan

DATE: 2007.10.20

KEYWORDS: INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE

PUBLICATION: cpw

WORD COUNT: 341

KABUL, Afghanistan _ U.S.-led coalition soldiers and Afghan forces killed about 50 militants in two days of major fighting near a Taliban-controlled town in southern Afghanistan's poppy-growing belt, officials Saturday.

Taliban forces fired rocket-propelled grenades and small arms at a combined coalition-Afghan patrol near the town of Musa Qala in Helmand province, sparking a battle that lasted several hours and involved the use of military aircraft, the coalition said in a statement. Nearly three dozen militants were killed.

The battle was the second in two days near Musa Qala. The coalition said it killed more than a dozen insurgents Friday after the militants ambushed a patrol. Attack aircraft helped repel that initial attack, though the fighters tried to reinforce their numbers throughout the engagement, which lasted several hours, the coalition said.

Taliban militants overran Musa Qala in February, four months after British troops left the town following a contentious peace agreement that handed over security responsibilities to Afghan elders. Musa Qala has been in control of Taliban fighters ever since and is in the heart of the world's largest poppy-growing region.

U.S. Gen. Dan McNeill, the commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan, said this week that the Taliban fund between 20 per cent and 40 per cent of their militant operations through opium poppies. Afghanistan is the world's largest producer of opium, the main ingredient in heroin.

This year has been the most violent since the U.S.-led coalition ousted the Taliban from power in 2001. More than 5,200 people have died in insurgency-related violence this year, according to an Associated Press count based on figures from Afghan and western officials.

Elsewhere, a remote-control bomb exploded next to a police vehicle in eastern Paktia province, killing two police, said Din Mohammad Dirwesh, the governor's spokesman. Four police were wounded in the blast.

A tribal elder close to the government, meanwhile, was killed by gunmen in Paktia, Dirwesh said. The elder had been threatened by the "enemy" several times to sever his ties with the government, he said.

N.B. anti-war group launching counter-campaign to yellow ribbons

DATE: 2007.10.20
KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS
PUBLICATION: cpw
WORD COUNT: 226

FREDERICTON _ An anti-war group in New Brunswick is launching a counter-campaign to the yellow ribbons local businesses have been displaying to support the Canadian troops in Afghanistan.

Members of the Fredericton Peace Coalition will be mailing about 35 packages to city businesses that display the yellow ribbon.

Inside will be a letter, along with alternative information about the Afghanistan mission and a different image featuring a question mark and the words "Question War" and "Bring Them Home."

Spokesman Charles Fournier says the group is hoping for healthy debate about the mission in Afghanistan from all sides.

Fournier said the coalition, a collection of 12 groups with about 100 members total, has been contacted by people who oppose their campaign, but he says it's necessary to ask "tough questions" when the country is involved in a war.

Colleen Moquin of Oromocto, whose husband is in the Armed Forces, says she hopes local businesses have already made up their minds whether or not to keep their ribbons up.

"I personally think that if people don't have ribbons up now, they should go out and get one," Moquin said.

"Displaying the ribbon has nothing to do with political views. It is to show support of the brave men and women who are doing their jobs, (and) to show them we a spouse is overseas, and reassuring that they were not alone while waiting for them to come home safe."

She says the peace coalition's campaign is turning the symbol into a political statement, which she thinks is "totally wrong."

(Fredericton Gleaner)

Federal Liberal leader says he won't let Tories endanger the environment

DATE: 2007.10.20

KEYWORDS: DEFENCE ENVIRONMENT INTERNATIONAL OIL&GAS POLITICS

PUBLICATION: cpw

WORD COUNT: 475

WINNIPEG _ Federal Liberal Leader Stephane Dion pledged to stop any anti-environment Conservative legislation Saturday during a visit to Winnipeg.

While Dion stopped short of saying the Liberals would defeat a confidence motion to trigger an election, he said the party would not support legislation that could endanger the environment of Canadians in general.

Earlier this week, Dion promised Canadians his party would abstain from voting against the minority Conservative government's throne speech to avoid provoking an election.

``The throne speech, it's an orientation about what the government intends to complete, but it's not concrete _ it's not like a bill, like an allocation of money," Dion said after a two-hour public question and answer session.

``Once they come with something that is wrong for the people, then we'll have to talk between ourselves on how to stop it."

Dion was greeted by a standing ovation from a crowd of more than 200 people at the Gas Station Theatre in Winnipeg late Saturday afternoon.

Despite the recent turmoil his party has faced, including a byelection loss in Quebec and a plummet in public opinion polls, a confident Dion said the Liberals will have no trouble bouncing back.

``Politics is like this, many parties in the past lost byelections and won general elections," he said. ``But you see I think we are a great party, we have a much more ambitious and generous vision than the other parties and when Canadians have the opportunity to compare, all will go well. You will see."

Although Dion is not officially on the campaign trail, he outlined what will likely be the highlights of the Liberal platform for the next election _ child care, sustainable development, and a commitment to tackle child poverty and improve the health and quality of life for aboriginals.

After a brief speech, Dion spent 90 minutes fielding impromptu questions from the audience, who asked about everything from the clean-up of Lake Winnipeg to Canada's role in Afghanistan.

Dion criticized the Conservative government for not taking a tougher stance on greenhouse gas emissions or investing in a proper clean-up of Lake Winnipeg.

``This is wrong _ \$7 million is a lot in your pocket, but for a lake like this one it's nothing," he said. ``We need to have a major investment in Lake Winnipeg based on science and good choices."

Dion said Canada needs to take a more balanced approach to industries like the Alberta oilsands and smelter companies in order to guarantee the businesses can thrive while lowering their emissions.

Dion also took time to critique Prime Minister Stephen Harper's cozy relationship with politicians south of the border.

He said Canada needs to work to develop multi-lateral relationships with countries around the world, but also has to be clear about its role abroad.

If Stockwell Day had won the 2000 election instead of Jean Chretien, Dion said Canada's troops would be fighting in Iraq.

“For us, the U.S. is our ally and our friend, it's the biggest trade partnership in the world,” he said. “But at the same time they are them and we are us and this is a distinction that is not made by Mr. Harper.”

(Winnipeg Free Press)

Resignation of Iran's top nuclear negotiator seen as victory for Ahmadinejad

DATE: 2007.10.20
KEYWORDS: INTERNATIONAL POLITICS DEFENCE
PUBLICATION: cpw
WORD COUNT: 590

TEHRAN, Iran _ The Iranian government announced Saturday that its top nuclear negotiator had resigned, a move seen as a victory for hardline President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad that could bring about an even tougher stance in ongoing talks.

Government spokesman Gholam Hossein Elham, said Saeed Jalili, a little-known deputy foreign minister for European and American affairs, was to succeed Ali Larijani as lead negotiator effective immediately.

Larijani in many cases held a hardline view on the nuclear standoff between Iran and the West but was also considered to be a more moderate figure than Ahmadinejad within Iran's hardline camp. He was seen as more committed to a diplomatic solution over Iran's nuclear program while Ahmadinejad is seen as not favouring talks with the West.

It was not clear whether Larijani left his post under pressure, but the resignation was interpreted by many here as giving Ahmadinejad a free hand in dictating his views to the less experienced Jalili.

Elham did not give a specific reason for Larijani's resignation other than to say he wanted to focus on "other political activities."

"Larijani had resigned repeatedly. Finally, the president accepted his resignation," Elham told reporters.

The United States and some of its allies accuse Iran of secretly trying to develop nuclear weapons. Iran denies the claim, saying its program is for peaceful purposes including generating electricity.

The country has periodically raised alarms over the possibility of war, particularly when the West brings up talk of sanctions over Tehran's rejection of a UN Security Council demand that it halt uranium enrichment.

On Saturday, Gen. Mahmoud Chaharbaghi, the missile commander of Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps, said the country was capable of firing 11,000 rockets into enemy bases within a minute of any attack.

"Enemy bases and positions have been identified. ... The Guards ground force will fire 11,000 rockets into identified enemy positions within the first minute of any aggression against the Iranian territory," the television quoted Chaharbaghi as saying.

Chaharbaghi did not specifically identify the bases or the enemy and did not refer to arch foes Israel or the United States by name. The United States has 40,000 troops on various U.S. bases in other Persian Gulf countries and 20,000 in Mideast waters. Another 160,000 U.S. troops are in neighbouring Iraq and about 25,000 are in another one of Iran's neighbours, Afghanistan.

Elham stressed that Iran's nuclear policy would not change because of Larijani's resignation and he said the new negotiator would meet as scheduled with the European Union foreign policy chief, Javier Solana, on Tuesday in Rome.

“Iran's nuclear policies are stabilized and unchangeable. Managerial change won't bring any changes in (those) policies,” Elham said.

John Bolton, a former U.S. ambassador to the UN, said Larijani's resignation was “a clear victory for Ahmadinejad” and shows that “the leadership is determined to continue with the nuclear program.”

Bolton, who served as the U.S. administration's point man on the Iran nuclear issue before becoming UN ambassador, said the conflict between Larijani and Ahmadinejad is “part of the larger struggle for power after (Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ali) Khamenei dies.”

“It's more about personalities and internal politics, but Ahmadinejad saw Larijani as someone with a different perspective on (nuclear) negotiations,” Bolton told The Associated Press, suggesting Larijani was more moderate.

Ahmadinejad was elected president in 2005 and appointed Larijani, a former Revolutionary Guards Corps commander and a close ally of Khamenei, to replace Hasan Rowhani. Ahmadinejad had accused Rowhani and his team of technocrats as weak and giving too many concessions in nuclear talks with European countries.

After Larijani was appointed, Iran took a more defiant approach to its nuclear program, drawing two sets of UN sanctions.

N.B. anti-war group launching counter-campaign to yellow ribbons

DATE: 2007.10.20

KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

PUBLICATION: bnw

WORD COUNT: 132

FREDERICTON – An anti-war group in New Brunswick is launching a counter-campaign to the yellow ribbons local businesses have been displaying to support the Canadian troops in Afghanistan.

Members of the Fredericton Peace Coalition will be mailing about 35 packages to city businesses that display the yellow ribbon.

Inside will be a letter, along with alternative information about the Afghanistan mission and a different image featuring a question mark and the words 'Question War' and 'Bring Them Home.'

Spokesman Charles Fournier says the group is hoping for healthy debate about the mission in Afghanistan from all sides.

Fournier said the coalition, a collection of 12 groups with about 100 members total, has been contacted by people who oppose their campaign, but he says it's necessary to ask 'tough questions' when the country is involved in a war.

Colleen Moquin of Oromocto, whose husband is in the Armed Forces, (The Canadian Press)

TOR OUT YYY

DATE: 2007.10.20
KEYWORDS: JUSTICE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS
PUBLICATION: bnw
WORD COUNT: 166

TORONTO — The Globe and Mail reports it may have discovered the reason Canadian Maher Arar is still barred from the U–S despite being cleared of wrong doing.

The newspaper says Arar's denials that he ever went to Afghanistan are contradicted by a man now jailed in Minnesota.

The Globe says Mohamed Kamal Elzahabi's claim that he spotted Arar in Afghanistan in the early 1990's is in classified American documents.

The Lebanese–born Elzahabi, who claims to have trained snipers in Afghanistan, is serving three years for immigration fraud and still faces charges of lying to the F–B–I.

The information seen by the Globe stems from F–B–I interviews with Elzahabi two years after Arar was arrested in New York and then sent to his native Syria.

Arar was held in Syria for 10 months and tortured before being released without charge.

The inquiry headed by Justice Dennis O'Connor concluded he had no link to terrorism and Ottawa is paying him 10.5 (m) million dollars in compensation.

Though Elzahabi's allegations are considered highly suspect, the Globe says U–S sources cite them as key to Washington's argument Arar remains a security threat.

(The Globe and Mail)

ScH

--Sixth NewsWatch--

DATE: 2007.10.20
KEYWORDS: ADVISORIES
PUBLICATION: bnw
WORD COUNT: 251

A Canadian facing child sex charges in Asia is professing his innocence.

Investigators in Thailand say Christopher Neil denied all charges when questioned following his arrest yesterday.

The 32-year-old teacher from Maple Ridge, B-C had been the subject of an intense international manhunt.

An arrest warrant was issued after the discovery of hundreds of online photos of abuse.

It's alleged Neil paid young boys for sex at his Bangkok apartment.

He's being held under a 12-day detention order at a Thai jail. (6)

(Bodies Found) (Audio: 015)

One veteran Mountie says he's never seen a crime scene like this one.

The bloodied bodies of six people have been found in a suite in a Surrey, B-C apartment complex.

Investigators aren't ruling out murder-suicide in the case.

The bodies were discovered late yesterday afternoon by firefighters and hazardous materials crews responding to reports of a gas leak.

Fire officials say the smell of decomposing remains may have been mistaken for gas. (6)

(Plane Crash Building)

The pilot is dead after his small twin-engine plane slammed into an apartment building in Richmond, B-C yesterday afternoon.

Two residents of the ninth-floor apartment in the 15-storey building were hurt.

Fire crews evacuated the building and those nearby, but there was no fire after the crash.

The federal Transportation Safety Board is investigating. (6)

(School Bus Collision)

Charges are pending against the driver in a fatal school bus crash west of Calgary.

A nine-year-old girl was killed when the bus collided with a parked dump truck on the side of a busy highway Thursday morning.

Another child was seriously hurt and nine others were treated for minor injuries.

Most of the right side of the bus was sheared off in the accident. (6)

(Afghan Cda General)

The nation's top army general says Canada will have a role to play in Afghanistan for a long time to come.

Lieutenant-General Andrew Leslie says the decision to remain in a combat role will be up to the politicians.

But he says Canada will continue to have a presence in the country — military or not.

Leslie says there will still be Canadian money and Canadian interest in the Afghan recovery long after Canadian soldiers have left. (6)

(Harry Potter-Gay Wizard)

Yes, the rumours are true: the Headmaster of Hogwarts in the Harry Potter series is gay.

Author J-K Rowling (ROHL'-ing) has outed the character of Albus Dumbledore at Carnegie Hall in New York.

Rowling says she regards her work as a ``prolonged argument for tolerance." (6)

(NewsWatch by Geri Smith)

Afghan–Violence–Update (more militants killed)

DATE: 2007.10.20
KEYWORDS: INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE POLITICS
PUBLICATION: bnw
WORD COUNT: 106

KABUL, Afghanistan — U–S–led coalition soldiers and Afghan forces killed nearly 50 militants in the second day of major fighting.

Officials today say the battles are near a Taliban–controlled town in southern Afghanistan's poppy–growing belt.

A statement from the coalition says Taliban forces fired rocket–propelled grenades and small arms at a combined coalition–Afghan patrol near a town in Helmand province.

That sparked a battle and involved the use of military aircraft.

Yesterday, the coalition says it killed more than a dozen insurgents after the militants ambushed a patrol.

Attack aircraft helped repel that initial attack.

Taliban militants overran the area in February, four months after British troops left the town following a contentious peace agreement that handed over security responsibilities to Afghan elders.

The town (Musa Qala) has been in control of Taliban fighters ever since.

(The Associated Press)

RMo

--Eleventh NewsWatch--

DATE: 2007.10.20
KEYWORDS: ADVISORIES
PUBLICATION: bnw
WORD COUNT: 266

More than two dozen Mounties are investigating the discovery of six bodies in Richmond, B-C, which police say looks like a targeted attack.

Police have told residents of the 15-storey building in Surrey to lock their doors and refuse visitors.

But they are also trying to calm nearby residents' concerns, saying this wasn't a random attack.

Police refuse to say how the people were killed. (11)

(Interpol Manhunt) (Audio: 80)

Investigators in Thailand say Christopher Neil denied all charges when questioned following his arrest yesterday.

It's alleged the 32-year-old teacher from Maple Ridge, B-C paid young boys for sex at his Bangkok apartment.

He's being held in a Thai jail.

While being moved back to his cell, Neil had a message for his relatives back in Canada to help get him home.

An arrest warrant was issued after the discovery of hundreds of online photos of abuse. (11)

(Plane Crashes-Building)

Federal investigators are sifting through the wreckage of a small plane that crashed into an apartment building in the Vancouver suburb of Richmond.

The pilot is dead and two residents are injured, one seriously.

The cause of the crash is still not known.

Police identify the pilot as 82-year-old Peter Garrison. (11)

(Afghan-Cda-General) (Audio: 74)

Canada's top army general says the decision to remain in a combat role in Afghanistan is for politicians to decide, not him.

But Lieutenant-General Andrew Leslie says he has seen for himself that progress is being made by Canadian troops in Afghanistan, and he's proud of that.

Leslie is in Kandahar, where he spent the last few days visiting troops in the field. (11)

(Security–Certificate–Protest)

Demonstrators in about a dozen cities rallied today against what they call undue federal government secrecy.

This follows word in this week's throne speech that the Harper government plans to introduce new security certificate legislation.

The demonstrators called on Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day and Immigration Minister Diane Finley to immediately withdraw all security certificates.

The documents are used to detain or deport citizens on national security grounds. (11)

(Colombia–Iron Mask Protest)

He's a real–life man in the iron mask.

In Colombia, an unemployed man has sewn shut his mouth and locked himself behind an iron mask to demand the government attend to his family's desperate economic plight.

Luis Miguel Aldana says he adopted the peculiar form of protest five days ago.

He says he was locked out of his apartment in Bogota.

Instead of paying two months of rent, Aldana says he bought shoes for his three children. (11)

(NewsWatch by Roger Ward)

INDEX:International

DATE: 2007.10.20
KEYWORDS: INTERNATIONAL
PUBLICATION: bnw
WORD COUNT: 119

KABUL, Afghanistan – A battle in southern Afghanistan between U.S.–led coalition forces and Taliban militants left more than a dozen of the insurgents dead, the coalition said.

Insurgents launched the attack with guns and rocket–propelled grenades on the coalition soldiers and the Afghan forces accompanying them on a patrol in northern Helmand province on Thursday.

Attack aircraft helped repel the initial attack but the insurgents tried to reinforce their numbers throughout the engagement, which lasted several hours, according to the coalition.

This year has been the most violent since the U.S.–led coalition ousted the Taliban from power in 2001.

More than 5,200 people have died in insurgency related violence this year, according to an Associated Press count based on figures from Afghan and Western officials.

(The Associated Press)

Afghan-Cda-General

DATE: 2007.10.20
KEYWORDS: INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE
PUBLICATION: bnw
WORD COUNT: 113

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — Canada's top army general says the decision to remain in a combat role in Afghanistan will be a purely political decision and one he won't comment on.

But Lieutenant-General Andrew Leslie says he has seen for himself that progress is being made by Canadian troops in Afghanistan and he's proud.

Leslie says he served a tour in the central Asian nation in 2003 and has returned every few months since then.

He says there is still danger but that families have returned to areas they had fled.

The Conservatives want to extend the mission in some form to 2011 but the Liberals and the Bloc Quebecois want troops out when the current combat mandate expires in February 2009.

Leslie is in Kandahar, where he spent the last few days out visiting troops in the field.

(The Canadian Press)

clt

--Ninth NewsWatch--

DATE: 2007.10.20
KEYWORDS: ADVISORIES
PUBLICATION: bnw
WORD COUNT: 326

More than two dozen officers are investigating the deaths of six men whose bodies were found in various rooms of a condo in Surrey, B-C.

Corporal Dale Carr says it appears the victims may have been targeted or knew their attackers, and many scenarios are being considered.

He says it's a gruesome, complicated crime scene and nothing is being ruled out.

A team of forensic investigators are expected to be scouring the 15th floor apartment for several days. (9)

(Interpol-Manhunt) (Audio: 92)

A Canadian schoolteacher suspected of having sex with dozens of young boys in several Asian countries will be held in a Thai jail for at least 12 days.

Christopher Neil denied doing anything wrong when he made a brief court appearance today.

The family of the 32-year-old man from Maple Ridge, B-C, say they will do all they can to support him, and hope he will be extradited to Canada to face the allegations. (9)

(Afghan-Cda-General) (Audio: 81)

Canadian army Lieutenant-General Andrew Leslie says this country's role in Afghanistan will be decided by the government -- not the military.

Leslie says he expects Canada play a role in Afghanistan for a long time to come, military or not.

While visiting troops in Kandahar, Leslie said he's proud of the progress so far, and notes things are improving for the Afghan people. (9)

(Space Shuttle-Women)

A giant leap is about to be made for womankind.

When the space shuttle Discovery blasts off Tuesday, Pamela Melroy will be sitting in the commander's seat.

And at the international space station, a female skipper, Peggy Whitson, will be waiting to greet her.

It will be the first time in the 50-year history of spaceflight that two women are in charge of two spacecraft at the same time. (9)

(Sinking Cities)

Cities around the world are facing the danger of rising seas and other disasters related to climate change.

The Worldwatch Institute says of 33 cities predicted to have at least eight (m) million people by 2015, at least 21 are highly vulnerable.

In North America, Los Angeles and New York are on the list.

Experts say more than one-tenth of the world's population, or 643 (m) million people, live in low-lying areas at risk from climate change. (9)

(Manhattan-Ladybugs)

About 720-thousand ladybugs have been released in the middle of New York City to help protect one of Manhattan's biggest apartment complexes from pests.

Over the next few weeks, they will crawl into plants, flowers and shrubs in search of insects like leaf-sucking aphids and mites.

The owner of the complex says ladybugs are being used instead of chemical insecticides, and work just as well. (9)

(NewsWatch by Phil Godin)

TOR OUT YYY

DATE: 2007.10.20
KEYWORDS: ADVISORIES
PUBLICATION: bnw
WORD COUNT: 304

Police have not ruled out a murder-suicide after six bodies were found in an apartment building in the Vancouver suburb of Surrey.

The victims — all adults — were discovered in a 15th-floor suite after residents complained they smelled natural gas.

Police say the bodies were there for some time, which appears to account for the smell.

Although police say there's lots of blood at the murder scene, they won't reveal how the victims died, or their ages or sex. (3)

(Plane Crashes Building) (Audio: 17)

An unidentified pilot is dead after his small twin-engine plane crashed into the ninth-floor of an apartment building in Richmond, B-C.

Two residents of the building are injured — one seriously.

Moments before impact, the plane left Vancouver International Airport on a short flight to Pitt Meadows in the Fraser Valley.

Witnesses heard the engines sputtering just before the crash. (3)

(Interpol Manhunt)

A judge in the Thai capital of Bangkok has ordered Christopher Neil to remain in jail for at least 12 days, pending a trial on child molestation charges.

Neil — a 32-year-old native of Maple Ridge, B-C — is suspected of sexually abusing boys in Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam.

Thai police say their investigation could take a month, and a trial could begin soon afterward. (3)

(Arar-Secret-Documents)

The Globe and Mail says it may have discovered why Mahar Arar is still barred from the U-S, even though a Canadian judicial inquiry found he has no terrorist ties.

Although Arar says he never went to Afghanistan, the paper says those denials are contradicted by a man in a Minnesota jail.

The Globe says Mohamed Kamal Elzahabi's claims that he saw Arar in Afghanistan in the early 1990's is in classified U-S documents.

The Globe is also reporting that earlier this year Elzahabi was convicted of immigration fraud and still faces outstanding charges of lying to the F-B-I. (3)

(Flaherty Price Cuts)

At a meeting in Ottawa on Tuesday, Finance Minister Jim Flaherty will press major retailers to trim some of their prices.

Flaherty says a stronger loonie means they're paying less for goods made in the United States.

So, he says those savings should be passed on to consumers.

Yesterday, Hudson's Bay said it will trim prices on about 300 items at its Zellers stores across Canada.

Those items include diapers and cleaning products imported from the U-S. (3)

(Afghan-Cda-General)

The Canadian army's top general says progress is being made by Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan.

And, Lieutenant-General Andrew Leslie says he's proud of that progress.

Leslie made his comments in Kandahar after spending the last few days visiting Canadian soldiers in the field. (3)

(NewsWatch by Bill Marshall)

War of words shames ex-PMs; Rhetorical excess and sleazy cheap shots stain Mulroney, Chrétien biographies

IDNUMBER 200710210075
PUBLICATION: Times Colonist (Victoria)
DATE: 2007.10.21
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Comment
PAGE: D2
SOURCE: Times Colonist
WORD COUNT: 773

It appears that two of the larger egos to occupy 24 Sussex Drive in recent years, Brian Mulroney and Jean Chrétien, still have scores to settle. The pair, who in succession occupied the prime minister's office for almost 20 years, have published memoirs. And sour reading, they make.

Certainly neither man has found modesty in retirement. Nor goodwill toward former colleagues, it appears.

Mulroney's tome, which runs to more than 1,100 pages, is essentially an enemies list. No slight has been forgotten, and every one is repaid, with interest.

The book has rather less of the exaggeration and melodrama that got Mulroney in trouble with the electorate. That lesson, at least, has been learned.

Instead, the former prime minister executes a clinical hit-job on the leading politicians of his era. He excoriates Lucien Bouchard, his Quebec lieutenant, for betraying him over the Meech Lake Accord and trying to split the country.

He paints Pierre Trudeau a coward for refusing to serve during the Second World War. "One million young Canadians... signed up and shipped off to do battle... Pierre Trudeau was not among them. While compatriots were fighting off Nazis ... Trudeau and his friends were fighting off black flies in Outremont."

He retells, with relish, Ontario premier David Peterson calling fellow premier Clyde Wells from Newfoundland "a crazy bastard." He accuses Wells of intriguing with Jean Chrétien to sabotage the Meech Lake Accord. And he writes his own epitaph for the Newfoundland premier: "Vain, egocentric, and consumed."

Chrétien, meanwhile, has scores of his own to settle. If his earlier book of reminiscences was *Straight from the Heart*, this version should have been called *Straight to the Groin*.

As the former prime minister sees it, Paul Martin, the man who succeeded him after a nasty tug-of-war, was a weak and indecisive minister whose dithering contributed to Canadian military casualties in Afghanistan.

Where Martin is widely credited with extinguishing the federal deficit during his tenure in Finance, Chrétien is unimpressed. It was he himself alone, le petit gars from Shawinigan single-handed, who did all the heavy lifting. Martin was simply along for the ride, because he lacked the nerve to make tough choices.

Most notably, Chrétien complains that a "gang of self-serving goons" conspired to force him into retirement. What's notable is these "goons" were his own colleagues, and some of the Liberal party's most trusted advisers.

But he and his wife, Aline, were having none of it, and he clung to office just long enough (though he doesn't say so) for the full weight of the Adscam fiasco to fall on his head. His only regret, it seems, is that he didn't fire Paul Martin before his own number was up.

On one level, the rhetorical excess of these books is nothing new, though Chrétien's attack on his own party, as it struggles to rebuild, has the flavour of strafing lifeboats. But politics is a rough business, and none the worse for people saying what they think.

Sir John A. Macdonald once threw up on stage during a debate, the result of several drinks too many over dinner. He extracted himself by claiming it was his opponent's views that turned his stomach.

And Pierre Trudeau had a habit of scandalizing audiences with less-than-diplomatic language.

Yet words spoken in haste on the campaign trail, or in late-night sessions of Parliament, are one thing. These memoirs are something different.

They represent the considered judgment of men who held the highest elected office, who were actually winners of the political wars, though you wouldn't know it. And they were written well after the authors retired from the cut and thrust of campaigning.

Instead of bitterness and character attacks, we might have expected gratitude for the honour of serving. We might also have expected understanding about the adversarial nature of politics.

Our system of government is designed to reach solutions by contest and debate. The larger the issues, the more intense the dissent.

But carrying on the fight so long after the bell, and recasting honest disagreements as personal betrayals, or worse, completely misses the point. It's not even an effective way of getting a message across, as men who spent their lives in the public arena should know.

Smear tactics usually backfire on the smearer. And self-praise, in the effusive, it's-all-about-me style of these books, is more repellant than attractive.

But perhaps what's most disappointing about these memoirs is the realization that our country was run, for more than two decades, by men who cannot rise above petty vindictiveness. And it makes us wonder what happened to politics along the way, to engender such hatreds.

Perhaps the growing tide of incivility that appears in everything from road rage, to trash-talking celebrities, to shock-jock radio hosts, plays a part. Yet it's up to political leaders to set an example.

As former prime ministers, both these men enjoy the title "Right Honourable" for life. It's time they lived up to it.

At least one of the victims, Paul Martin, is said to be hard at work on an autobiography of his own. Let's hope he aims several degrees higher.

Generals venture into Taliban territory

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DATE: 2007.10.21

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: A7

ILLUSTRATION: Colour Photo: Finbarr O'Reilly, Reuters / Afghan children walk alongside a Canadian soldier patrolling in the Panjwaii district of Kandahar province, southern Afghanistan, yesterday. Canadian troops patrolled a farming village from which Taliban insurgents launched recent rocket attacks on their camp. ;

DATELINE: KANDAHAR, Afghanistan

BYLINE: Matthew Fisher

SOURCE: CanWest News Service

WORD COUNT: 382

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — In a show of confidence in Afghanistan's much maligned national police force, two senior Canadian generals bunked with 15 Afghan policemen and their Canadian mentors this weekend in a small substation in an area where support for the Taliban may be stronger than anywhere else in the country.

"We were way, way out there ... in the heartland of Mullah Omar's birthplace," said Canada's top army commander, Lt.-Gen. Andrew Leslie, after returning yesterday with Brig.-Gen. Guy Laroche, the Canadian battle group commander, from a three-day tour of the war's often invisible front lines in the Zhari and Panjwaii districts.

"Three months ago, that would have been fatal. By that I mean that the odds of dying would have been very high."

But a lot of progress had been made recently, the three-leaf general said of the Afghan police, who were often accused by Afghans of being corrupt and poorly trained and who were now being mentored by scores of Canadian troops.

"Our hands were essentially in the hands of 15 police auxiliaries recruited locally ... but we don't take stupid risks. This was a measure of how confident we are."

Except for a rooster that began crowing at three in the morning, "the night passed off without a hitch," he said.

Leslie, who was second in command with the International Security Assistance Force when it had a much smaller presence in Afghanistan in 2003, had an eventful sojourn in the Afghan countryside. At one point, the Taliban rocketed some Canadian infantry from the Quebec-based Royal 22nd Regiment that he was with at the time.

The visit was part of "an endless series of snapshots" Leslie said he got by visiting his troops every three or four months.

While Afghanistan was still "a dangerous place," from his position as a guard on the back of a light armoured vehicle out on patrol, Leslie said he had noticed "definite signs of progress. There are more people to be seen outside in Panjwaii."

Asked about the continuing controversy in Ottawa over Canada's combat mandate beyond February 2009, Leslie said it was having no effect on the troops.

"We are all soldiers, professionals," he said. "We are all mature enough to recognize that the decision to keep us here or pull us out is a government decision.

"A time will come to leave, probably for another place that is equally dangerous. There will be gainful employment for people like me overseas for a long period to come. I'm not worried about job security."

Women still cool on Harper; Throne speech does little to court female voters, garnering much higher approval among men

IDNUMBER 200710210121
PUBLICATION: The Toronto Star
DATE: 2007.10.21
EDITION: Ont
SECTION: News
PAGE: A08
ILLUSTRATION: NATHAN DENETTE the canadian press file photo Belinda Stronach, Liberal women's caucus chair, says Harper may have written off his chances with women voters. ;
BYLINE: Susan Delacourt
SOURCE: Toronto Star
COPYRIGHT: © 2007 Torstar Corporation
WORD COUNT: 701

Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his Conservatives didn't do much last week to improve their chances with women voters, according to some pollsters and opposition critics.

Parliament Hill was awash in events to mark the 78th anniversary of the famous "persons case," when the Supreme Court of Canada ruled on whether women could be appointed to the Senate.

But the new Speech from the Throne, delivered Tuesday, is being described as deliberately silent on women's concerns or issues.

Nik Nanos, of SES Research, was immediately struck by how the speech failed to make any outreach to the women voters he says the Conservatives will need if they want to form a majority government. He registered his surprise on his website this week.

"Assuming the throne speech is all about forming a majority government, from a research viewpoint it is most likely to yield another Conservative minority," Nanos wrote. "The underlying structural problem for the Conservatives is that they are not competitive among women. The priorities of the throne speech align quite well with the priorities of men, thus reinforcing the core Conservative vote but not addressing a strategy for growth."

Belinda Stronach, chair of the Liberal women's caucus, says it looks like Harper has written off his chances with women voters.

"The silence on women's issues speaks volumes, especially in a throne speech that was intended to trigger an unwanted election," Stronach told the Star. "It says Mr. Harper not only doesn't care about women's issues, he doesn't even care about their votes. It's shameful, but consistent with his record of cuts to the Status of Women and the court challenges program. To add insult to injury, this on the anniversary of the Famous Five – Harper's message is clear – women's issues are not on his priority list"

That assessment appears to be shared in initial polling done by Angus Reid, which shows far more approval by men for the major themes outlined in Harper government's throne speech – sometimes by almost a two-to-one ratio.

Women still cool on Harper; Throne speech does little to court female voters, garnering much higher approval among men

When Angus Reid asked 1,018 respondents online to say whether they were satisfied with key themes in the speech, men were far more likely than women respondents to say they were. A full 50 per cent of men liked what the speech had to say on Arctic sovereignty, while only 26 per cent of women did. On crime legislation, 46 per cent of men were satisfied, but only 29 per cent of women; on Afghanistan, 37 per cent of men, 22 per cent of women.

The poll, conducted on Tuesday and Wednesday last week, is considered accurate within 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Heritage Minister Josee Verner, also responsible for the Status of Women, was questioned in the Commons this week about the Conservatives' alleged abandonment of women by Bloc Quebecois MPs who referred to the throne speech as "a slap in the face" to more than half the population.

Verner countered that the government wants to do more than pay lip service to women's concerns – that what women really need are practical solutions.

"The reality is that our government increased the grants to women's programs by 42 per cent, making it the largest budget ever for the program that provides direct assistance to women, thus much less bureaucracy and more tangible results for women," Verner said.

New Democratic Party leader Jack Layton says that women aren't buying that message. He notes that women make up around 40 per cent of the NDP caucus and, no surprise, the NDP immediately turned thumbs down to the throne speech.

"Women are very concerned about people being left behind and issues of concern to future generations," Layton said. "Mr. Harper doesn't seem to understand that at all."

Beyond just the issues in the throne speech, there's also some suggestion that the Harper government is turning off women voters simply with its style.

On Nanos' website this week, there was some conversation about why the Conservatives aren't making any inroads in building support among women.

One of the commenters was Angelle DesRochers, a 34-year-old entrepreneur and small-business owner who should be within the Tories' sights as a potential supporter. But she said the Conservatives wouldn't get her vote because of the highly partisan attitude of the government. "Labelling, cajoling or bullying people to get their vote is not working for this woman and many others," she wrote.

Stephane: Just say no to Harper

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The conventional wisdom among pundits, and Liberal insiders, is that Dion must gird his loins and ensure, by whatever means necessary, the government's survival in the months to come. In short, avoid the election that is surely Harper's to lose so that the cash-starved and fratricidal Liberal party can live to fight another day.

As comforting as a "head-in-the-sand" strategy might be for the embattled Liberals, it represents a fundamental misinterpretation of Dion's strengths and ultimately increases the likelihood of a Conservative majority.

Dion's credibility as a prime minister in waiting is the product of a public persona unique among recent federal leaders. He is not a streetwise political brawler in the mould of Jean Chretien. Nor is he a too-smart-by-half political charmer like Brian Mulroney.

In contrast, Dion is the rarest of all breeds: the principled politician. This is a man who was vilified in his native Quebec for his steadfast defence of federalism, culminating in the deeply unpopular Clarity Act. He is earnest to a fault in his environmentalism and personal probity. In sum, he is Canada's village curate, the last guy you want to have a beer with but the one politician you might actually trust to babysit your children.

By signalling that he will not bring the government down on the throne speech, Dion can only postpone an election by either supporting bills on the environment, federalism and taxation that run counter to his core principles, or facilitate their passage by keeping Liberal members away from the House. This will be especially wounding when it comes to legislation that will further limit the federal government's ability to create new national social programs. While the Liberals can vote against such measures, the fact they allowed the throne speech to pass – thereby paving the way for the Conservatives' devolutionist agenda to proceed with the Bloc's support – risks permanently tarnishing Dion's hard-won federalist credentials.

The reality is that even if the Liberals avoid triggering an autumn rush to the polls, their leader will have lost the public's confidence that Dion is a man of principle. Instead, by Christmas he will look like any other

recent Liberal leader, a power-hungry and rudderless politician, who to boot lacks the "tough guy" image voters respected in Chretien and increasingly associate with Harper.

To save his political soul and his party Dion must say "no" to the Faustian bargain his handlers are pressing on him and instead bring the government down, as soon as possible, on legislation that gives the Liberals a fighting chance in an election of holding the Conservatives to a minority or winning one of their own.

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Afghan poll not as clear as it seems

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Do ordinary Afghans want Canada to stay in Kandahar until the Taliban is defeated?

Initial reports of an Environics survey released Thursday suggest the answer is a strong yes. "Majority of Afghans want foreign troops to stay and fight" was The Globe and Mail's headline.

Analysts argued that the poll results, based on interviews conducted last month in the war-torn country, would bolster Prime Minister Stephen Harper's efforts to keep Canadian troops fighting in Kandahar past February 2009.

But when the poll is examined more carefully (it's available at <http://erg.environics.net>), its findings become far less definitive. Indeed, it is not clear that they provide solace to any of the politicians now debating Canada's Afghan mission.

First, let us be clear about what the survey did not find. It did not find that a majority of Afghans want foreign troops to stay and fight. It did find that a majority of those polled approved of the "presence of foreign countries" in Afghanistan.

But that term "presence" included everything foreigners are doing in the country, from aid to business to soldiering.

In Kandahar, for instance, India was rated more highly than Canada. But, as the survey notes, India's main contribution there is not troops but goods and entrepreneurs.

On the question of foreign troops, the poll concluded that Afghans are split down the middle – with 52 per cent calling for a full withdrawal within five years versus 43 per cent who want NATO to stay until the Taliban are crushed.

In short, the vast majority of Afghans don't want us to keep fighting in their country until, as Harper puts it, the job is done. Yet neither, it seems, do they favour those, like the New Democrats, who would pull out Canadian troops immediately, or even those, like the Liberals, who would have us end our combat role by 2009.

Elsewhere, the poll results are equally murky. On the one hand, the survey shows that close to three quarters of Afghans do not like the Taliban – thereby strengthening Harper's pro-war argument.

Yet at the same time, 74 per cent say they want their government to negotiate with the Taliban, which is the NDP position.

And more than half say they want to be ruled by a coalition government that includes the Taliban.

Assuming that it is possible to carry out a scientific poll in a country wracked by civil war, what then does this survey tell us?

One, it demonstrates that Afghans do not want to be abandoned by the world again. Hence the overwhelming desire for a continued "foreign presence." Two, while they do not like the Taliban, neither do they demonize them – which is why most would prefer a negotiated end to civil war over continued violence.

Three, they are deeply ambivalent about the presence of foreign troops. They don't want to throw them out. But, at the same time, they are not sure they want them to remain indefinitely. There is a limit to their patience and hospitality.

Finally, the survey provides a rather humbling insight into how Afghans view Canada's military role. The short answer is that they don't. Even in Kandahar, just 2 per cent of those polled knew that Canada was fighting the Taliban. Germany got a bigger mention and it has no troops there.

When Afghans were asked specifically about Canada, most were delightfully complimentary. But first they had to be reminded we were there. One hopes they weren't just being polite.

Thomas Walkom's column appears Thursday and Sunday.

NATO to battle Taliban on YouTube; Afghan mission finally ready to pull plug on Cold War caution and Stone Age methods

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ILLUSTRATION: AHMAD MASOOD reuters NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer: The coalition is "frankly in the Stone Age" when it comes to many aspects of public diplomacy. ;
BYLINE: Mitch Potter
SOURCE: Toronto Star
COPYRIGHT: © 2007 Torstar Corporation
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The classified video that is about to change the way NATO reveals itself to the world was aired secretly to a select group of military brass one month ago.

The clandestine clip, shot from a top-secret military platform, shows a Taliban fighter with an AK-47 over his shoulder.

Just before he rounds a corner and prepares to open fire against NATO soldiers, the man reaches into his backpack, pulls out a burqa and disappears under the head-to-foot robe, instantly transforming himself into another faceless woman in the Afghan crowd.

Senior NATO spokesperson James Appathurai was in the room when the footage was shown to headquarters staff in Brussels.

The Toronto-born public affairs specialist, envisioning a YouTube coup, asked for permission to release the video immediately.

Permission denied. It is classified, after all.

Fast forward less than a month, and the frustration of working within the confines of Cold War-era caution no longer shows on Appathurai's face. Weeks of intense internal debate sparked by the video in question has led to a sea-change in NATO's entire approach to public diplomacy, with the order for wholesale change coming now from the very top – Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer.

Scheffer crystallized the change in a major speech last week that itself passed below the public radar.

Addressing a Copenhagen gathering of insider delegates, including a sizeable contingent from Canada, he said NATO is "frankly in the Stone Age" when it comes to many aspects of public diplomacy.

"When there is an incident in Afghanistan, the Taliban are quick to say there have been high numbers of civilian casualties. The wires pick it up, then the TV stations, then the Web," Scheffer said. But by the time

NATO to battle Taliban on YouTube; Afghan mission finally ready to pull plug on Cold War caution and Stone

NATO has investigated, checked the results and passed the information through its approval system, "our response comes days later – if we are lucky. By that time, we have totally lost the media battle."

Scheffer also faulted commanders for tending to deal only with reporters from their own countries.

"The result? The population of Canada thinks Canadian soldiers are fighting alone. So do the British and the Dutch. That undermines solidarity, diminishes the multilateral nature of the operation and makes it harder to sustain," he said.

"Canadians need to see Danish soldiers in the south, and Romanians and Poles as well as Dutch and British and Estonians and Americans."

Scheffer's words were music to the ears of Appathurai, who has been the "lone voice" urging his colleagues to awaken to tempo of 21st-century communications.

"The Taliban is making videos every day and NATO is not on TV," Appathurai told the Star. "The Taliban has websites. We don't have websites, certainly not an effective Afghan website."

"These cave dwellers – literal cave dwellers – are kicking our asses every single day. And when a video comes along that shows exactly what they are doing, we can't release it because it is classified."

The issue will be revisited this week when NATO defence ministers meet for informal discussions Wednesday and Thursday in Noordwijk, the Netherlands.

Sources say NATO will put new emphasis on Web videos, including the declassification of images previously thought too sensitive to publicize, and place a premium on fleet-footed communication, possibly using rapid-reaction teams to mobilize when Taliban-conceived falsehoods hit the press.

"This is a turning point because now there is consensus that NATO needs to do much, much better at communication, first and foremost with video," said Appathurai.

"We need to be on YouTube."

Appathurai said NATO's failure to communicate deepens perceptions of failure on the ground – perceptions that play directly into the hands of the enemy.

"The average Canadian or Dutchman sees what NATO is doing either as a stalemate between us and the Taliban or as a series of random acts of violence, without being able to see the light at the end of the tunnel. But there is a tunnel and there will be light. The challenge for NATO in Afghanistan is to do everything possible to bring us to it. And the challenge for those of us here in Brussels is to make sure people can see it coming."

Stephane: Just say no to Harper

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Rudyard Griffiths is the co-founder of the Dominion Institute.

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Blackwater: security empire or private army?; Hired guns under fire; In the sometimes murky world of private security contractors, Blackwater stands out with its menacing tactics, well-placed connections and multimillion-dollar contracts

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ILLUSTRATION: Photo: Preston Keres, Washington Post / Erik Prince is the founder of the security contractor Blackwater. "I wanted to do a free-market version of how units could be trained," he says. ; Graphic/Diagram: (See hard copy for graphic.) ; Photo: Preston Keres, Washington Post / Members of a North Carolina sheriff's department train on one of the several shooting ranges at Blackwater's facility in North Carolina. ; Photo: AFP, Getty Images / A Blackwater helicopter flies over the scene of a roadside bomb explosion in central Baghdad in July 2005. In a style now familiar to many living beneath Baghdad's skies, the Blackwater sharpshooter in khaki pants sits sideways on the right side of the chopper, his automatic weapon gripped for battle. ;

KEYWORDS: 0

DATELINE: MOYOCK, N.C.

BYLINE: Robert O'Harrow Jr. and Dana Hedgpeth

SOURCE: The Washington Post; With files from the New York Times

WORD COUNT: 3269

MOYOCK, N.C. – Erik Prince bounded up the stairs of a sand-coloured building and paused on the flat roof, a high point of the 2,800-hectare facility in North Carolina known as Blackwater Lodge and Training Center.

As owner of Blackwater, he has been the focus of intense scrutiny recently by the U.S. Congress and critics because the company's private security forces have at times operated with impunity in Iraq, including allegations they murdered innocent civilians. But on a steamy afternoon recently, just days after testifying on Capitol Hill, Prince seemed like a king surveying his domain.

Below him was a complex he calls Little Baghdad, a collection of drab structures used to prepare security forces for urban warfare in Iraq and elsewhere. In the distance, a half-dozen battered cars raced around a track in a high-speed motorcade, kicking up dust as they practised tactics with a role-playing assailant in pursuit.

Blackwater has an airstrip and hangar filled with gleaming helicopters, a manufacturing plant for assembling armoured cars, a pound filled with bomb-sniffing dogs and a lake with mock ships for training sailors. An armoury is stacked to the ceiling with rifles.

Throughout the place are outdoor ranges where military, intelligence and law enforcement authorities from around the country practise shooting handguns and assault rifles at automated metal targets made by the firm. An incessant pop, pop, pop fills the air.

Blackwater: security empire or private army?; Hired guns under fire; In the sometimes murky world of private

There's no other place quite like Blackwater, at least not in private hands. The complex anchors a global training and security operation that is one of the U.S. government's fastest-growing contractors and both a fixture and a flashpoint of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In a decade, Blackwater's revenue from federal government contracts has grown exponentially, from less than \$100,000 to almost \$600 million last year. In August, the company won its biggest deal ever, a five-year counternarcotics training contract worth up to \$15 billion shared with four other companies.

Blackwater's extraordinary rise would not have been possible without a swirl of historic forces, including sharp cuts in military and security staffing in the 1990s, the Bush administration's drive to outsource government services to the private sector and the sudden demand for improved security in response to the threat of terrorism.

Some law enforcement officials trained by Blackwater consider the firm a resounding success.

"They're the Cadillac of training services," said Jon Adler, national executive vice-president of the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association. "You've got the best of the best teaching close-quarter combat tactics."

But critics focused more on Blackwater's role in Iraq, where nearly a thousand of the firm's heavily armed contractors provide security. The critics describe the firm as a private army and Prince as a war profiteer.

The Iraqi government, meanwhile, has demanded that Blackwater be expelled from the country within six months and pay \$8 million in compensation to the family of every one of 17 civilians its employees are accused of killing at a Baghdad intersection on Sept. 16.

During a recent hearing, Rep. Elijah Cummings, a Democrat from Maryland, questioned whether Blackwater has "created a shadow military of mercenary forces that are not accountable to United States government or to anyone else."

Prince seemed incredulous that anyone would suggest such a thing.

"The idea we have a private army is ridiculous," he said, as a group of sheriff's department deputies cleaned their weapons nearby. "This idea of a private mercenary army is nonsense.

"These guys have sworn the oath as military or law enforcement persons. These are guys who served voluntarily. They are all Americans, working for Americans, protecting Americans."

The organization most people think of as Blackwater is actually a collection of companies with Prince and his McLean, Va.,-based holding company, the Prince Group, at the top. Prince, a former navy Seal and heir to an industrial fortune, owns everything.

Blackwater Maritime has a 55-metre-long ship for naval training. Two aviation-services businesses operate more than 50 planes and helicopters. Blackwater Manufacturing makes special armoured cars the firm hopes to market to the military, as well as moving metal targets for training. Total Intelligence Solutions is led by former CIA officials, including Blackwater executive Cofer Black, who worked on counterterrorism at the CIA and the U.S. State Department.

The most well-known company is Blackwater Lodge and Training Center, a subsidiary of Blackwater Worldwide, which until recently was known as Blackwater USA.

More than 100,000 people in the military and in local, state and federal law enforcement agencies have taken

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the centre's courses. So have thousands of special operations personnel from the U.S. navy, army and other federal agencies.

Before the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the training centre hosted up to 50 people a day. Now the number of students on a given day is 500, sometimes higher.

The company has more than 550 full-time employees and 1,400 contractors who operate in nine countries, including Jordan, Azerbaijan and Burkina Faso. Contractors in Iraq earn the equivalent of \$115,000 a year, a company official said.

U.S. government officials generally have declined to discuss its contracts with the company. As a private corporation, Blackwater does not have to divulge such details. Public procurement data show that over the past six years, about half of Blackwater's federal contracts were awarded with little or no competition from other companies, according to a congressional report. Company officials dispute this, claiming that the bulk of the awards were openly competed.

Prince said the increasingly large awards came as a result of good service and the word spreading among government officials. He said he has largely made good on his goal of doing a better job training special military and police forces than the government does. He said he aims for a "country-club-like experience" with tight schedules and good service.

Strolling on a garden path marked by 30 stones, each bearing the name of a Blackwater contractor who died on assignment in Iraq or elsewhere, he spoke about the success of his idea almost as an inevitability. He said the company has never reached out to Capitol Hill for help.

"This started as a field of dreams: Build it, and they will come," he said. "It was a little success that led to another success to another success."

A review of legal papers, contracting documents, company literature and news accounts, along with interviews with Blackwater and government officials, suggests the story is more complicated.

One factor fuelling the company's ascent is the business savvy and deep pockets of Prince, 38, a zealous entrepreneur and heavy contributor to conservative and Christian causes.

Prince was a White House intern under President George H.W. Bush. His political donations over the past two decades total almost \$263,000 to Pat Buchanan; Oliver North; Rep. Ron Paul, a Texas Republican; and former senator Rick Santorum, a Pennsylvania Republican; among others.

His sister, Betsy DeVos, is former chairwoman of the Republican party in Michigan. She's married to Dick DeVos, son of the co-founder of Amway and a Republican gubernatorial candidate in Michigan. After he was sued in 2005, Prince retained former special prosecutor Kenneth Starr and current White House counsel Fred Fielding, who was then in private practice.

Prince has hired a stable of former officials from the navy, State Department, CIA, FBI and other agencies. He also maintains a database of 40,000 contractor candidates, mostly former military and law enforcement officials, and their particular military, language, mechanical and other skills.

And there's his timing. Prince started the company at a time of sharp cutbacks in federal spending on the military and security. The al-Qaida bombing of the USS Cole in 2000 and the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks created sweeping security demands by the government, contractors and others, in and out of the war zones.

Behind it all was the Bush administration's philosophical push to shrink government. Over the past seven

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years, federal agencies have used changes in contracting rules launched during the Clinton administration to outsource an unprecedented amount of government business, including life-and-death duties once the domain of the military.

Prince insists the security work that brings in so much of the company's revenue was supposed to be a secondary part of the business, behind the training operations. The company was called on by the government in a time of need, he said, and it answered that call.

"The customer demanded it. People asked us to do something, and we did it well," Prince said. "It pushed us as an organization. It made us better. But we're paying a huge price politically."

At odds with that assertion, though, were boasts last year by Blackwater executive Cofer Black. At a conference in Amman, Jordan, Black touted the company's willingness to provide more aggressive peacekeeping forces around the globe.

"We're low-cost and fast. The issue is, who's going to let us play on their team?" Black said, according to a story in the *Virginian-Pilot*.

The birth of Blackwater began with the death of Prince's father in 1995. Edgar Prince, a native of Holland, Mich., founded Prince Corporation and made a fortune inventing and selling auto parts. He also helped found and guide some of the country's most aggressive Christian and family-values groups, including the Family Research Council and Focus on the Family.

"I can say without hesitation that without Ed and Elsa and their wonderful children, there simply would not be a Family Research Council," Gary Bauer, then president of the organization, wrote to his members shortly after Prince's death.

At the time, Erik Prince was a navy Seal on a ship in the Mediterranean, he said. He had joined the navy after studying economics at Hillsdale College in Michigan and, he said, loved being a Seal. But he was dissatisfied with the military's training, saying the facilities were often shabby and lacked good instructors. While on the USS America, he wrote a letter to his wife about the possibility of starting what he later described as his own "state-of-the-art facility."

He was driven by the same entrepreneurial zeal as his father, who he said wanted "precision in all things" and tried to solve problems by making things "better, smarter, faster."

"I wanted to do a free-market version of how units could be trained," he said. "I wanted to do something excellent in this world."

Prince's inheritance funded Blackwater's launch. In July 1996, Prince and his family sold much of his father's business for \$1.35 billion. Prince used about \$900,000 of his share to buy the first 1,250 hectares of land in North Carolina, not far from Norfolk and about 350 kilometres south of the District of Columbia.

Prince bought a backhoe and, for a while, worked at clearing the land himself. The company's name was inspired by the dark, brackish water he encountered everywhere on the low, sandy expanse near the Great Dismal Swamp. Its logo — a bear claw in a rifle scope — alludes to the nearly 100 black bears he says are on the property.

The company's first training contract came in 1998. A Seal unit in California had heard about the camp through word of mouth in the close-knit special forces world, and it came to practise combat, shooting and other skills. For the next few years, the company worked with law enforcement and small military units. It considered a \$40,000 contract a big deal.

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All that changed after the October 2000 al-Qaida attack on the USS Cole in the Yemeni port of Aden. The suicide bombing not only killed 17 sailors and crippled a high-tech destroyer, but it also exposed how unprepared the navy was to defend against a new, unpredictable kind of threat. The top brass demanded better training.

Blackwater employees, many of them former navy pilots and special forces, heard that demand and called everyone they knew in the military to promote the company.

It eventually won a \$46-million training contract in September 2002. It was the pivot-point in the company's brief history because it gave Blackwater credibility in Washington.

"It was our first big-volume, predictable customer," Prince said. "It conferred legitimacy ... At that point, we became a government contractor."

By then, the other key event shaping Blackwater's history had occurred. The Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks changed the security landscape. Suddenly, everyone from corporate America to agencies across the Defense Department and the rest of the government felt the need for protection against looming terrorist threats.

Once again, Prince and his Blackwater colleagues put out the word in the special forces community. "We made it known to them that we have a lot of capacity and we're ready to help in any way we can," he said.

Not long after Sept. 11, 2001, he received a call from an agency he won't name. He went to a meeting in a room filled with people seeking urgent and classified help in Afghanistan. He was told that a couple of secret buildings in Afghanistan needed protection.

Prince himself was among a small group of Blackwater contractors who made the initial trip. Although he still declined to name the agency, Prince said officials were so satisfied with the performance of Blackwater contractors that they hired the company to do similar work in Iraq at the beginning of the war.

"We're a service business. We bend over backwards," he said. "Our direction to the guys is to make themselves indispensable."

In August 2003, the company won a \$25-million contract to protect Paul Bremer, administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority. It was a step into the centre of the conflict in Iraq — and undreamed-of revenue for Blackwater.

The scene of Blackwater guards moving throughout Baghdad became a familiar, menacing sight. The entourage looked like something out of a movie. A dozen bodyguards wearing assault rifles joined U.S. soldiers to flank Bremer. A Blackwater helicopter or two hovered over their convoys of dark sport utility vehicles.

Blackwater is only one of dozens of security firms from around the world operating in the region. The estimated 160,000 contractors of all stripes working in Iraq equal the number of warfighters. Security contractors number about 48,000.

Still, Blackwater stood out.

Retired marine Col. Thomas Hammes, who served in Iraq in 2004, said the Blackwater contractors were no-nonsense guards who did whatever necessary to protect Bremer. In contrast to other security guards in the Green Zone, he said, they were "remarkably professional."

But that was part of the problem. They didn't seem to care how abusive they could be to regular Iraqis, and

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they didn't seem to be under the control of U.S. authorities, Hammes said. In addition, when Bremer left his post, he signed an order exempting U.S. contractors such as Blackwater from being prosecuted under Iraqi law.

As a consequence of the contractors' aggressive behaviour, Hammes said, Blackwater undermined the counterinsurgency efforts that depend so heavily on winning over civilians.

"They're greatly disliked," he said.

That animosity boiled over on March 31, 2004, when four Blackwater contractors driving in the battered city of Fallujah were ambushed by three insurgents in a large truck. The attackers shot and killed all four contractors and fled. A crowd of onlookers took two of the bodies, burned them and hung them on a bridge crossing the Euphrates River.

The company's striking name and its bear-paw logo suddenly became, for some, horrific symbols of everything wrong with the war in Iraq.

And Blackwater's performance became a high-profile issue. In November of that year, a plane owned by Blackwater subsidiary Presidential Airways crashed into a mountain in Afghanistan, killing three soldiers and three Blackwater contractors on a mission under a \$35-million State Department contract.

Families of the victims in both incidents have filed lawsuits against the company, claiming Blackwater failed to prepare the men to go into those areas.

More questions arose from the inspector general at the State Department, who said in 2005 that Blackwater had failed to keep track of contractors' hours, appeared to double-bill for drivers and vehicles that weren't used and allegedly charged more than double the proper amount for overhead expenses.

On Dec. 24, 2006, a Blackwater contractor got drunk and shot dead a bodyguard for Iraqi Vice-President Adel Abdul Mahdi. Blackwater worked with the State Department to fly the contractor back to the United States and fired him. Five months later, Blackwater guards shot and killed an Iraqi driver outside the Interior Ministry in Baghdad, prompting an armed standoff between ministry commandos and the guards.

On Sept. 16 of this year, during a chaotic confrontation in downtown Baghdad, Blackwater contractors allegedly shot and killed 17 Iraqis in a crowded square.

Fresh accounts of the Blackwater shooting last month, given by three rooftop witnesses and by U.S. soldiers who arrived shortly after the gunfire ended, have cast new doubt on statements by Blackwater guards that they were responding to armed insurgents when Iraqi investigators say the 17 Iraqis were killed at a Baghdad intersection.

The three witnesses, Kurds on a rooftop overlooking the scene, told the New York Times that they had observed no gunfire that could have provoked the shooting by Blackwater guards. U.S. soldiers who arrived minutes later found shell casings from guns used normally by American contractors, as well as the U.S. military, but did not find any casings from the sort of guns typically used by insurgents or by Iraqi security forces.

As such incidents mounted, Blackwater hired some of the most politically connected and conservative lawyers and lobbyists in America. The Alexander Strategy Group — disgraced Republican Jack Abramoff's former lobbying outfit — provided public relations advice. Former independent counsel Starr is defending Blackwater in the Fallujah case, and Joseph Schmitz, former inspector general for the Pentagon, joined the Prince Group as in-house counsel.

Blackwater: security empire or private army?; Hired guns under fire; In the sometimes murky world of private

All the while, Blackwater's contracting business continued to grow markedly, according to federal procurement data collected by Eagle Eye, a database marketing company.

In early 2004, the State Department announced a need for a contractor to protect the new U.S. Embassy in Baghdad. DynCorp had a contract to protect U.S. embassies worldwide but was unable to do the work in Baghdad, according to a document provided by Blackwater. So the State Department turned to a company already in position through its work for the Coalition Provisional Authority: Blackwater.

In June 2005, Blackwater's revenue stream took another leap. After a competition, the State Department awarded Blackwater, DynCorp and Triple Canopy work worth \$2.5 billion in the coming years to provide security in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Israel and Iraq.

Democrats in Congress could not have been clearer how they view Blackwater during a packed oversight hearing this month. The company, lawmakers said, operates as an out-of-control, mercenary force.

As Prince drove around the grounds of his property several days after the hearing, he still fumed at the accusations.

Acting as a proud tour guide in a black Suburban, he seemed to want the facilities to prove that Congress and other critics are wrong and that he has nothing to hide.

In his hangar, he looked on as technicians took meticulous care of \$4.5-million helicopters, the grey painted floor gleaming beneath them. Prince noted that Blackwater has lost \$10 million in aviation equipment in action in Iraq and Afghanistan. He said Blackwater helicopters have repeatedly helped save the lives of U.S. soldiers.

At the centre's original lodge, he proudly pointed out a stuffed bobcat, a wild turkey and a beaver that he recalled killing. The lobby of the Blackwater headquarters resembles a ski lodge with a twist: the front doors feature barrels from .50-calibre machine-guns. Inside are oversize wood-and-leather chairs and a large stone fireplace. A glass showcase displays replicas of guns used to assassinate presidents.

Prince visits the complex once or twice a week. He wrapped up his tour and prepared to go home to McLean, where his wife had just had their seventh child. He hopped in a waiting helicopter that shuttled him to another airstrip, where he boarded a small Presidential Airways prop plane normally used to fly government and corporate VIPs.

Prince had become more voluble about his business, but he grew frustrated when pressed about exactly who can hold his growing Blackwater empire accountable. When it comes to his contractors, he said, there's only so much he can do. It's up to the Justice Department and the Pentagon to enforce criminal infractions.

In the end, he said, Blackwater is always ultimately answerable as a business to its government customers.

"We're open, honest Americans trying to do a good job," he said. "If they don't like what we're doing then" — he snapped his fingers — "cut off that revenue steam right now."

Be a hero and lose your job

IDNUMBER 200710210131
PUBLICATION: Edmonton Journal
DATE: 2007.10.21
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Sunday Reader
PAGE: E2
COLUMN: Telescope
Photo: Gary Hershorn, Reuters / THE ALPO LOOKS GOOD: The warm weather in New York City this season has beckoned man and beast alike to enjoy the outdoors. Jair and Angela Freire are joined for lunch by their bulldog Bruiser at a cafe patio in Soho. Bruiser, by the way, looks like he's up to no good. ; Cartoon: (See hard copy for illustration.) ;
KEYWORDS: 0
BYLINE: Terry Mcconnell
SOURCE: The Edmonton Journal
WORD COUNT: 941

Meet Steven Gomez. One public official in New Jersey called him a hero. Another cited his "extraordinary bravery." A local sheriff labelled him a "beacon for everyone to look up to."

Well, thanks to his bravery, that beacon is now unemployed.

According to the Newark Star-Ledger, Gomez was a quick-thinking bank teller from Elizabethtown — and we emphasize the past tense on the part about the bank teller — who helped nab one of New Jersey's most notorious bank robbers. For that, he collected a \$10,000 reward.

But then his employer, the Bank of America, told him if he accepted the reward, he couldn't work there anymore. So Gomez, a 21-year-old with dreams of a career in law enforcement, quit.

Apparently Gomez violated bank procedures when he followed the bandit out of the branch in Union township where he worked and jotted down the man's licence plate.

That act gave police the break they were looking for in making an arrest of the famed Hat Bandit, so named because he wore a different hat to each bank job. Yet instead of thanking Gomez, his bosses scolded him.

"It was really depressing," Gomez said of losing his job. "I just did what was right."

REWARD: BEER

Speaking of rewards, a brewery in New Zealand is offering a "lifetime" supply of beer for the return of a stolen laptop.

The computer contains creative work, contact details and confidential financial information on the Croucher Brewing Company, reports the Rotorua Daily Post.

The lifetime beer supply, about 12 beers a month — yeah, we know, that's one Sunday of football for some of you guys — goes to anyone who can name the thief.

Meanwhile, in the Nevada town of Minden, Martin Ruiz celebrated getting out of jail on an impaired driving charge by knocking back a 12-pack on the courthouse steps.

According to the New York Post, another arrest quickly followed.

DRESSED FOR WORK

Police in Milwaukee are on the lookout for a robber, too, reports the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. He was described as a black male in his 30s, about six foot, three inches tall, weighing 300 pounds — and wearing a denim skirt, red lipstick, and a blond-and-black wig.

The cross-dressing suspect is wanted for the robbery of a loans office.

LIGHTS OUT FOR JERSEY

Steven Gomez might tell you New Jersey is not an easy place to call home. Not only is the Garden State the butt of jokes for every New York-based comic since Vaudeville, but according to Newsday it's not so popular with Jerseyans either.

A poll conducted by Monmouth University discovered that half of New Jersey's adults would like to leave the state — for good.

Many are already voting with their feet. Close to a quarter of a million people have moved out of New Jersey since 2002, and 51 per cent of those who said they'd like to leave plan on joining them sometime soon.

The high cost of living in New Jersey is often cited as the reason, and high property taxes are singled out for particular mention. But the weather, overdevelopment, congestion and corruption in state and local governments are also fingered for blame.

Most of those wanting to leave have their eyes on either Florida or North Carolina.

ASK THE SOPRANOS

"Who needs a house out in Hackensack? Is that all you get for your money?"

— Billy Joel from the song

MOVIN' OUT CHANGES

Maybe you can't go home again. The most common given name for newborn boys in Belgium is Mohammed, reports the Chicago Sun-Times.

FIGHTING FOR VALUE

In this space three weeks ago, Telescope reported that the U.S.-led war in Iraq was costing American taxpayers \$8,000 per second.

OK fine, said astute reader James Gray, but how much is Canada's involvement in the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan costing Canadian taxpayers?

Well, Telescope found the answer, thanks to the remarkably thorough and wholly reliable resources of the CBC. We are, however, required to do a spot of math. Let's see, divide by 24, divide that by 60, divide that by

To review: Iraq is costing American taxpayers \$8,000 per second; Afghanistan is costing Canadian taxpayers, per second (sound of throat clearing), \$16.78.

Mind you, Iraq can be a bit pricey this time of year.

BEACON OF DEMOCRACY

"I believe that the government that governs best is a government that governs least, and by these standards we have set up a fabulous government in Iraq."

— U.S. comic Stephen Colbert

DEEP-LY FELT

Telescope crony Glenn Kubish, the news director for CTV in Edmonton, suspects he has stumbled across a significant discovery: that giants of journalism Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein planted clues to the identity of Deep Throat, their confidential source on wrongdoings in the Nixon White House, in their epic tome *All The President's Men*.

First of all, it's helpful to note Deep Throat was FBI agent W. Mark Felt.

Kub takes it from there:

"This is from chapter 12, paragraph 5, which begins with the first three words 'Deep Throat was...'," writes Kub.

"The next word begins with a W. Three of the next 10 words start with W. So Deep Throat was W.

"Then we get this: 'Mock-offhandedly.' Mock equals Mark. So Deep Throat was W. Mock, er, Mark.

"Does the word felt appear in this paragraph? You bet. Exactly once.

"So in this paragraph, in order, we have: Deep Throat was ... W ... Mock ... Felt."

Kub has forwarded his theory to the aforementioned Mr. Woodward. He has yet to hear back. We can't imagine why.

ARRR!

Just so you know — pirate attacks worldwide are up 14 per cent over last year, reports the New York Times.

Blowing off the clock

Telescope's critics — and yes, there are a few — suggest there are better things to do with one's time on a Sunday than graze on this column.

OH YEAH, LIKE WHAT?

Readers of the Washington Post's Style Invitational column served up some examples of time-wasters that even put reading Telescope to shame.

For example:

- Writing letters to the editor about grammatical mistakes in the classified ads.
- Playing Poor Man's Pac-Man: Type a row of periods, then hold down Backspace and watch that cursor gobble 'em all up.
- Rotating the air in your tires.
- Alphabetizing your days-of-the-week underwear.
- Counting the days since last year's Christmas.
- Filming a shot-by-shot re-creation of every episode of The Sonny and Cher Comedy Hour, using Pez dispensers for the performers.
- Re-enacting the Civil War draft riots.
- Doing a study examining whether fingertip width is correlated with nostril size in the higher vertebrates.
- Trying to pay for that item advertised for .99 cents with a penny.
- Setting the Guinness record for time spent reading the Guinness Book of World Records.
- Swapping perfectly healthy kidneys with your identical twin.
- Collecting a napkin from every restaurant you visit, but not labelling them.
- Stopping the DVD, frame by frame, to verify that there really are 101 Dalmatians.
- Bootlegging audio recordings of "live" Britney Spears concerts.
- Well, I'm actually pretty proud of the time I perfectly reconstructed, using wood glue and tweezers, a shattered pecan shell whose pieces were mixed with bits of other pecan shells, so I guess this doesn't qualify.
- Setting up a logbook in your bathroom to verify that the toilet bowl cleaner really works for 1,000 flushes.
- Finally learning how to program my Commodore 64.
- Weighing yourself before and after restroom visits, and plotting the difference on a graph.
- Reading 10,000 fictional racehorse names and carefully evaluating each one based on humour and originality.

AND FINALLY...

- Counting the stairs on the escalator.

Contributions to Telescope are always welcome. You can reach Terry at 498-5842, fax him at 498-5677 or e-mail him at tmccconnell@thejournal.canwest.com.

Canadian generals' visit in support of Afghan police; Officials claim progress being made, even in Taliban heartland

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PUBLICATION: Edmonton Journal
DATE: 2007.10.21
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SECTION: News
PAGE: D10
KEYWORDS: WAR; TERRORISM
DATELINE: KANDAHAR, Afghanistan
BYLINE: Matthew Fisher
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 333

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan – In a show of confidence in Afghanistan's much maligned national police force, two senior Canadian generals "dossed down" with 15 Afghan policemen and their Canadian mentors this weekend in a small sub-station in an area where support for the Taliban may be stronger than anywhere else in the country.

"We were way, way out there ... in the heartland of Mullah Omar's birthplace," said Canada's top army commander,

Lt.-Gen. Andrew Leslie, after returning Saturday with Brig.-Gen. Guy Laroche, the Canadian battle group commander, from a three day tour of the war's often invisible front lines in the Zhari and Panjwaii districts. "Three months ago, that would have been fatal. By that I mean that the odds of dying would have been very high."

But a lot of progress had been made recently, the three-leaf general said of the Afghan Police, who were often accused by Afghans of being corrupt and poorly trained and who were now being mentored by scores of Canadian troops.

NO STUPID RISKS

"Our hands were essentially in the hands of 15 police auxiliaries recruited locally ... but we don't take stupid risks. This was a measure of how confident we are."

Except for a rooster who began crowing at three in the morning, "the night passed off without a hitch," he said.

Leslie, who was second in command with the International Security Assistance Force when it had a much smaller presence in Afghanistan in 2003, had an eventful sojourn in the Afghan countryside.

At one point, the Taliban rocketed some Canadian infantry from the Quebec-based Royal 22nd Regiment that he was with at the time.

Asked about the continuing controversy in Ottawa over whether or under what terms Canada's combat mandate should be extended beyond February, 2009, Leslie said it was having no effect on the troops.

"We are all soldiers, professionals," he said. "We are all mature enough to recognize that the decision to keep us here or pull us out is a government decision.

"A time will come to leave, probably for another place that is equally dangerous. There will be gainful employment for people like me overseas for a long period to come. I'm not worried about job security."

Japan to cut military payments to US

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PUBLICATION: Edmonton Journal
DATE: 2007.10.21
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A4
COLUMN: World Digest
KEYWORDS: EXECUTIVES; SOFTWARE INDUSTRY
DATELINE: TOKYO
SOURCE: News Services
WORD COUNT: 111

TOKYO – The Japanese government plans to cut about \$87.3 million in host–nation support for U.S. military forces stationed in the country due to Tokyo's budget constraints, a report said Sunday.

The planned cut will likely be made in the form of personnel cuts in Japanese workers at U.S. military bases nationwide, the Yomiuri Shimbun newspaper said. If realized, the cut would be the first reduction in government financial support for U.S. forces stationed in Japan, it said.

U.S. Defence Secretary Robert Gates is scheduled to visit Japan early next month to negotiate a new budget deal and to discuss the Japanese military's refuelling mission for US–led operations in Afghanistan.

Afghans lend reality to mock war; Immigrant role players at CFB Wainwright give soldiers a chance to learn from mistakes

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EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A1 / FRONT

ILLUSTRATION: Colour Photo: Larry Wong, the Journal / Afghan villagers stand in the background as a Canadian soldier patrols the road as part of a military training scenario held at CFB Wainwright. In this exercise, the killing of civilians doesn't have to be a tragedy. ; Colour Photo: Larry Wong, the Journal / The son of a local con man weds the daughter of a local construction magnate in this Afghanistan military exercise which halted convoy traffic. ; Colour Photo: Larry Wong, the Journal / ;

KEYWORDS: WAR; TERRORISM
DATELINE: EDMONTON
BYLINE: Elise Stolte
SOURCE: The Edmonton Journal
WORD COUNT: 859

EDMONTON – Four Afghan villagers were shot at CFB Wainwright Tuesday.

The villagers were role players, Afghan immigrants helping to train soldiers heading to Afghanistan in February.

Late in the afternoon, the villagers approached the soldiers for help and shuffled forward, even when the soldiers yelled "Stop."

The soldiers thought they were suicide bombers and opened fire. Nearby Taliban forces shot back and, in the end, the Canadians "turned the whole village against them," said director Doug Berquist afterward. "Now the Taliban are heroes."

When the scenario ended, the four slain villagers picked themselves up and the soldiers stopped to debrief.

Berquist, a professional film director, and the Afghans working with him count this as a successful event.

"They should do the mistake here, better than doing it in real life and costing a life there," says Taqi, 51, who's afraid printing his last name would bring the wrath of the Taliban on his relatives in Kabul. "That's the point of everything here."

Despite the risks, Taqi and about 40 other Afghan immigrants will spend the next two weeks training soldiers heading for their homeland. It's the army's fifth such training session since August 2006.

But role players aren't teaching soldiers to kill, Taqi says. They're teaching soldiers to understand Afghan culture.

Afghans lend reality to mock war; Immigrant role players at CFB Wainwright give soldiers a chance to learn

"We are trying to save lives on both sides."

The civilian role player's part lasts three weeks and takes place "inside the box" — 425 square kilometres of Alberta soil called Afghanistan, located 170 kilometres southeast of Edmonton.

About 2,500 soldiers, medics and members of the provincial reconstruction team spend their days and nights inside the box, immersing themselves in a mock battle in final preparation for the real one.

Each day, Berquist looks at the army's plans and scripts village life to force soldiers into contact with his role players.

On Wednesday, Berquist scripted a wedding. As director, he knew the army planned to send a convoy through the centre of the village of Loy Karezak. So he wrote a wedding into the town square.

The provincial reconstruction team had a meeting with the local governor Wednesday morning, so Berquist made the wedding important: The son of a local con man, who controlled illegal trade in the region, was to marry the daughter of a man who virtually owned the local construction industry.

The governor was anxious to get to the wedding, so the morning meeting flopped. Soldiers hoping to meet the Malik, or mayor, of another village arrived to find everyone gone.

And at Loy Karezak, the road was blocked. The governor and local Maliks were far too important to move out of the way, so the convoy trucks drove back in a cloud of dust.

Meanwhile, tanks surrounded the village and soldiers watched from the hills, taking photographs and sending information back to their bosses at the nearby command centre.

"This is all intelligence. That's how it works," says Berquist. "Our characters can't be shallow because these guys have to go up the ranks figuring out who's who. If you're going to win the hearts and minds of the Afghans, you need to know who's who."

During training in Wainwright, planners rely on Taqi and the other elders to make sure costumes and scenarios are accurate.

The 40 Afghan role players are mostly men, although a few younger women come with their brothers. Most do not want their faces photographed.

"We're not going to say the enemy is too weak," says a man who gave only his last name, Ahmad. "I have relatives, brothers back there. (The Taliban) would come in the middle of the night, take some of them and kill them."

Inside the box, Taqi is the groom's father, the "mafia leader of Kandahar," he says. Outside the box, he drives a taxi in Edmonton.

Taqi fled Afghanistan in 1992. Russia had pulled out of the country a few years before and when the socialist government it sponsored fell, the country descended into civil war.

Taqi was a chemical engineer who worked out of a lab in the Afghan capital of Kabul. In the midst of war, he hid with his wife and two toddlers in a basement for 40 days while fighters perched high on the mountain turned their guns on anything that moved.

"After that, they decided to attack the whole city," he said. "(Before the fighting) I didn't even dream I would

Afghans lend reality to mock war; Immigrant role players at CFB Wainwright give soldiers a chance to learn

leave Afghanistan."

Taqi's mother, three brothers and two sisters still live in the country with their families. "I was so hopeful that by this time the situation would be all better.

"We're a wartorn country, obviously," he said. "This is a country that got attacked by Russia, and then with the Taliban and the war, so much was destroyed and gone.

"We're looking for the international community's help. (Now as Canadians), we are part of that. We're helping to bring them back on their feet."

In Wainwright, Berquist uses a team of makeup artists and costume designers to prepare role players for the field. In addition to the Afghan immigrants, Berquist uses actors with roots in neighbouring countries, and some Caucasian or other Canadians with professional acting experience.

Other soldiers, not directly in line for deployment, play Taliban fighters. They fill the villages overnight, sleeping in old shipping crates arranged to form a police station, mosque, hospital and village square.

Taqi sees it as a small way to help. If soldiers can learn to stop trying to speak to women before addressing the men, if they never wear shoes in a mosque or drop a Qur'an on the ground, they will avoid a lot of violence. And the taxi driver says he knows it's working.

"I live very close to the military base so I pick (soldiers) up sometimes. I bring them to Whyte Avenue and we talk," he says. "Some of them are back from Afghanistan and some of them are going. I ask them how it was and they're telling me that (the training is) helping there.

"They have a lot of questions about everything."

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Calgary Bestsellers

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DATE: 2007.10.21
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Books & The Arts
PAGE: C2
KEYWORDS: 0
SOURCE: Calgary Herald
WORD COUNT: 175

FICTION

- 1 (—) Darkwing, Kenneth Oppel. A fantasy novel in the Silverwing series.
- 2 (—) Fatal Revenant, Stephen Donaldson. The sequel to The Runes Of The Earth.
- 3 (—) Porcupine, Meg Tilly. The story of a family whose father is killed in Afghanistan.
- 4 (1) Playing For Pizza, John Grisham. An ex-NFL player heads to Italy to play football and gets more than he bargained for.
- 5 (7) Spanish Fly, Will Ferguson. A trio of young men get caught up in crime and love in the 1930s.
- 6 (—) The Silent Raga, Ameen Merchant. A novel about family, tradition, loss and reconciliation.
- 7 (8) Silk, Alessandro Baricco. A story of adventure and love set in the 1800s.
- 8 (3) A Thousand Splendid Suns, Khaled Hosseini. Two women become victims of men in Afghanistan.
- 9 (—) Right Away Monday, Joel Hynes. A young bartender hits both high and lows.
- 10 (4) Bones To Ashes, Kathy Reichs. A forensic anthropologist tries to solve a series of deaths.

Information provided by McNally Robinson and Pages on Kensington

NON-FICTION

- 1 (—) Shock Doctrine, Naomi Klein. How the free market came to dominate the world.
- 2 (9) The City Of Words, Alberto Manguel. How to create tolerant societies.
- 3 (—) Young Thugs, Michael Chettleburgh. A look at the underground world of Canadian street gangs.
- 4 (—) Signspotting 2, Lonely Planet. More absurd and amazing signs from around the world.
- 5 (—) Arc of the Medicine Line, Tony Rees. Mapping the world's longest undefended border.

- 6 (—) For Those About To Write, Dave Bidini. A quirky look at one man's personal path to becoming a writer.
- 7 (6) Memoirs, Brian Mulroney. His political life story from 1939 to 1993.
- 8 (—) The Big Book Of Pop Culture, Hal Niedzviecki. A how-to guide for young artists.
- 9 (—) Around The World In 57 1/2 Gigs, Dave Bidini. The story of his travels doing rock 'n' roll gigs.
- 10 (1) Rick Mercer Report: The Book, Rick Mercer. A collection of satirical rants, writings and comic encounters.

The New York Times book review BestSellers

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PUBLICATION: Calgary Herald
DATE: 2007.10.21
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SECTION: Books & The Arts
PAGE: C2
KEYWORDS: 0
SOURCE: Calgary Herald
WORD COUNT: 465

FICTION

- 1 Playing for pizza, by John Grisham (Doubleday, \$21.95) An American third-string quarterback joins the Italian National Football League.
- 2 The Choice, by Nicholas Sparks (Grand Central, \$24.99) How the choices made by a North Carolina man and the neighbour with whom he falls in love play out their lives; from the author of At First Sight.
- 3 Dark of the moon, by John Sandford (Putnam, \$26.95) Virgil Flowers investigates three murders in a small Minnesota town.
- 4 A Thousand Splendid Suns, by Khaled Hosseini (Riverhead, \$25.95) A friendship between two women in Afghanistan during 30 years of war.
- 5 You've been warned, by James Patterson and Howard Roughan (Little, Brown, \$27.99) An aspiring photographer working as a nanny and in love with the children's father has terrible visions.
- 6 Bridge Of Sighs, by Richard Russo (Knopf, \$26.95) The entangled lives of an upstate New York couple and their friend, from the author of Empire Falls.
- 7 Run, by Ann Patchett (Harper \$25.95) Two young black men, adopted in childhood by the former mayor of Boston, encounter their birth mother and sister; from the author of Bel Canto.
- 8 Shoot him if he runs, by Stuart Woods (Putnam, \$25.95) Stone Barrington tracks a rogue CIA agent on a Caribbean island.
- 9 The Orc King, by R.A. Salvatore (Wizards of the Coast, \$27.95) The dark elf Drizzt Do'Urden seeks vengeance in first book of a new fantasy trilogy.
- 10 Dead Heat by Dick Francis and Felix Francis (Putnam, \$25.95) Someone is out to destroy a young chef's Newmarket restaurant, poisoning food and setting off a bomb.

NON-FICTION

- 1 My Grandfather's son, by Clarence Thomas (Harper, \$26.95) A memoir from an associate justice of the Supreme Court.

- 2 *The Age of turbulence*, by Alan Greenspan (Penguin Press, \$35) A memoir by the longtime chairman of the Federal Reserve Board.
- 3 *If Democrats Had Any Brains, They'd Be Republicans*, by Ann Coulter (Crown Forum, \$24.95) A collection of the columnist's provocative quotations, some from previous books and interviews, some new.
- 4 *The Nine*, by Jeffery Toobin (Doubleday, \$27.95) A portrait of the Supreme Court since the Reagan administration focuses on the influence of its moderates.
- 5 *Louder Than Words*, by Jenny McCarthy (Dutton, \$23.95) A mother deals with her son's autism and struggles to find treatment.
- 6 *The day of battle*, by Rick Atkinson (Holt, \$35) The American army in Sicily and Italy, 1943 to 1944; the second volume of the *Liberation* trilogy.
- 7 *The war*, by Geoffrey C. Ward (Knopf, \$50) A companion to the seven-part PBS documentary directed by Ken Burns, with hundreds of photographs.
- 8 *The Coldest Winter*, by David Halberstam (Hyperion, \$35) A history of the Korean War from the author of *The Best and the Brightest*, who died earlier this year.
- 9 *The Vixen diaries*, by Karrine Steffans (Grand Central, \$24.99) How the author's life changed after the publication of her first book, *Confessions of a Video Vixen*.
- 10 *Power to the people*, by Laura Ingraham (Regnery \$27.95) The political commentator urges Americans to restore traditional conservative principles.

Rankings reflect sales figures for the week ended Oct. 6 at almost 4,000 bookstores plus wholesalers serving 50,000 other retailers (gift shops, department stores, newsstands, supermarkets), statistically weighted to represent all such outlets nationwide.

H indicates that a book's sales are barely distinguishable from those of the book above.

I indicates that some bookstores report receiving bulk orders for a book. Expanded rankings are available at The New York Times on the Web: nytimes.com/books.

Stray NATO warning shot kills Afghan girl, 2

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SECTION: News
PAGE: A11
KEYWORDS: WAR; TERRORISM
DATELINE: KANDAHAR, Afghanistan
SOURCE: Agence France–Presse
WORD COUNT: 222

A toddler died when she was struck by a gunshot from a NATO soldier, while troops killed four dozen Taliban in two days of battles in Afghanistan's top opium-growing area, officials said Saturday.

NATO's International Security Assistance Force said it deeply regretted the death of the child in the southern province of Helmand on Friday.

Helmand provincial police chief Mohammad Hussain Andiwal said the girl was two years old and the incident happened outside her home.

An ISAF soldier fired a single shot to stop a vehicle from coming too close to a military patrol, the force said in a statement. The bullet apparently ricocheted and hit the child, although the incident was being investigated, it said.

"Some time later, a family brought a child suffering from a gunshot wound to the head to an ISAF base for medical attention. Unfortunately, the child died," it said.

Several civilians have been killed in Afghanistan this year by warning shots fired to stop people approaching international security force checkpoints and patrols.

Troops are the main target of Taliban suicide bombs, often delivered by car or fixed to a person who launches himself at the soldiers.

Meanwhile, the separate U.S.-led coalition, which works alongside ISAF and the Afghan security forces, said it had killed around four dozen Taliban fighters in two straight days of fighting elsewhere in Helmand.

Nearly three dozen were killed Saturday and more than a dozen on Friday in fighting in the Musa Qala area, an insurgent hotbed.

British SAS fighting secret war inside Iran: source; U.S., Australians helping to ambush arms smugglers

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PUBLICATION: Calgary Herald
DATE: 2007.10.21
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A10
KEYWORDS: WAR; IRAQ; ARMED FORCES; UNITED STATES
BYLINE: Michael Smith
SOURCE: Times of London
WORD COUNT: 377

British special forces have crossed into Iran from Iraq a number of times in recent months as part of a secret border war against the Iranian Revolutionary Guard's Al-Quds special forces, U.K. defence sources have disclosed.

There have been at least half a dozen intense firefights between the SAS and arms smugglers, a mixture of Iranians and Shi'ite militiamen.

The unreported fighting straddles the border and has also seen the Iranian military firing mortars into Iraq. U.K. commanders fear Iran is using a militia ceasefire to step up arms supplies in preparation for a future offensive against their base at Basra airport.

An SAS squadron is carrying out operations along the Iranian border in Maysan and Basra provinces with other U.K. special forces, the Australian SAS and American special operations troops.

They are patrolling the border, ambushing arms smugglers bringing in sophisticated surface-to-air missiles and components for roadside bombs.

"Last month, they were involved in six significant contacts which killed 17 smugglers and recovered weapons, explosives and missiles," a source said.

Last week, Bob Ainsworth, the U.K.'s armed forces minister, said the Ministry of Defence was unable to state if anyone killed or captured by British troops in Iraq was Iranian. The ministry declined comment, but privately officials insisted British troops never carry out hot pursuit across the border.

There have been persistent reports of U.S. special operations missions inside Iran preparing for a possible attack.

But the sources said U.K. troops were solely stopping arms smuggling.

The fighting comes amid an increase in U.S. and British intelligence operations against Iran.

Britain's forces have more than 70 Farsi experts monitoring Iranian communications and the intelligence is shared with the U.S.

Seven American U2 spy planes have passed through a Royal Air Force base in Gloucestershire this year on their way to Cyprus or Abu Dhabi, the sites of bases for flights over Iran.

The Al-Quds force has been increasing its arms supplies to both the Shi'ite militias in Iraq and the Taliban in Afghanistan. Officially, Britain has been careful not to blame the Iranian government for the move. But senior U.K. officials have confirmed to the Times that it would not happen without the backing of the Iranian leadership.

They pointed out that Gen. Qassem Suleimani, the head of the Al-Quds force, has direct access to Ayatollah Khamenei, Iran's supreme leader.

Liam Fox, shadow defence secretary for the U.K.'s Conservative opposition, said: "Increasingly, Iran poses a direct threat to our armed forces and our wider interests. . . . They are playing a very dangerous game."

WILD ART

SOURCETAG 0710210302

PUBLICATION: The Winnipeg Sun

DATE: 2007.10.21

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 16

ILLUSTRATION: photo by Finbarr O'Reilly, Reuters DRIVE-BY LAUGHTER Canadian troops, patrolling a village in southern Afghanistan yesterday from where Taliban insurgents launched recent rocket attacks on their camp, share a joke with a local resident.

WORD COUNT: 0

Our role vital Military or not, Afghans need us: Canuck general

SOURCETAG: 0710210419
PUBLICATION: The Toronto Sun
DATE: 2007.10.21
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: 37
ILLUSTRATION: photo of ANDREW LESLIE Top general
BYLINE: DENE MOORE, CP
DATELINE: KANDAHAR
WORD COUNT: 176

Canada's top army general says that while the decision to remain in Afghanistan will be up to the politicians, Canada will have a role to play in the central Asian nation for a long time to come, military or not.

Lt.-Gen. Andrew Leslie declined comment on the throne speech suggestion that Canada's mission should be extended to 2011.

"We're all soldiers, we're all professionals," he told reporters at Kandahar Airfield yesterday.

"We're all mature enough to understand that the decision to keep us here or to pull us out, that's purely political. We'll do that which the government of Canada tells us to do."

But Leslie, who spent several days visiting troops throughout Kandahar province, said Canada will have a presence in the country for some time.

"A long time after Canadian soldiers leave, there will still be Canadian money, Canadian interest coming to areas such as Afghanistan because it's got such a long way to go to recover," he said.

Leslie said the military focus now is on building the capacity of Afghan national security forces.

"Then, tucked in right behind that, you develop," he said.

Leslie, who served in Afghanistan in 2003 and returns every few months as commander of the army, said he has seen for himself that progress is being made by Canadian troops in that country.

KEYWORDS=CANADA

Letters to the Editor Column

SOURCETAG 0710210875
PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Sun
DATE: 2007.10.21
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Comment
PAGE: 23
COLUMN: Letters to the Editor
WORD COUNT: 417

Re: "Energy answers blowin' in the wind?" (Oct. 18). I was compelled to write in regard to a quote by Luke Geleynse of Terravis Wind Energy.

I feel the quote, "Each 10-megawatt wind farm will offset a large amount of coal-fired power production, which has a positive effect on Ontario's CO2 emissions," is very misleading to the casual observer of both our electricity system and industrial wind power in general.

First, one must realize that due to its intermittent and uncontrollable nature, wind power cannot replace any form of "baseload" power — be it coal, nuclear or hydro — only supplement it. Baseload power plants supply most of our electricity, and most of the time and they are designed to operate on a nearly continuous basis. Wind simply cannot meet this mandate.

Second, a wind power plant rarely produces its "installed" or "nameplate" capacity. It is generally accepted that a wind power plant may produce about one-third of its installed capacity when averaged out over the course of a year. For a 10MW industrial wind turbine plant, this would mean 3.3MW. For comparative purposes, the Nanticoke coal plant is about 3,920 MW and the Bruce Nuclear plant is currently about 4,000 MW.

There is a limit to the amount of wind power that can be added to our grid. This is to ensure the stability of the grid when supplementing it with unpredictable, fluctuating sources of power. This is why Germany, with thousands of turbines, is still constructing new coal plants. The Ontario target for wind power is about 4,700 MW. This too, will take thousands of turbines spread across the countryside.

However, the actual power contributed to the grid over the course of the year will only be a bit more than the already closed Lakeview generating station supplied.

Environmentally speaking, there is nothing wrong with wanting to shut down our coal power plants, but let's be realistic about how to replace the power and carefully consider the siting of high impact "non-solutions" to our energy and environmental goals.

ALLAN LEWIS

GREY HIGHLANDS

(No need to worry, the coal plants aren't closing any time soon)

This is in response to all of your articles on Const. Chris Worden, the RCMP officer killed in the line of duty. That should be expected, along with the OPP, Surete du Quebec, etc. You published news of this one officer killed in the line of duty for over a week. What about our soldiers in Afghanistan?

When a soldier gets killed overseas you publish one article, not a dozen. It's time to realize that all death is tragic, however, it is to be expected when you enter a field where a firearm is necessary.

JOHN ZAPATCIKY

OTTAWA

(Worden is from Ottawa; that matters to us and our readers)

50 Afghan insurgents killed

SOURCETAG 0710210202
PUBLICATION: The London Free Press
DATE: 2007.10.21
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A13
DATELINE: KABUL, AFGHANISTAN
COLUMN: News Digest
WORD COUNT: 102

U.S.-led coalition soldiers and Afghan forces killed about 50 militants in two days of major fighting near a Taliban-controlled town in Afghanistan's poppy-growing belt, officials said yesterday. Taliban forces fired on a combined coalition-Afghan patrol, sparking a battle that lasted several hours and involved military aircraft. Nearly three dozen militants were killed. The battle was the second in two days near Musa Qala. The coalition said it killed more than a dozen insurgents Friday after militants ambushed a patrol.

KEYWORDS=WORLD

Canada's Afghan role will endure: general But politics will decide the details, says army boss

SOURCETAG: 0710210757

PUBLICATION: The Edmonton Sun

DATE: 2007.10.21

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 53

ILLUSTRATION: photo by Finbarr O'Reilly, Reuters Canadian soldiers from the NATO-led coalition return to base after a patrol through the Panjwaii district of Kandahar province, southern Afghanistan, yesterday. Canadian troops patrolled a farming village yesterday from where Taliban insurgents launched recent rocket attacks on their camp.

BYLINE: DENE MOORE, CP

DATELINE: KANDAHAR, Afghanistan

WORD COUNT: 279

The decision to remain in a combat role in Afghanistan will be up to politicians but Canada will have a role to play in the central Asian nation for a long time to come, military or not, says Canada's top army general.

Lt.-Gen. Andrew Leslie declined comment on the throne speech suggestion that Canada's mission should be extended to 2011.

"We're all soldiers, we're all professionals," he told reporters at Kandahar Airfield yesterday.

"We're all mature enough to understand that the decision to keep us here or to pull us out, that's purely political. We'll do that which the government of Canada tells us to do."

But Leslie, who spent several days visiting troops throughout Kandahar province, said Canada will have a presence in the country for some time.

"A long time after Canadian soldiers leave, there will still be Canadian money, Canadian interest coming to areas such as Afghanistan because it's got such a long way to go to recover," he said.

Leslie said the military focus right now is on building the capacity of Afghan national security forces.

"Then, tucked in right behind that, you develop," he said.

Leslie, who served in Afghanistan in 2003 and returns every few months as commander of the army, said he has seen for himself that progress is being made by Canadian troops in Afghanistan.

"There are more people out in the Panjwaii. There are more people in the subdistricts. The markets are open."

He said there are signs of progress "in the heart of (Taliban leader) Mullah Omar's place of birth," the Zhari district, where Canadians have established police substations that are being manned by Afghan national police and Canadian military mentors.

The Conservatives want to extend the mission in some form to 2011 but the Liberals and the Bloc Quebecois

want troops out when the current combat mandate expires in February 2009.

The mission will be the subject of intense debate in the months to come but Leslie, like other military officials, has avoided comment.

"There will come a time when we have to leave and the Canadian army will probably go somewhere else, equally dangerous, equally complicated, and do an equally good job," he told reporters.

KEYWORDS=WORLD

Soldiers kill 50 militants in Afghanistan's south

SOURCETAG 0710210597

PUBLICATION: The Calgary Sun

DATE: 2007.10.21

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 41

ILLUSTRATION: photo by Finbarr O'Reilly, Reuters A Canadian soldier from the NATO-led coalition gives stuffed toys to children yesterday during a patrol in the Panjwaii district of Kandahar province in southern Afghanistan.

BYLINE: AP

DATELINE: KABUL

WORD COUNT: 180

U.S.-led coalition soldiers and Afghan forces killed about 50 militants in two days of major fighting near a Taliban-controlled town in southern Afghanistan's poppy-growing belt, officials said yesterday.

Taliban forces fired rocket-propelled grenades and small arms at a combined coalition-Afghan patrol near the town of Musa Qala in Helmand province, sparking a battle that lasted several hours.

The battle was the second in two days near Musa Qala.

The coalition said it killed more than a dozen insurgents Friday after militants ambushed a patrol.

Attack aircraft helped repel that initial attack, though fighters tried to reinforce their numbers throughout the engagement, which lasted several hours.

Taliban militants overran Musa Qala in February, four months after British troops left the town after a contentious peace agreement that handed security responsibilities to Afghan elders.

Musa Qala has been in control of Taliban fighters since and is in the heart of the world's largest poppy-growing region.

U.S. Gen. Dan McNeill, commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan, said this week the Taliban funds between 20% and 40% of their militant operations through opium poppies.

Afghanistan is the world's largest producer of opium, the main ingredient in heroin.

This year has been the most violent since the U.S.-led coalition ousted the Taliban from power in 2001.

More than 5,200 people have died in insurgency-related violence this year, according to a count based on figures from Afghan and western officials.

Elsewhere, a remote-control bomb exploded next to a police vehicle in Paktia province, killing two police.

KEYWORDS=WORLD

'Parachutes' hardly golden It's in our best interests to ensure city politicians are properly rewarded for their work

SOURCETAG: 0710210572
PUBLICATION: The Calgary Sun
DATE: 2007.10.21
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Editorial/Opinion
PAGE: 21
ILLUSTRATION: drawing by TAB
BYLINE: IAN ROBINSON
WORD COUNT: 502

I feel as though I'm about to commit an unnatural and anti-social act.

Like voting New Democrat or tying firecrackers to squirrels or founding a website called nakedmidgetsinpain.com.

But here goes: There is nothing wrong with the schedule of severance pay and pensions received by defeated or retiring Calgary aldermen.

Scott Hennig, on behalf of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, has slammed the money Barry Erskine, Craig Burrows, Madeleine King and Helene Larocque will get as "golden parachutes."

And he is wrong.

It kind of hurts to say this, because there is scarcely a human being alive who loathes taxation as much as I do.

I believe taxation is theft.

I hate it when my tax dollars go to buy "public art," subsidize opera or professional sports teams, or hire city workers to harass citizens whose lawns are so shaggy they're starting to look as sketchy and unkempt as Owen Wilson.

I'm getting so antisocial, I'm usually about one Deerfoot traffic jam away from chucking it all and building a cabin in the woods like the Unabomber, eating raccoon stew and spending the rest of my life writing sternly worded and mildly threatening letters to newspapers.

The only things I like my tax dollars purchasing are water, sewer and roads, cops and firefighters, prisons, unlimited ammo for the guys keeping us safe in Afghanistan and whatever Gov. Gen. Michaelle Jean wants from the Victoria's Secret catalogue. (The Holiday Issue just arrived and it's better than ever! I commend to you Page 12 in particular. Merry Christmas.)

But I recognize that if we're going to live in a civilized, organized, democratic society, we need to elect people to public office to balance the demands of various groups and to find ways to fund those demands that won't steal any more from me than is absolutely necessary.

'Parachutes' hardly golden It's in our best interests to ensure city politicians are properly rewarded for their work

Let's face it: The City of Calgary is a \$2-billion-a-year corporation. I would prefer that the people who run it — let's call them, I dunno, "politicians" — were not idiots.

I know it's a lot to ask, but I travel hopefully.

One of the ways to attract non-idiots to local politics is to compensate them well. It is not an easy job, not if done right. Lots of evening and weekend work. Lots of tongue-biting. Loss of privacy.

Ever been to a municipal council or committee meeting? Duller than a long-weekend marathon of The View.

Barry Erskine, who gave 15 years of his life to it, walks away with \$48,000 to help him transition back to the market economy and a pension of about \$24,000 a year.

As for Hennig's assertion such payouts are unknown in the private sector, I somehow doubt an executive in Big Oil walks away after 15 years with a paltry \$24,000.

For the top guys in the tall towers looking down on city hall, \$24,000 a year isn't a pension. It's a bar tab.

After six years, Burrows and King transition with \$19,000 each and pensions of roughly \$9,500 and Larocque, after three years, gets the same in transition allowance and pension worth \$4,700 annually.

Hennig also notes: "In the real world, you don't get severance if you quit a job or get fired with cause."

In the real world, you also don't keep or lose your job based on a popularity contest.

Sometimes people who lose elections are being fired for cause. Sometimes they're victims of changing political winds or smear campaigns or because their last name starts with a "Q" and voters were too lazy to read to the bottom of the ballot.

In a normal job in a normal economy, you give it your best effort, you turn up every day, you don't get drunk at the company Christmas party and corner the boss's wife under the mistletoe, chances are, you're pretty secure.

The life of a politician is, almost by definition, one of insecurity.

Easing the path of the failed ones back to private life is, not only the least we can do, it's in our best interest to do so.

'Parachutes' hardly golden It's in our best interests to ensure city politicians are properly rewarded for their v

Arar's denials contradicted by convict

SOURCETAG 0710210562
PUBLICATION: The Calgary Sun
DATE: 2007.10.21
EDITION: Early
SECTION: News
PAGE: 13
ILLUSTRATION: photo of MAHER ARAR Under scrutiny
BYLINE: CP
DATELINE: TORONTO
WORD COUNT: 124

Maher Arar's denials that he ever went to Afghanistan are contradicted by a man convicted of immigration fraud who says he spotted him there in the early 1990s, according to classified American documents seen by an Eastern newspaper.

The intelligence documents are said by U.S. sources to be key to understanding Washington's argument that, even though Arar has been cleared of any wrongdoing, he should remain on a no-fly list and remain barred from entering U.S. territory as an alleged security threat, the newspaper reported yesterday.

Until now, the files have been accessible only to those with security clearance.

In Minnesota, Mohamed Kamal Elzahabi, a Lebanese-born U.S. resident who once led training camps in Afghanistan, has been jailed for three years.

Earlier this year he was convicted of immigration fraud.

His case is obscure and his credibility is very much at issue.

In Canada, an inquiry concluded Arar had no link to terrorism. KEYWORDS=NATIONAL

New twist to Northwest Passage adventures

PUBLICATION: WINNIPEG FREE PRESS

DATE: 2007.10.21

PAGE: D0

SECTION: Books

WORD COUNT: 586

None Helen Norrie THE Northwest Passage — channel to the Orient, route to riches, avenue to fame.

Those were the dreams of the 17th-century travellers who sought to unlock the New World's ice-laden mysteries. But in the young-adult adventure story *The Alchemist's Dream* (Key Porter, 248 pages, \$17 hard cover) Vancouver Island author John Wilson suggests another compelling motive: to complete the search for four mystical elements that will unlock a new Golden age for England.

Wilson's novel begins with the appearance of a slovenly sailor who sells a tattered journal to a former Arctic explorer, Robert Bylot.

Bylot recognizes the lost journal of Henry Hudson, which vanished with its author when he was put adrift in Hudson Bay. It leads him to recall his desperate search for the "Furious Overfall" that supposedly led to the Northwest Passage and to the tragedies of those who also tried and for the strange theories of Dee, the alchemist who believed the secret of eternal harmony lay somewhere in that northern wilderness.

This novel will appeal to all readers who long for adventure, especially those who dream of confronting impossible tasks. Wilson has written 12 historical novels, including *Flames of the Tiger*, as well as non-fiction books for adults. He is able to carry the reader along on a suspenseful current of well-chosen words.

z z z Two main characters, two different religions, two respected authors.

That's the formula for *Bifocal* by Deborah Ellis and Eric Walters (Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 280 pages, \$13 paperback).

Jay Wilson and Haroon Badawi are Grade 11 students. But that's where similarities end. Jay is white, Protestant and a linebacker on the football team.

Haroon is "brown" (the term used by the other students), his family is from Afghanistan, he is Muslim and a contestant for the Reach for the Top team.

When police descend on the school and arrest a Muslim student on suspicion of terrorism, the whole atmosphere of the school changes.

All the "brown" students are suspect, and Jay finds himself caught up in some ugly racial actions.

Despite its dual authorship, the novel's narrative flows with surprising smoothness. Ontario-born world traveller Ellis wrote the chapters in Haroon's mind; Toronto author Walters writes as Jay.

With her previous success with the *Breadwinner Trilogy*, set in Afghanistan, Ellis is able to describe Haroon's home life and religion with accuracy, as in his observance of Ramadan and his sister's decision to wear a veil.

In Jay's case, prolific novelist Walters is a master of depicting the football team mentality, the feeling that winning is everything and solidarity is crucial.

This novel is about our differences and how we treat one another.

It deals with contemporary issues and could well become important reading in today's high schools.

z z z B.C. author Gayle Friesen has written a breezy sequel to her novel *Losing Forever in For Now* (Kids Can Press, 248 pages, \$17 hardcover, \$9 paperback).

Jes is starting at a new school, her mom has remarried and Jes is learning to live with her beautiful (and seemingly unapproachable) stepsister Angela.

But now her mom is pregnant and Jes has a whole new series of changes to cope with.

One of the best things about this novel is its humour. It is written in the first person, and Jes never takes herself too seriously.

Many students will identify with Jes's feelings as she approaches high school: "I was a little nervous because I'm going to a bigger school and starting eleventh grade, which is a big deal due to the need to get good grades in order to get into a good college in order to have a good and productive life. (That little commercial was sponsored by my mother, who has been saying this for the last 15 years.)" Young women, especially, will like this novel.

Winnipegger Helen Norrie's column appears on the third Sunday of the month.

Head coverings not about choice

PUBLICATION: WINNIPEG FREE PRESS

DATE: 2007.10.21

PAGE: B9

SECTION: Faith

WORD COUNT: 671

Freelance Writer Natalie Gordon Re: Head coverings and Islam, Oct. 14.

Shahina Siddiqui's presentation of the hijab and other religious coverings for women as nothing more than a choice to conform to modesty requirements of the founder of Islam is naive at best and disingenuous at worst. The hijab and other forms of head coverings for women are hugely controversial within the Muslim world, particularly among reformers. First, according to Imam Khaleel Mohammed (professor of religion, Islam, Islamic law and comparative religion at San Diego State University), the veiling and other covering of women was not mandated directly by the Prophet Muhammed. The text quoted by Siddiqui refers to a specific situation that Muhammad found offensive.

A prevailing fashion of that time meant women partly covered their hair with a long band but wore dresses with such a low-cut décolletage that their breasts were frankly visible. An examination of the original Arabic indicates the Prophet told his wives to drop the local fashion, dress modestly, and cover their breasts. The use of head veils and other coverings is merely a custom that predates Muhammed and these customs vary by region and were often adopted directly from surrounding Christian and Jewish customs. They have no basis in Islam.

Nabil Abdel-Fattah, who conducts research on political Islam at the Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies in Cairo, states that headscarf wearers are by no means always religiously motivated and wearing the headscarf is more often a political statement than a religious one.

If it were simply a matter of choice for all women, as Siddiqui suggests, then I would wholeheartedly endorse the choice of any Muslim woman to wear the hijab, burqa or any other form of personal covering. Unfortunately, the history of such covering of women in the Muslim world has never been about choice.

Ayaan Hirsi Ali reported in her book *Infidel*, that the appearance of the hijab precisely correlates with the advancement of the radical Islamic doctrine promoted by the Muslim Brotherhood in Africa, which was funded by wealthy religious Wahhabist Saudis. Further, Ali reports that if a woman chose not to cover herself, she was immediately the object of severe sexual harassment, and even rape, by Muslim Somali men in her community. Among the Shia Muslims of Iran, religious police patrol the street looking for women who are not conforming to state-imposed "modesty" standards and they are beaten and arrested.

Irshad Manji reports in her book *The Trouble With Islam*, that she donned fully covered Saudi-style garb, including the face veil, while she visited in Saudi Arabia. (Saudi Arabia is another Muslim place where morality police beat and arrest the uncovered woman among many other forms of extreme gender oppression.) Manji reports that she was so anonymous in a crowd of women that her own bodyguards could not locate her in a marketplace, hence its value for turning women into objects. The burqa, which was a quaint country custom in Afghanistan, became the primary tool of oppression of women by the Taliban.

So the body covering presented by Siddiqui as the obvious free choice for any woman who wishes to conform to religious Islam, is in reality as practised in the Muslim world, the single most obvious method of objectification and oppression of women. Among young women in the West, who presumably have free

choice, the hijab in particular is an externally imposed conformity promoted by radical Islam or (among those who know the entire history of the hijab) an active statement of personal support for promoting the goals of radical Islam in the West.

No wonder then, that the Egyptian minister of culture, Farouk Hosni, recently asserted that the growing number of headscarf wearers in Egypt must be taken as a sign of backwardness.

Natalie Gordon lives in Winnipeg.

Around the World

PUBLICATION: WINNIPEG FREE PRESS

DATE: 2007.10.21

PAGE: A8

SECTION: World Wire

WORD COUNT: 416

CP Wire Canada's staying: general KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — The decision to remain in a combat role in Afghanistan will be up to politicians but Canada will have a role to play in the nation for a long time to come, says Canada's top army general.

"A long time after Canadian soldiers leave, there will still be Canadian money, Canadian interest coming to areas such as Afghanistan because it's got such a long way to go to recover," Lt.-Gen. Andrew Leslie said Saturday .

Women flying high CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — A giant leap will be made for womankind.

When space shuttle Discovery blasts off Tuesday, a woman will be sitting in the commander's seat. And up at the International Space Station, a female skipper will be waiting to greet her. This is no public relations gimmick cooked up by NASA. It's coincidence, which pleases shuttle commander Pamela Melroy and station commander Peggy Whitson.

"To me, that's one of the best parts about it," said Melroy. "This is not something that was planned or orchestrated in any way." Iran's nuclear boss quits TEHRAN, Iran — The Iranian government announced Saturday that its top nuclear negotiator had resigned, a move seen as a victory for President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad that could bring about a tougher stance in talks.

Saeed Jalili, a deputy foreign minister for European and American affairs, will succeed Ali Larijani. Larijani was seen as more committed to a diplomatic solution over Iran's nuclear program while Ahmadinejad is seen as not favouring talks with the West.

Kid suspended for drawing NEW YORK — Harry Potter fans, the rumours are true: Albus Dumbledore, master wizard and Headmaster of Hogwarts, is gay.

J.K. Rowling, author of the mega-selling fantasy series that ended last summer, outed the beloved character Friday night while appearing before a full house at Carnegie Hall. After reading briefly from the final book, "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows," she took questions from audience members.

She was asked by one young fan whether Dumbledore finds "true love." "Dumbledore is gay," the author responded to gasps and applause.

She then explained that Dumbledore was smitten with rival Gellert Grindelwald, whom he defeated long ago in a battle between good and bad wizards. "Falling in love can blind us to an extent," Rowling said of Dumbledore's feelings, adding that Dumbledore was "horribly, terribly let down." — From the news services {Kandahar AFGHANISTAN}

Chrétien in translation; How Daniel Poliquin helped the ex-PM 'write his voice, to make sure he sounded like Jean Chrétien'

IDNUMBER 200710210058
PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Citizen
DATE: 2007.10.21
EDITION: Final
SECTION: The Citizen's Weekly Arts & Books
PAGE: C1 / FRONT
ILLUSTRATION: Colour Photo: Ashley Fraser, the Ottawa Citizen / 'Daniel got me talking and thinking in ways that seemed more suitable to my mother tongue,' Jean Chrétien says of Ottawa author-translator Daniel Poliquin. ; Photo: Jean Chrétien: 'Iron in his blood' ;
BYLINE: Paul Gessell
SOURCE: The Ottawa Citizen
WORD COUNT: 1588

The instruction from former prime minister Jean Chrétien was clear: He did not want the French version of his new political memoir to make him look like a country bumpkin who speaks the slangy Quebec French known as joul.

"He said, 'Don't make me too joul; they always thought I was a hick, anyway, so don't play too much that card,'" recalls Daniel Poliquin, the Ottawa author and translator who stickhandled *Passion politique*, the French edition of *My Years as Prime Minister*.

Chrétien wanted the French book published by Boréal to have just the right tone. The backwoods boy from Shawinigan also did not want to sound too high falutin', with a pretentious made-in-France vocabulary.

In the gripping passage when a would-be assassin breaks into 24 Sussex Drive, for instance, Poliquin had Chrétien rushing from bed to put on his "peignoir" — a word that means a bathrobe for either men or women.

Chrétien was not pleased. He wanted a more colloquial Quebec expression.

"Hey, I'm from Shawinigan," Chrétien exclaimed. "It's a robe de chambre."

At one point in the book, Chrétien wanted to compare himself to John F. Kennedy by quoting the dead president's brother Robert Kennedy as saying JFK had given Americans back their confidence.

"Maybe I did that, too," Chrétien said about his relationship to Canada.

Poliquin was uneasy with the Kennedy quotation.

"I said, 'Why do we need a foreign reference to talk about ourselves? Can't you talk about yourself what you did?' I said: 'Can I rewrite that?' So, there were a couple of passages like that I deemed very important for the book ... for the book to be really Jean Chrétien and a Canadian book."

The Kennedy quote was axed.

Word by word, phrase by phrase, Chrétien and Poliquin debated the manuscript originally crafted in English by ghostwriter Ron Graham, who also penned Chretien's earlier mega-selling memoir, *Straight from the Heart*.

"The challenging part was to write his voice, to make sure he sounded like Jean Chrétien," Poliquin says.

The former PM thanks Poliquin for his skill in Chrétienese in the acknowledgements at the back of the book.

"Though the texts of the two editions are similar in structure and content, Daniel got me talking and thinking in ways that seemed more suitable to my mother tongue," Chrétien wrote.

As a result, the French version is more of a "rewrite" than a translation of the original English manuscript. In fact, Random House, publisher of the English version, altered its text in some instances, such as the Kennedy quotation, to incorporate the changes Poliquin was making to the French edition.

Some differences were necessary because the audiences, their concerns and assumptions were different.

"When we talk about sovereignty-association, the French version is more edgy," Poliquin says. "He bulldozes the fantasy of sovereignty-association."

When Chrétien tired of the seemingly endless debates over just the right words, he would suggest the two relax with a beer and a game of pool. Then Chrétien would open up and feed Poliquin more material.

Chrétien, Poliquin says, can be charming, caring as well as stubborn and disciplined — so disciplined that he would note if Poliquin arrived one minute late for an appointment.

"He has iron in his blood."

The relationship between the Chrétien and the Poliquin families dates back almost half a century when the former was a political neophyte in Ottawa and Jean-Marc Poliquin, Daniel's father, was on his way to becoming one of French-Canada's most respected journalists, first at *Le Droit* newspaper and later with Radio-Canada. Jean-Marc was a small-town boy like Chrétien, having been born in Ste-Angele-de-Laval.

In Ottawa, Jean-Marc was something of a mentor to both young journalists and aspiring politicians. He certainly encouraged the young Chrétien to follow his dreams.

Jean-Marc Poliquin died in 1982. His status on the Hill was such that he was given a rare honour for a journalist — a lounge in Parliament's Centre Block was named after him.

Daniel Poliquin also works on Parliament Hill, as a simultaneous interpreter, but is perhaps better known as a much-decorated author and translator of novels. Being a Hill interpreter means that voice you hear on the evening news translating MPs' comments into French could very well be Poliquin, the younger.

During the leaders' English debate in the last federal election, Poliquin did the simultaneous translation of the remarks of Bloc Québécois leader Gilles Duceppe into French. Poliquin chuckles at the memory of the separatist leader unwittingly addressing a coast-to-coast French-Canadian audience through the voice of a man whose writings have been frequently vilified in the Quebec press for being far too federalist.

Consider the novel, *The Straw Man*, whose French version (*L'homme de paille*) won the Trillium Award in 1999 for best French-language book by an Ontario author. The book leaves the impression Quebec peasants didn't really care all that much when the British beat the French on the Plains of Abraham.

Chrétien in translation; How Daniel Poliquin helped the ex-PM 'write his voice, to make sure he sounded like

Poliquin's essay on Quebec nationalism, *In The Name of the Father*, originally published as *Le Roman colonial*, won the Shaughnessy Cohen Prize in 2001 for best political book in Canada. The essay claims that Quebec separatists are battling injustices that no longer exist. And this from a man who once believed Quebec's first separatist premier, René Lévesque, could do no wrong.

"It took a long time for me to open my eyes," says Poliquin, a true-blue Canadian patriot with a soldier son in the Van Doos preparing for duty in Afghanistan. Papa gets teary-eyed just thinking about his son's forthcoming adventure.

In 1990, Poliquin was invited by some Chrétien aides to work as a translator on the latter's run at the Liberal leadership. Through that connection, Chrétien became aware of Poliquin's books. He read them and liked them.

The two men became friends and occasionally dined together. Chrétien asked Poliquin at one point to assemble a group of Quebec intellectuals, even some who disliked the prime minister, to dine at 24 Sussex. The event was a success, says Poliquin.

The friendship actually got too cosy for Poliquin. He asked the prime minister to back off.

"I told him in those days, 'I have to remain as independent as possible. I'm an artist; I'm an intellectual. I can't be seen as part of your court or getting favours. So, if you don't mind, we'll stay friends and I'll do my thing and you do yours.'"

Poliquin, the author, rather than Poliquin, the translator, is making waves these days with his latest novel, *The Secret Between Us*, which is the English edition of the novel *La Kermesse*, about love and lust in First-World-War-era Ottawa. The French version just won the Ottawa Book Award and was earlier a finalist for the Trillium. The English version has just popped up on the shortlist for this year's Scotiabank Giller Prize.

In the book, a young French-Canadian soldier has a sexual encounter with his captain that changes his life. The soldier was not really in love with his captain; instead, he wanted to become his captain. He essentially tries to appropriate the captain's life, stalking the officer's high-society English-Canadian girlfriend after the war, but spending far more time with a rough-hewn maid.

The result is a bawdy, but poetical story largely set in an almost Dickensian world of poverty, drunkenness and illicit sex in old LeBreton Flats. It's an Ottawa few would recognize until you check out old paintings of the Flats, before the area was bulldozed into nothingness half a century ago. Such paintings were the underpinning for what Poliquin calls the "imaginary geography" he created for Ottawa's original "high-tech" industrial park.

Poliquin does not romanticize the past. But he does make it compelling reading. Frankly, he says, contemporary Ottawa is far more interesting.

And he does know Ottawa. The man who states his age as "54, soon," was raised in Sandy Hill, just after the rich fled and before the rich returned to make it fashionable again.

"It was very tough in those days," he says of his childhood. "There were always fights at school."

Poliquin prefers small cities, such as Trois-Rivières, Kingston, Peterborough or Ottawa to Montreal or Toronto. And he has fallen in love with Acadia, at least partially because of his Acadian girlfriend, but because of the unique culture of rural Acadia. His next book has not yet been plotted but he knows it will be about Acadia.

Chrétien in translation; How Daniel Poliquin helped the ex-PM 'write his voice, to make sure he sounded like

Poliquin calls *A Secret* a "picaresque novel," a term defined by the dictionary as a novel about "sharp-witted vagabonds." Most characters do, indeed, fit the definition.

It's a novel for romantics. The central character finds his true nature only after experiencing unrequited love. That's the only part that is autobiographical, Poliquin states, although various of his uncles and aunts, all now dead but once sharp-witted vagabonds, make cameos of sorts in the book.

"I am a failed romantic," Poliquin says of the unrequited love in his own past. But he is still a romantic, of the old-fashioned, courtly but Bohemian variety one expects to encounter sipping absinthe, most properly, in a sidewalk café.

He can often be seen sporting a long, beige scarf thrown rakishly over a suit. The scarf seems oddly juxtaposed with the Order of Canada pin on his lapel. The pin looks far too establishment for a bon-vivant man-about-town with a reputation for making women swoon with those brown bedroom eyes.

But then Poliquin has never been easy to classify. He is part Left-Bank artiste and part a discrete Establishment Man.

Most importantly to his readers, Poliquin is a connoisseur of big ideas and passionate debates. He delights in sensory experiences, whether a fine wine or a beautiful woman. And he also appreciates the "small things" in life. He can wax eloquently about the wooden carvings on the walls of the Canadian Museum of Nature or the tranquillity of a pew in church.

While *The Secret*, in both English and French editions, is getting much attention, the biggest headlines are reserved for his more anonymous work on the Chrétien book and the enmity between the former prime minister and his successor, Paul Martin.

The trick of the translator is to help the author better "express" himself. Poliquin feels he has done that with Chrétien. Few people will likely read both the English and French versions to know just how much of the French edition has the mark of Poliquin.

"It's not a literal translation," Poliquin insists. "It's a rewritten book."

Truth, torture and the war on terror; On Capitol Hill and in Hollywood, Americans this week asked some hard questions about torture, 'enhanced interrogation' and 'rendition.' At what point, asks Peter Jones, do such tactics betray the fundamental principles a country is fighting for?

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ILLUSTRATION: Colour Photo: To Canadians, the newly-released movie *Rendition* has eerie parallels to the case of Maher Arar, the Ottawa engineer sent by U.S. authorities to Syria, where he was tortured. ;

BYLINE: Peter Jones

SOURCE: The Ottawa Citizen

WORD COUNT: 1410

There is an old adage that truth is the first casualty of war. "In wartime," Winston Churchill famously said, "truth is so precious that she should always be attended by a bodyguard of lies."

These sayings speak to different conceptions. Churchill speaks to the need for deception in order to confuse the enemy and protect the element of surprise for one's own operations. This is a legitimate tactic of war.

The first saying speaks to a more profound issue: At what point do one's tactics tip over from the concealment to protect operations and into the realm of the betrayal of fundamental principles — the essential "truths" that one is fighting for? And what lies and deceptions does one engage in with one's own people during this slide?

Since 9/11, the Bush administration has systematically redefined torture to provide the CIA and other U.S. agencies with legal exemptions from both U.S. laws and international conventions to which the U.S. is party. There is considerable evidence of a concerted policy to use legal double-talk to cover up and deflect attention from these practices.

The issue came up at this week's confirmation hearings for Michael Mukasey, President George W. Bush's choice for attorney general. Democratic senators accused Mr. Mukasey of hedging his answers about the use of torture and whether the president is exempt from following laws concerning torture.

Ironically, the Orwellian term for the administration's policy, "Enhanced Interrogation," is exactly the same as the term used by the Gestapo in its own policy guidelines covering torture: "Verschärfte Vernehmung" — literally, "Enhanced Interrogation."

In a 1937 memo, the Gestapo outlined the following methods, to be used only after approval of senior officer:

– Simple rations.

Truth, torture and the war on terror; On Capitol Hill and in Hollywood, Americans this week asked some hard

- Hard bed.
- Dark cell.
- Deprivation of sleep.
- Exhaustion exercises.
- Blows (with a stick).

Later on, two more methods were added:

- Hypothermia (induced by having the victim stand in a cold cell for several hours, while being doused with cold water); and
- "Waterboarding" (in which the victim was strapped to a board and a simulated drowning was performed).

The Allies found these practices to be war crimes at the post-war trials. Many Nazis claimed that: a) they had been ordered to perform these procedures; b) in most cases the procedures had not caused death or permanent injury; and c) most of those subjected to "Verschärfte Vernehmung" had been members of various European resistance movements, and thus not regular, uniformed members of a military force entitled to protection under the international conventions prohibiting the torture of enemy prisoners.

This last excuse essentially attempts to establish the principle that members of insurgencies or resistance movements are exempt from the protections against torture. In a 1948 war crimes trial against a group of Nazi officers who used "Verschärfte Vernehmung" against several members of the Norwegian resistance the officers made the argument that resistance fighters were not members of a regular military force and therefore exempt from protection against torture. The tribunal rejected the argument and sentenced the officers to death.

In a secret August 2002 memo, a small group at the U.S. Justice Department, working for then-attorney general John Ashcroft, and with considerable input from the office of Vice-President Dick Cheney, came up with legal arguments to justify the use of "enhanced interrogation" against captured al-Qaeda prisoners.

First, it was argued that such prisoners are not members of a regular military force, but are defined as "unlawful enemy combatants" and thus not entitled to the protections of the Geneva Conventions (the same argument as many Nazis had made at their trials but which was rejected). Second, it was argued that the laws prohibiting torture generally do "not apply to the president's detention and interrogation of enemy combatants."

After stripping prisoners of protection against torture, and stating that such protections are not binding on the president anyway, the memo went on to define torture as punishment which inflicts pain, "equivalent in intensity to the pain accompanying serious physical injury, such as organ failure, impairment of body function, or even death." In other words, so long as the method of interrogation selected does not cause pain equivalent to the loss of an organ or death, it is not torture.

Thus can Mr. Bush and his officials state that the United States does not condone or perpetrate torture — at least not according to its own restrictive definition of torture.

Of course, there can be no equating of the United States with Nazi Germany. The U.S. remains an unprecedented force for good in the world. However, according to a November 2005 report by the American ABC news network, based on leaks from CIA sources, the following interrogation methods are approved:

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- The Attention Grab; The Attention Slap; The Belly Slap.
- Long Time Standing: Prisoners are forced to stand, handcuffed and with their feet shackled to an eye bolt in the floor for more than 40 hours. Exhaustion and sleep deprivation yield confessions.
- The Cold Cell: The prisoner is left to stand naked in a cell kept near 50 degrees. Throughout the time in the cell the prisoner is doused with cold water.
- Water Boarding: The prisoner is bound to an inclined board, feet raised and head slightly below the feet. Cellophane is wrapped over the prisoner's face and water is poured over him. Unavoidably, the gag reflex kicks in and a terrifying fear of drowning results.

These raised considerable controversy within the U.S. security and intelligence community. Those opposed based their arguments on two issues: that the unilateral exemption of the president from domestic and international laws concerning torture was unlawful; and that these methods do not work terribly well anyway. The second of these arguments relates to a widespread view that torture is generally regarded as an inefficient way to obtain useful information in that the victim will often tell his torturers what he thinks they want to hear in order to get them to stop.

In 2004, the CIA temporarily suspended its use of "enhanced interrogation" due to increasing concern that it was on dubious legal ground, and a series of damaging leaks by Justice Department lawyers who were appalled at what had happened. The effect of the Abu Ghraib prison scandal was also still fresh.

At first, the administration defended the techniques, while simultaneously distancing itself from those who had drafted the August 2002 memo. But then it appeared to give way. Rules were re-drafted and the memo was rescinded.

However, the matter did not end there. In an explosive Oct. 4 article this year, The New York Times revealed that the Bush administration simply re-issued a version of the August 2002 memo, but did it in secret.

This apparently happened shortly after Alberto Gonzales took over as attorney general in early 2005. Moreover, the new legal opinion not only permitted all of the "enhanced interrogation" techniques permitted in the original, it allowed them to be used in combination in order to enhance their effect.

Currently, it is alleged that these practices are carried out at a series of secret locations across Eastern Europe, in Afghanistan and elsewhere, including Guantanamo. "Unlawful enemy combatants" are shuttled between these locations on secret flights in a process which has given a grim new word to the lexicon: "rendition."

Perhaps tellingly, the one presidential candidate of either party who has unequivocally condemned the torture of people captured in America's "War on Terror" is Senator John McCain, who was himself tortured by the North Vietnamese, using many of the same techniques now permitted by the Bush administration. In a Republican candidates debate in North Carolina on May of this year, Mr. McCain said:

"When I was in Vietnam, one of the things that sustained us, as we ... underwent torture ourselves, is the knowledge that if we had our positions reversed and we were the captors, we would not impose that kind of treatment on them.

"It's not about the terrorists, it's about us. It's about what kind of country we are. And a fact: The more physical pain you inflict on someone, the more they're going to tell you what they think you want to know."

The administration argues that these practices have produced valuable intelligence, but cannot point to any specific instances, often citing security considerations.

Truth, torture and the war on terror; On Capitol Hill and in Hollywood, Americans this week asked some hard

Meanwhile, opponents of these policies ask how the U.S. can take a dictatorship to task for torture while these policies continue — and how could it object should an enemy inflict these methods of interrogation on captured U.S. personnel?

Opponents also argue that "enhanced interrogation" betrays a fundamental truth of the conscience and character of the United States, which has defined it as a champion of human rights around the world.

Peter Jones is associate professor in the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Ottawa.

Iran threatens to respond with '11,000 rockets in minute'

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DATELINE: TEHRAN
SOURCE: Agence France–Presse
WORD COUNT: 258

TEHRAN – Iran warned yesterday it would fire off 11,000 rockets at enemy bases within the space of a minute if the U.S. launched military action against the Islamic republic.

"In the first minute of an invasion by the enemy, 11,000 rockets and cannons would be fired at enemy bases," said a brigadier general in the elite Revolutionary Guards, Mahmoud Chaharbaghi.

"This volume and speed of firing would continue," added Brig.–Gen. Chaharbaghi, who is commander of artillery and missiles of the guards' ground forces, according to the semi–official Fars news agency.

The U.S. has never ruled out attacking Iran to end its defiance over the controversial Iranian nuclear program. Iran has for its part vowed never to initiate an attack, but has also warned of a crushing response to any act of aggression against its soil.

"If a war breaks out in the future, it will not last long because we will rub their noses in the dirt," said Brig.–Gen. Chaharbaghi.

"Now the enemy should ask themselves how many of their people they are ready to have sacrificed for their stupidity in attacking Iran," he said.

Iranian officials have repeatedly warned the military would target the bases of U.S. forces operating in neighbouring Iraq and Afghanistan in the event of any attack and already has these sites under close surveillance.

Brig.–Gen. Chaharbaghi said that the Guards would soon receive "rockets with a range of 250 kilometres" whereas the current range of its rockets is 150 kilometres.

"We have identified our targets and with a close surveillance of targets, we can respond to the enemy's stupidity immediately," he added.

He said that the guards' weapons were spread out throughout the country and so would not be affected by any isolated U.S. strikes against military facilities.

Success feels 'super bien'; Closing Credits. The 36th annual Festival du nouveau cinéma 'wraps up' with top prizes for La Visite de la Fanfare, Boxing Day and actor Richard Green

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PAGE: A19

ILLUSTRATION: Photo: LIAM MALONEY THE GAZETTE / Filmmaker Denys Arcand walks off stage at the Imperial Theatre during the awards ceremonies of the 36th Festival du nouveau cinéma yesterday. Arcand presented the jury grand prize Louve d'or, which went to Eran Kolirin for the 2007 film La Visite de la Fanfare. ;

KEYWORDS: 0

BYLINE: JOHN GRIFFIN

SOURCE: The Gazette

WORD COUNT: 591

Asked how he felt after learning the 36th Festival du nouveau cinéma may have been the most successful in its long history, managing director Nicolas Girard Deltruc paused for a nano-second and replied "super bien!"

The oldest event of its kind in the country partied like a teenager last night, with awards and a gala closing film at the Imperial Theatre and an after-party at SAT on St. Laurent Blvd. that threatened to rage on until the last cinéphile fell.

Festival founder Claude Chamberlan played his familiar role as ringmaster in setting up the awards ceremony before a screening of the 2007 Cannes-winning 4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days, by Romanian Cristian Mungiu, introduced by the director via a taped message. It opens commercially here Friday.

The FNC jury grand prize Louve d'or went to the Israel-France co-production La Visite de la Fanfare, by Eran Kolirin. This story of interconnections between seemingly diametrically opposed Egyptian and Israeli cultures has been gathering happy buzz during the festival.

The jury also noted Boxing Day, by Australia's Kriv Scenders. This harrowing drama told in real time and shot in a single take also brought home the Louve d'or for actor Richard Green, who plays a recovering alcoholic under house detention preparing Christmas lunch for his teenage daughter. It's a Wonderful Life this is not, though hope springs eternal.

The Daniel Langlois Innovation Prize, named after the festival patron and new media guru, went to Buddha Collapsed Out of Shame. This first feature by Hana Makhmalbaf, youngest member of the famed Iranian filmmaking family, sees the conflict in Afghanistan through the eyes of a child.

The Radio-Canada People's Choice Award, chosen by patrons of the festival and a sure sign the winner will be back in some commercial capacity, was awarded to Mexican Rodrigo Plà, for La Zona, an edge-of-seat thriller that won the Golden Lion award at the Venice film festival last summer.

Success feels 'super bien'; Closing Credits. The 36th annual Festival du nouveau cinéma 'wraps up' with top prizes for La Visite de la Fanfare, Boxing Day and actor Richard Green

The NFB Short Film Award was shared between *Dust Bowl Ha!Ha!* by Quebec's Sébastien Pilote, and *Madame Tutli-Putli*, a prize-worthy NFB production by Chris Lavis and Maciek Szczerbowski.

Another public prize, the Grand Prix Z Télé, devoted to the strongest film in the experimental/confrontational Focus ø section went to the appropriately titled *I'm a Cyborg But That's OK*, by South Korea's Park Chan-wook, of *Old Boy* fame.

Finally, the Prix de L'AQCC-Espoir Award, bestowed by the Association Québécoise des Critiques de Cinéma, was given to *XXY*, a France-Argentina-Spain co-production, by Lucia Puenzo.

In other festival news, it was announced that the annual "surprise" film, set for Ex-Centris at 9:20 tonight, is Craig Gillespie's *Lars and the Real Girl*, a highly acclaimed American comedy about a young man's love for a life-sized doll. It's written by *Six Feet Under*'s Nancy Oliver, and stars the Oscar-nominated Ontario native Ryan Gosling, as well as the great Patricia Clarkson and Emily Mortimer.

It is part of a full slate of films tomorrow, the festival's real last day. Last night's informalities were part of an "official" closing, marking the end of the 36th edition's special events and late night blowouts.

A 37th edition is promised.

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Our team of film writers have been keeping you posted throughout the fest on films to see, which to avoid and what else has been happening in and out of the theatres. See our blog at

montrealgazette.com/

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Festival Facts

The 36th Festival du nouveau cinéma wraps up today with screenings at Ex-Centris, 3536 St. Laurent Blvd.; the Imperial Cinema, 1430 Bleury St.; and Cinémathèque québécoise, 335 de Maisonneuve Blvd. E. Regular tickets cost \$10. There are discounts for seniors and students. Call 514-844-2172 or see www.nouveaucinema.ca.

Lose respect, then support

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KEYWORDS: 0
SOURCE: The Gazette
WORD COUNT: 156

As a longtime Liberal, I supported Stéphane Dion, mostly because of his integrity about key issues. To me, there were two key issues in the Throne Speech: Kyoto and Afghanistan.

The Liberals clearly stand in opposition to the government on both because of their principles. If they put these away in favour of political manoeuvring (not forcing an election), they – Dion first and foremost – will lose my respect, and eventually my support.

If a competent candidate like the NDP's Tom Mulcair emerges in my riding of Lac-Saint-Louis, I will consider this the only way to put across my message that regardless of political context, I want my leader and party to work on the basis of clear, long-held principles, and that no amendments or voting-abstention strategies replace clear opposition to an opportunistic government.

Italians, Israelis and others go to the polls more often than we do because real issues call for real consultation of real people.

André M. Bergeron

Beaconsfield

Canadians 'doss down' in Taliban heartland

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ILLUSTRATION: Colour Photo: FINBARR O'REILLY, REUTERS / A Canadian soldier waits to go on patrol in Panjwaii district of Kandahar yesterday. ;
KEYWORDS: WAR; TERRORISM
DATELINE: KANDAHAR
BYLINE: MATTHEW FISHER
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 390

In a show of confidence in Afghanistan's much maligned national police force, two senior Canadian generals "dossed down" with 15 Afghan policemen and their Canadian mentors this weekend in a small sub-station in an area where support for the Taliban may be stronger than anywhere else in the country.

"We were way, way out there ... in the heartland of Mullah Omar's birthplace," said Canada's top army commander, Lt.-Gen. Andrew Leslie after returning yesterday with Brig.-Gen. Guy Laroche, the Canadian battle group commander, from a three day tour of the war's often invisible front lines in the Zhari and Panjwaii districts. "Three months ago that would have been fatal. By that I mean that the odds of dying would have been very high."

But a lot of progress had been made recently, the general said of the Afghan Police, who were often accused by Afghans of being corrupt and poorly trained and who were now being mentored by scores of Canadian troops.

"Our hands were essentially in the hands of 15 police auxiliaries recruited locally ... but we don't take stupid risks. This was a measure of how confident we are."

Except for a rooster who began crowing at 3 in the morning, "the night passed off without a hitch," he said.

Leslie, who was second in command with the International Security Assistance Force when it had a much smaller presence in Afghanistan in 2003, had an eventful sojourn in the Afghan countryside. At one point the Taliban rocketed some Canadian infantry from the Quebec-based Royal 22nd Regiment that he was with at the time.

The visit was part of "an endless series of snapshots" Leslie said he got by visiting his troops every three or four months.

While Afghanistan was still "a dangerous place," from his position as a guard on the back of a light armoured vehicle on patrol, Leslie said he had noticed "definite signs of progress. There are more people to be seen outside in Panjwaii."

Asked about the continuing controversy in Ottawa over whether or under what terms Canada's combat mandate should be extended beyond February 2009, Leslie said it was having no effect on the troops.

"We are all soldiers, professionals," he said. "We are all mature enough to recognize that the decision to keep us here or pull us out is a government decision.

"A time will come to leave, probably for another place that is equally dangerous. There will be gainful employment for people like me overseas for a long period to come.

"I'm not worried about job security."

Drunk driving charges laid a year after death; As grieving mother waits for justice, National Assembly will weigh stiffer penalties for impaired drivers

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ILLUSTRATION: Colour Photo: COURTESY OF LOUISE ROUX / Brothers Tom (left), Maxime and Guy Desaulniers joined the army. Tom, a 22-year-old corporal, was killed in a head-on collision on his way home for a visit. ; Graphic/Diagram: (See hard copy for graphic) ;

KEYWORDS: IMPAIRED DRIVING; LAWS & REGULATIONS; SENTENCES; STATISTICS

BYLINE: MAX HARROLD

SOURCE: The Gazette

WORD COUNT: 930

That her son – a soldier – died young does not surprise Louise Roux. It's why he died that leaves her with so many aching questions.

Quebecer Tom Desaulniers, a 22-year-old Canadian Forces corporal fresh from a tour of duty in Afghanistan, was killed Aug. 19, 2006, in a head-on collision on Highway 20 near Ste. Hélène de Bagot, 75 kilometres northeast of Montreal. He was the eldest of Roux's three sons.

The other driver, Patrice Lamarche, 25, was charged with impaired driving in the case last week, nearly 14 months after the crash. He was never detained after the accident and his driving privileges remain unaffected.

Roux says she believes the lag-time in the case shows what a banal, if sad, reality drunk driving deaths have become in Quebec.

"People just don't seem to care," Roux said.

"What's happened to us?"

The glaring reality is that in 2006, Quebec had more than twice the number of people charged with impaired driving causing death than in far more populous Ontario.

Although the overall number of drivers caught driving drunk has dropped in both provinces in the past four years, those charged with impaired driving causing death rose in Quebec, from 44 in 2003 to 59 last year.

In the same period, the number of drivers in Ontario charged with the same offence dipped to 27 from 38.

In 2005 in Quebec, the last year for which such data are available, 200 people died, another 600 were seriously injured and 2,400 suffered less serious injuries because of drunk driving, according to the Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec. (Although the causes of road deaths in 2006 are not yet compiled, the total number of deaths was 717.)

In Ontario, there were 192 impaired-driving-related deaths in 2004, the last year for which such data are available. That was an 11.5-per-cent drop from 2003.

"I don't know if it's a cultural difference," Gino Desrosiers, a spokesperson for the SAAQ, said of the difference with Ontario. "Is it because people in Ontario are more afraid of being caught or because we consume more alcohol (and then drive)? What we know is that we still have a lot of work to do."

Quebec plans to hit drunk drivers with stiffer penalties being proposed this fall in the National Assembly.

Under the proposed legislation, police will be able to suspend a driver's licence on the spot for 24 hours if that driver registers as little as .05-per-cent alcohol in his or her blood (the legal limit is .08 per cent).

The measure is already in effect in nearly every other Canadian province.

Quebec also wants to make Interlock devices – which allow vehicles to start only if there is no alcohol on the driver's breath – available on a voluntary basis, not just to offenders.

"It looks like Quebec is finally catching up," Theresa-Anne Kramer, spokesperson for the Montreal chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving, said of the proposals. The group wants the government to go farther still. "I'm convinced the end of this crime (of drunk driving) will only come when Interlock devices are installed on all cars, like seat belts," Kramer said.

Étienne Blais, a criminologist at the Université de Montréal, said Quebec's less severe laws and weak police enforcement have enabled repeat offenders to continue driving, perhaps explaining the high number of drunk driving charges involving death here.

"They've got nothing to lose," Blais, 30, said of the repeat offenders. "They're more impulsive. They often have other criminal records. They are the most likely to do serious damage."

The proposed changes should help a bit, he said, but Quebec is unlikely to get real results unless it considers more drastic measures like the random roadside Breathalyzer tests conducted in Australia. Drunk driving deaths in that country have been cut in half there as a result, he said.

But Quebec police need reasonable doubt to stop a motorist, making the random tests impossible under current law.

"It doesn't help when police officers relax enforcement of road regulations as a labour negotiating tactic," Blais added, referring to Sûreté du Québec officers' actions last year.

This year has been better, he said, noting that 34 police departments are now part of a concerted strategy to regularly conduct roadside checks for impaired and other dangerous drivers.

Rendering stiffer sentences, as provided for under current law, would be another effective deterrent to drunk driving, Kramer said. Impaired driving causing death is punishable with a life sentence, yet the toughest sentence ever given out is 10 years.

The final shape of the minority Liberal government's proposed legislation will be influenced by the two opposition parties, since at least one of them must support the bill for it to pass. Action démocratique du Québec spokesperson Élodie Girardin-Lajoie said the party "definitely" supports stronger measures to curb drunk driving and sees some of its ideas in the proposal.

In August 2006, Desaulniers was nearing the end of a six-hour drive from Petawawa, Ont., where he was

stationed, to Victoriaville to visit family and friends when he was hit, about 1 a.m.

"He drove huge transport trucks for a living," Roux said. "He knew how to drive."

It wasn't until Sept. 24 of this year, however, that a coroner's report officially confirmed what Roux long suspected: the driver of the car her son collided with had a blood-alcohol level above the legal limit. The impaired driver was headed into oncoming traffic when he crashed, coroner Yvon Garneau said in his report.

Desaulniers' blood was alcohol- and drug-free when he died, the report noted.

"Why were there no charges for all this time? Good question," Garneau told The Gazette when asked about the delay between the initial police report, handed to him and the prosecutor Jan. 31, and his own.

Several important pieces of information were missing from the police until August, he said.

Yet the prosecutor did not have to wait for the coroner's report to press charges, he noted.

Lamarche, who was charged with impaired driving once before in 2002, but acquitted in 2003, now faces more serious charges: besides impaired driving, he is charged with dangerous driving while street racing and impaired driving causing death. His first court date is Dec. 17.

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