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Canada urged to 'stay course'

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CALGARY --- Former British prime minister Tony Blair urged Canada to "stay the course" in Afghanistan as he addressed a crowd of more than 1,500 in Calgary on Friday.

Blair, who increasingly came under attack during his final term in office over his support for the war in Iraq, said the efforts to defeat the global forces of extremism and terrorism could take a generation.

"The worst thing you can ever do is back away in the face of opposition just because the thing is too tough to do even though you know it is the right thing to do," he said to applause from the crowd.

"If we're going to fight this terrorism effectively, we have to show that we are as determined as they are, believe in what we're doing as much as they do --- and do not give up, but stay the course."

Blair was brought in for the special speaking engagement by TD Bank.

Blair paid tribute to the "marvellous job" the Canadian Forces are doing in Afghanistan, saying the fight in that country is essential to stability.

"If we give up in Iraq, then we will be under increasing pressure in Afghanistan," he said. "If we give up in Afghanistan, then we will be under increasing pressure right around that region."

The \$400-a-head luncheon drew a crowd from Calgary's oil and financial sectors.

Blair said he wished he had been more prepared for the long-haul fight against terrorism, following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Calgary Herald

Hillier denies war of words with gov't

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BYLINE: Mike De Souza
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OTTAWA — Canada's top soldier is denying recent suggestions that he's at war with Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government because of its optimistic assessment of progress by Canadian troops in their mission in Afghanistan.

Despite stirring up controversy for suggesting that it would take up to a decade to adequately train Afghan troops to provide security and stability in the region to support Afghanistan's new government, Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Rick Hillier insisted Friday there was "no difference of opinion whatsoever" between his views and the position of the Harper government which has suggested that Canadian soldiers could finish their mission in four years.

"I get my direction from the government of Canada," Hillier told CBC Newsworld's Politics on Friday after returning from a visit to Afghanistan this week. "I talk to the prime minister. I'm absolutely clear on where he wants to go and on what he needs and I'm absolutely in line with that, otherwise I wouldn't be his chief of defence staff."

Hillier said Canadian troops are making progress in training Afghans to take over the lead in combat mission and rebuild the southern part of the country, but he reiterated that it could take 10 to 15 years to train senior military leaders who would bring stability to the region.

"I think most Canadians, living in the incredible country that we have, don't always see all the complexities of trying to rebuild a country," he said, noting Afghanistan endured "25 years of destruction."

"But I think they're increasingly aware that you just don't do that overnight."

In the Commons, Conservative House leader Peter Van Loan insisted that Canadian Forces could finish training the new Afghan military troops by 2011.

"Building up the capacity of the Afghan people is obviously going to take time," Van Loan said in the Commons. "We want them to be able to defend their sovereignty. We know that will not happen overnight, but our government does believe it can happen by 2011."

In the throne speech last week, the government indicated that it did plan to end Canada's military involvement in Afghanistan in February 2009, despite the clamouring by the three opposition parties to bring the troops home by then, if not sooner.

"Our government does not believe that Canada should simply abandon the people of Afghanistan after February 2009," the speech said.

Although Canada should shift its emphasis to training the Afghan army and police to defend their own people, the speech added: "This will not be completed by February 2009, but our government believes this objective should be achievable by 2011, the end of the period covered by the Afghanistan Compact."

The latest suggestions from the government about finishing its mission by 2011 contrast with Harper's previous statements that Canadians wouldn't "cut and run" from Afghanistan before "finishing the job" of stabilizing the country and preventing a return of the Taliban regime and terrorists.

The federal Liberals said the apparent contradictions between the government and Hillier are another sign that Harper is still "bungling the mission," even after replacing former defence minister Gordon O'Connor last summer in the midst of controversy over the treatment of Afghan detainees.

But Hillier said he was disappointed about the response from some of Canada's other NATO allies who haven't stepped up to take a greater role in the mission. He noted that Barnett Rubin, an academic expert on Afghanistan had recently said that failure in the mission could result in the end of the NATO alliance.

Cdn. Forces veterans glad to get chance to do some real soldiering; Chance to join Afghan mission considered a career highlight for many enlisted men

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War may be hell but for some Canadian troops serving in Afghanistan, getting a chance to do some actual soldiering in a war zone is a dream come true.

This is especially so for longtime career soldiers who felt they missed out on combat experience during the decades when the Canadian Forces were more involved in peacekeeping around the world.

Traditionally, it's often been young people, those just entering the first blush of adulthood, who have rushed out and enlisted for an opportunity to go to war.

But with Canada largely performing a peacekeeping role in the past 30 years, many soldiers had gone their entire careers without firing a shot at an enemy.

It has been a bitter pill for many enlisted men to swallow, given Canada's storied military past as a fierce fighting force dating back to the First, Second and Korean Wars.

Then came Afghanistan.

The conflict in the war-torn country has claimed the lives of 71 Canadian soldiers since 2002. The troops face a dangerous adversary, the Taliban, and often have to live in primitive conditions and be away from their families for months.

But the veterans are relishing the opportunity.

"This is the highlight, basically, of my career," said Master Warrant Officer Michel Carrier, whose unit is based in Valcartier, Que.

"The mission is basically the first time I go to war even though before that I went through Bosnia and Croatia three times," he said with a sigh.

"Basically at first, probably everybody wants to try it, although some of them change their minds after a few years. But after 18 years in the army, that was something important to me to do before I retire or go to an office job somewhere else."

The arrival of the Leopard tank squadron has opened a door of opportunity for Sgt. Scott Schall of Medicine Hat, Alta.

The tanks were deployed to the Panjwahi district, west of Kandahar, less than a year ago. It was the first time Canadian tanks had returned to combat operations since the Korean War more than five decades ago.

"I've just been in several actions where I consider myself to be a veteran now," said Schall.

"Before that, I had never been in anything even remotely dangerous while I was in the military. Until you start taking tours over here, you really don't understand what it is all about."

Schall was in a battle in September that claimed the life of Cpl. Nathan Hornburg of Calgary. Hornburg was trying to put a track back on a tank and was killed by a mortar.

"Lots of rockets, machine-gun fire and myself and one other tank were the only two tanks not hit that day. So you have a different reality of the whole thing," Schall said.

The experience being gained by Canadian troops seeing action in Afghanistan will make them better soldiers, said a senior officer.

"This is good, solid experience for the soldiers. It's reinforced a lot of basic lessons we've been teaching," said Maj. Warren Smith, battery commander for the Canadian Battle Group.

Defence chief denies he contradicted PM; Rick Hillier says he expects NATO forces to be in Afghanistan for at least another decade

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Canada's top general is denying he is at odds with the prime minister over Canada's mission in Afghanistan.

"(There is) no difference of opinion whatsoever," Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Rick Hillier said yesterday immediately upon returning to Ottawa from a visit to Kandahar.

The opposition parties yesterday called on the Conservative government to explain why Hillier appeared to contradict Prime Minister Stephen Harper over how long it will take for NATO countries to withdraw troops from Afghanistan.

In his government's throne speech last week, the prime minister said the Afghan army and national police should be ready to take over security duties by 2011.

This week, however, Hillier told reporters he expected NATO forces would likely be in Afghanistan for at least another decade.

The difference in messages about the timing of the Afghan mission is a question of trust in the government, Liberal deputy leader Michael Ignatieff told the Commons.

"What's at stake here is the government's competence and its credibility," Ignatieff said.

"When will the government get this mission under control?" he asked.

"Who's in charge?"

But in an interview later in the day on CBC Newsworld, Hillier made painstakingly clear that it's the government calling the shots on Afghanistan, not the military.

"I've talked to the prime minister," said Hillier.

"I'm absolutely clear where he wants to go and on what he needs and I'm absolutely in line with that, otherwise I wouldn't be his chief of defence staff."

The difference between the throne speech and his own comments, said the general, comes down to his explanation to reporters of his vision of what it will take to produce a top-notch, professional army in

Defence chief denies he contradicted PM; Rick Hillier says he expects NATO forces to be in Afghanistan for

Afghanistan.

"What I talked about for the longer term was simply the continuation of a professional military force," Hillier explained.

"Of how do you produce senior non-commissioned military officers, how do you develop staff colleges, how do you develop senior leaders," he said.

"It takes us 10 plus years, 15 years to develop those kinds of people, and consistently produce them through the system so you are capable of securing your country for ever and ever.

"That's the part I'm talking about and many other countries have the lead on those things. Our job, our military mission in Kandahar province that we clearly have given to us by the government of Canada . . . that part is eminently doable."

The prime minister has pledged to hold a vote in the Commons following a debate on extending the Afghan mission. And Harper has hinted broadly to Canada's NATO allies that any such extension would depend on the outcome of that vote.

But Canada cannot complete its mission of training Afghan army and police units within the current time frame allotted by Parliament, Hillier warned.

"I'll be very clear. We're not going to be finished that train-up by February 2009," he said.

"And if we are not going to continue in that role and shift as much weight into it and train as fast as we can, that Afghan national army, that combat brigade in the south, the police forces around it, will not be able to lead the operations by themselves in February 2009."

Woman looks to Afghanistan for more answers

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A woman whose brother died in Afghanistan is hoping to serve those who serve their country.

Amanda Cushley has applied to work a six-month stint as a Tim Hortons employee at the Canadian base in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

The resident of Port Lambton, Ont., south of Sarnia, said she's applying, in part, because she wants to better understand the military service of her younger brother, Pte. William Cushley, who was killed in a Sept. 3, 2006, battle with the Taliban.

The 21-year-old, who was based at CFB Petawawa, Ont., died in a major offensive aimed at taking control of two dangerous districts in southern Afghanistan.

"I want to see where he was," said Cushley, 26. "When he joined the army we had the talk about, 'Are you sure you want to do this because, you know, things happen.' But he wanted to do it, and I never really knew why he wanted to do it.

"I told him, 'It's your decision and I support you 100 per cent,' but I never really understood why."

Amanda Cushley has been accepted for the job but must first complete a training course. She said she hopes soldiers on the base can help fill in some of the missing pieces.

"When I go there, I will be able to see what they are doing. I'll get to see how the guys feel about what they are doing," she said.

"But I'm also going for me. I may not get the answers I'm looking for, but it's an opportunity I don't want to miss."

She applied for the overseas position with her stepmother, but there were problems with Elaine Cushley's application.

"I kinda hoped we would get to go together. I've never done anything like this before," Amanda Cushley said.

Elaine Cushley said she hasn't given up on one day working in Kandahar but is happy that Amanda will experience some of the same sights and sounds as her son.

Amanda Cushley has spoken with people who have firsthand knowledge of conditions on the base. Sharing a tent with five others and using public showers won't be a problem, she said, but she's less sure of the scorpions and spiders that reportedly scurry about the living quarters.

"I've been told to check my shoes before I put them on," she said. "I don't know if I'm prepared for all that ... I don't even go camping."

If all goes well, Cushley expects to depart sometime between November and March.

"I really think it will help me appreciate things more. It's easy to sit here and make comments about things, but unless you're there, you don't really know what it's like."

Hillier denies contradicting PM over length of Afghan mission

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Canada's top general is denying he's at odds with the prime minister over Canada's mission in Afghanistan.

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The Opposition parties Friday called on the Conservative government to explain why Hillier appeared to contradict Prime Minister Stephen Harper over how long it will take for NATO countries to withdraw troops from Afghanistan.

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"Of how do you produce senior non-commissioned military officers, how do you develop staff colleges, how do you develop senior leaders," he said.

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NATO members promise just enough to keep Dutch troops in Afghanistan past 2008, commander says

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NATO defence ministers seem to have done just enough with meagre offers of additional troops to convince the Dutch to carry on the fight in southern Afghanistan, a former military commander said Friday.

Retired Dutch Maj.-Gen Frank van Kappen's observation appeared supported by remarks from a senior member of the ruling party in the Netherlands.

Pieter van Geel, leader of the Christian Democrat party in the Dutch parliament, told reporters he expects the cabinet to extend the mission in the war-torn country past the August 2008 deadline.

A formal decision will be made by the Dutch government only after NATO holds what's called a force-generation conference early next month in Mons, Belgium.

At that meeting, NATO countries that have verbally pledged additional support for the Afghan mission are supposed to put their commitment in writing.

At this week's informal meeting of NATO defence ministers in the Netherlands, Hungary said it would deploy 150 soldiers with Dutch forces in Uruzgan province, north of Kandahar. As well, Slovakia and the Czech Republic offered a few dozen troops each.

"If you add up all of the offers, it'll meet what we require," said van Kappen, now a senior fellow at the Hague Centre for Strategic Studies and an elected senator.

The hard-fought concessions from countries reluctant to send their troops to battle the Taliban should serve as a lesson to Canada, which is about to go through its own debate about its Afghan mission.

In an interview with The Canadian Press, van Kappen said the government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper shouldn't expect NATO to pay much attention to its cries for help in Afghanistan until a decision is imminent in Canada.

"As with the Dutch, they will do just enough to keep them in place," said van Kappen, who advised former UN secretary general Kofi Anan on military matters.

The fact that Canada patrols Kandahar, one of the most dangerous provinces in Afghanistan, means that Ottawa will have a harder time than the Netherlands in convincing allies to cough up what little the Dutch achieved, van Kappen said.

One of Canada's complaints has been that other NATO countries with troops in Afghanistan are refusing to send them to fight in dangerous areas.

The mandate for Canada's current military mission to Afghanistan expires in February 2009.

Maritimers in Afghanistan; Local | Many of the soldiers interviewed were from CFB Gagetown

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On Assignment in Afghanistan

by Chris Lambie, photographs by Christian Laforce (Nimbus)

The book *On Assignment in Afghanistan* offers insight on the war and the Canadian troops sent there to fight it.

The story is by journalist Chris Lambie and photographs by Christian Laforce. Both are employees with *The Chronicle Herald*. They spent a month imbedded with the troops at the base surrounding the airport in Khandahar.

Lambie is an award-winning journalist who has worked as a newspaper reporter in Halifax since 1995. Laforce is an award-winning photographer who has been a staff photographer with the *Chronicle Herald* since 2005.

The book is well written and accompanied with excellent photographs. The focus is on Maritime troops, most of them from CFB Gagetown, but anyone in any part of the country would want to read it.

One of the biggest yet most difficult problems facing those fighting the war is the drug trade. Money from the sale of opium poppies goes to the Taliban and smugglers.

On the other hand, the crops "are being irrigated with canals paid for by Canadian taxpayers." An acre of poppies is worth about \$200,000 but "almost none of that goes to the farmer." Attempts to have the Afgans grow other crops have up to this point been unsuccessful.

One of the goals of the mission is to train the Afghan to police themselves. Policing is a very dangerous line of work. They are the target of bombs, their families are harassed. They are also poorly equipped and are considered to be soft targets by the Taliban.

On a more personal level, the book covers the heat, smells, dust, bugs and other elements the troops must face while maintaining a state of alert where situations can change in the blink of an eye. Temperatures of 50C make it very difficult, if not impossible, to drive tanks and other armoured vehicles.

Probably one of the most interesting chapters is of six Canadians who lost their lives when a roadside bomb exploded beside a light armoured vehicle.

Photographs showing the commander Col. Mike Cessford announcing the deaths, Master Cpt. Brian McCallum listening to soldiers talk about their relationship with their six fallen comrades and the ramp ceremony are nothing short of amazing.

One picture that is certain to win awards is of a Canadian soldier injured in the blast, lying in a bed saluting the soldiers at the ramp ceremony.

Why are the troops going to Afghanistan? There are many answers but many of the soldiers are motivated by cash. They will take home \$20,000 on top of their normal pay. As one person puts it, "Money is the reason and that's no joke. Twenty grand for the private."

For anyone who has any interest in the war in Afghanistan the book offers a first-hand account of what life is like for the troops and the people living in this war-torn country.

— reviewed by RAY BOURGEOIS

NATO promises just enough to keep Dutch on mission

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COLUMN: Around the globe

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The Canadian Press

Hillier denies contradicting PM on mission

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The opposition parties Friday called on the Conservative government to explain why Hillier appeared to contradict Prime Minister Stephen Harper over how long it will take for NATO countries to withdraw troops from Afghanistan.

In his government's throne speech last week, the prime minister said the Afghan army and national police should be ready to take over security duties by 2011.

This week, however, Hillier told reporters he expected NATO forces would likely be in Afghanistan for at least another decade.

The difference in messages about the timing of the Afghan mission is a question of trust in the government, Liberal deputy leader Michael Ignatieff told the Commons.

"What's at stake here is the government's competence and its credibility," Ignatieff said.

"When will the government get this mission under control?" he asked. "Who's in charge?"

But in an interview later in the day on CBC Newsworld, Hillier made painstakingly clear that it's the government calling the shots on Afghanistan, not the military.

"I've talked to the prime minister," said Hillier.

How long should we stay?

PUBLICATION: The Guardian (Charlottetown)

DATE: 2007.10.27

SECTION: Editorial

PAGE: A6

WORD COUNT: 247

Editor:

After reading Dan MacInnis' letter ('Let the troops do the job', The Guardian, Oct. 25, 2007) on Canada's future role in Afghanistan, I saw the Globe and Mail's main headline for the same day: 'Afghan rebuilding a task for a generation'.

The NATO secretary-general, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, believes it will take at least that long, and maybe into "the foreseeable future" to stabilize the country.

There is no doubt our soldiers are doing an excellent job, and there have been successes. How could there not be with the millions spent thus far? We would be long gone, otherwise. Does this mean we are obligated to remain in this volatile area for 30, maybe 60, years? When the current troops' children are deployed to carry on the job, will Mr. MacInnis' dismissal of why we are there, and pertinent observation that "we are there", be adequate reasoning?

Mr. MacInnis is waiting for "some lasting political system" to emerge. In view of the area's volatility, divisions and history, I have no idea what realistic expectations are, but I am worried by the appeal to allow our troops to "clean out Kandahar" knowing that the writer appears complacent about civilian casualties: a "reality". Troops marching "with head and shoulders high" is no justification to me and is hardly objective. How long does Mr. MacInnis believe we should stay? Until Kandahar resembles Brampton, and Afghanistan is as stable as Canada?

Glen Armstrong, Summerside

Pulling double (double) duty; Civilians vie to serve their country – and soldiers – in Afghanistan

PUBLICATION: Kingston Whig–Standard (ON)

DATE: 2007.10.27

SECTION: Front

PAGE: 1

BYLINE: Ian Elliot Whig–Standard Military Reporter

PHOTO: Michael Lea/The Whig–Standard The Canadian Press MichaelLea/The Whig–Standard Support staff, including Anne Potvin (centre) and Samantha Lindsay (right), await their turn in the gas tent at the Montreal Street armouries as they undergo a training session to see if they will be chosen to go to Afghanistan.; "We're not trying to turn them into soldiers," says Gord Wells, manager of deployment operations for the Canadian Forces

ILLUSTRATION: Personnel Support Agency, of those who may work at a Tim Hortons in Kandahar, Afghanistan (above). "We're just trying to make them aware of the dangers that they will face."; Samantha Lindsay awaits her turn in the gas tent during training sessions yesterday at the Montreal Street armouries for support staff who hope to work in Afghanistan.

WORD COUNT: 874

Knowing how to survive a rocket assault or a gas attack isn't a job requirement for most Tim Hortons employees.

But it is for those who hope to be serving double–doubles in Kandahar by the end of the year, and Shanna Porter is one of those people.

She gave up two weeks of vacation from her job at the Thousand Islands Casino in Gananoque in hopes of being picked as one of the people who will soon be pouring coffee into the unique desert camouflage–patterned cups served in Afghanistan.

And she, along with more than 100 other prospective barbers, sports officers and other personnel support workers, is taking a two–week training and evaluation course in Kingston, aiming to be one of about 70 who will be chosen for a six–month tour supporting the Canadian Forces stationed in Afghanistan.

"This was something I could not not do," said Porter, 29, after learning how to put on a gas mask and other protective gear, then decontaminate, after a mock gas attack at the Princess of Wales' Own Regiment Armoury on Montreal Street yesterday morning.

"My little brother is in the army and I thought this is the best way that I could help support him and the other troops in Afghanistan." The Canadian Forces Personnel Support Agency, which supplies the workers and is running the training course, received more than 2,400 applications for the 70 jobs that will need to be filled in Afghanistan by the end of the year, plus another 76 applications from civilians who had already done tours there and wanted to return.

While conditions are rough – the workers can expect to sleep eight to a tent for six months, endure the harsh climate of Afghanistan and work long hours, some of them outside the relative safety of the wire of the Kandahar base – there are advantages. For example, the Tim Hortons job pays double the \$8 an hour average at the chain and is topped up with an \$1,800 monthly tax–free allowance.

Food and accommodations are also free, and when the workers return, no matter what their specialty, they will have an eye-catching job history.

"This would not be a bad thing to have on a resume," noted Gord Wells, the agency's manager for deployment operations. He said working in that country under challenging conditions and enduring the occasional rocket attack was a difficult job but there was no shortage of people who want to do it.

"We ask them to work a lot of long hours, and we ask them to do all kinds of different jobs because we're in a unique situation over there," he said.

"We might need someone to work as a cashier who hasn't been trained as a cashier, because in Afghanistan we can't go down to the temp worker office and say we're short that day and we need five more cashiers. For the right person, this is a great opportunity."

He says selecting the best candidates is relatively easy. The agency, like the military itself, wants team players who can make decisions under stress, obey orders and cope with challenging conditions. Interestingly, much of the class is made up of people over 30; there were relatively few footloose 18- or 19-year-olds undergoing the training.

All candidates must pass a medical screening, physical fitness and psychological tests, and the same sort of background check that military personnel have to go through to be considered.

During the course, the civilian employees get training on everything from matters that could save their lives, such as minefield awareness and basic first aid, to pragmatic matters, such as how to address officers and NCOs, to, as they learned yesterday, how to throw up while wearing a gas mask if absolutely necessary.

"We're not trying to turn them into soldiers," said Wells, who is retired from the Forces. "We're just trying to make them aware of the dangers that they will face."

Personnel from CFB Kingston oversaw the training – in most respects it is exactly what regular forces receive – and despite the fact that they were dealing with civilians and not troops used to following orders and military procedures, the NCOs praised their charges.

"They respond excellently," said Sgt. Peter Hanson, as he departed with a busload of the trainees to the gas shack at CFB Kingston, where the workers got their first exposure to tear gas. "They listen, they're interested, and because this is something new to them, they respond really well."

Sgt. Gary Jacklin said the civilians had not gone through the exercise 100 times before and, although they lacked a military background, were in some ways easier to train than soldiers.

"They're not bored with it the way that military people can be," he noted. "They pick up on this quite well."

Wells noted many of the volunteers had some military background or had an interest in serving at one point in their lives, and working in Afghanistan was a chance to rekindle that youthful enthusiasm.

"A lot of these people wanted to be in the military at some point in their lives, but decided back then that it wasn't for them," he said. "This gives them another chance."

Shanna Porter said she doesn't mind giving up sleep and learning a new routine – she just hopes she will be one of the workers chosen for the overseas deployment at the end of the course.

"I'm doing this because it's a chance of a lifetime," she said. "Who knows what will happen? I'm hoping if I'm

selected that the casino will keep my job open for six months, but we'll see what happens. This is something that I really want to do."

ieliot@thewhig.com

Soldier accused of killing friend gets support

PUBLICATION: The Chronicle–Herald
DATE: 2007.10.27
SECTION: Metro
PAGE: B4
BYLINE: Tera Camus Cape Breton Bureau
WORD COUNT: 379

GLACE BAY – A discharged soldier facing multiple charges in the shooting death of his friend in Afghanistan in March is receiving support from unusual sources.

Along with relatives of victim Cpl. Kevin Megeney, the MP for Cape Breton–Canso, Rodger Cuzner, said Friday it's time all residents of Glace Bay stand behind local son Cpl. Matthew Wilcox, 22, who was charged Thursday with manslaughter, criminal negligence causing death and negligent performance of duty.

The National Investigation Service laid the charges after investigating the circumstances surrounding the death of Cpl. Megeney, 25, of Stellarton, who was shot in the chest in his tent at Kandahar Airfield in Afghanistan on March 6. Loaded weapons are not supposed to be in tents.

Sources at the time told The Chronicle Herald that Cpl. Wilcox was being investigated for manslaughter and was being guarded by military police immediately after the shooting. For several days, Cpl. Wilcox was also on suicide watch and was then sent home to Canada.

A picture of the young Glace Bay man was taken at Smooth Hermans in Sydney and dated March 28 on his Facebook website Friday. According to his site, he served four years for the 2nd Battalion Nova Scotia Highlanders and his last tour of duty was part of Task Force 1–07 in Kandahar.

"What I'm seeing now is this is pretty much military protocol," Mr. Cuzner said Friday. "What this will likely boil down to is that each soldier is responsible for their weapon."

E-mails and calls to the Wilcox family were not answered Friday. Cpl. Wilcox was at the Sydney garrison Thursday to sign his discharge papers, according to a source.

Mr. Cuzner said the Wilcox family, to whom he spoke by phone from Ottawa, is so far holding up and have been surrounded by a large circle of friends and supporters in Glace Bay. Many residents believe the shooting was a tragic accident.

"There are two tragedies here," Mr. Cuzner said. "This was a close and dear friendship, forged in the heat of training, and you can imagine what this young man is going through now. "

He said that for now "it's important for Cape Bretoners to support each other" and especially Cpl. Wilcox, who if found guilty of manslaughter in a military trial, could face life in prison.

On Thursday, the family of Cpl. Megeney said they felt bad for their son's friend, Cpl. Wilcox, because they also believe the shooting was accidental.

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Soldier's supporters say shooting an accident

PUBLICATION: The Chronicle–Herald
DATE: 2007.10.27
SECTION: NovaScotia
PAGE: B1
BYLINE: Tera Camus Cape Breton Bureau
WORD COUNT: 604

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Mr. Cuzner said the Wilcox family, to whom he spoke by phone from Ottawa, is so far holding up and have been surrounded by a large circle of friends and supporters in Glace Bay. Many residents believe the shooting was a tragic accident and not spawned by malice. "There are two tragedies here," Mr. Cuzner said. "This was a close and dear friendship, forged in the heat of training, and you can imagine what this young man is going through now. Not only is there the tragic loss of his friend Megeney and the impact this has on his family, but there's impact on Wilcox and his family."

He said that as in most tragedies, there "will be lessons learned," but for now "it's important for Cape Bretoners to support each other" and especially Cpl. Wilcox, who if found guilty of manslaughter in a military trial, could face life in prison.

On Thursday, the family of Cpl. Megeney said they felt bad for their son's friend, Cpl. Wilcox, because they also believe the shooting was accidental. His father, Dexter, was quoted by The Canadian Press on Thursday as saying, "We're not out for blood."

There were almost 700 members registered on a Facebook site Friday "in memory of Cpl. Kevin Megeney," along with 60 photos that show the happier times of the part-time rapper who loved Eminem. There were pictures taken of the parties before he left for duty in Afghanistan and a number that show him in the field with some of his soldier colleagues.

A man named Jeremy MacKenzie wrote earlier this month, after the dedication of a memorial to Cpl. Megeney at the Pictou Armouries: "We all miss you, man. At least now there's something to remember you by and have something to look at for motivation. All the guys coming and going in the future can now look at it and get a glimpse of what a real man looks like. Miss you, Kev."

Cpl. Megeney was the 45th Canadian soldier to die in Afghanistan since the mission began in 2002.

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NATO's pledge enough to keep Dutch in mission; Meagre offer likely to keep troops in Afghanistan past August deadline

PUBLICATION: The Chronicle-Herald
DATE: 2007.10.27
SECTION: World
PAGE: A9
SOURCE: The Canadian Press
BYLINE: Murray Brewster
WORD COUNT: 646

AMSTERDAM – NATO defence ministers seem to have done just enough with meagre offers of additional troops to convince the Dutch to carry on the fight in southern Afghanistan, a former military commander said Friday.

Retired Dutch Maj.-Gen Frank van Kappen's observation appeared supported by remarks from a senior member of the ruling party in the Netherlands.

Pieter van Geel, leader of the Christian Democrat party in the Dutch parliament, told reporters he expects the cabinet to extend the mission in the war-torn country past the August 2008 deadline.

A formal decision will be made by the Dutch government only after NATO holds what's called a force-generation conference early next month in Mons, Belgium.

At that meeting, NATO countries that have verbally pledged additional support for the Afghan mission are supposed to put their commitment in writing.

At this week's informal meeting of NATO defence ministers in the Netherlands, Hungary said it would deploy 150 soldiers with Dutch forces in Uruzgan province, north of Kandahar. As well, Slovakia and the Czech Republic offered a few dozen troops each.

"If you add up all of the offers, it'll meet what we require," said van Kappen, now a senior fellow at the Hague Centre for Strategic Studies and an elected senator.

The hard-fought concessions from countries reluctant to send their troops to battle the Taliban should serve as a lesson to Canada, which is about to go through its own debate about the future of its Afghan mission.

In an interview with The Canadian Press, van Kappen said the government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper shouldn't expect NATO to pay much attention to its cries for help in Afghanistan until a decision is imminent in Canada.

"As with the Dutch, they will do just enough to keep them in place," said van Kappen, who advised former UN secretary general Kofi Anan on military matters.

The fact that Canada patrols Kandahar, one of the most dangerous provinces in Afghanistan, means Ottawa will have a harder time than the Netherlands in convincing allies to cough up what little the Dutch achieved,

NATO's pledge enough to keep Dutch in mission; Meagre offer likely to keep troops in Afghanistan past Aug

van Kappen said.

One of Canada's complaints has been that other NATO countries with troops in Afghanistan are refusing to send them to fight in dangerous areas.

The mandate for Canada's current military mission to Afghanistan expires in February 2009.

Although it's generally agreed to have been smart domestic politics, the Harper government's signal in the throne speech that it wants Canada to stay in Afghanistan until 2011 and its a public review of Canada's role post-2009 role may have undermined the country's bargaining position with the allies, said van Kappen.

Some NATO members are all too eager to leave the messy rebuilding of Afghanistan to someone else, he said.

"You have to play your cards close to your chest in these circumstances."

Dick Pels, a political commentator and author at the University of Amsterdam, said he believes the Dutch government is prepared to stay despite public misgivings.

The alliance is also reviewing troop offers from non-NATO members such as Georgia, Albania and Croatia. France has also offered to send at least 50 military trainers to Uruzgan province to help get the Afghan army up and running.

The promises came only after intense bilateral discussions.

The Dutch made a strong plea to the other countries behind closed doors at this week's meeting. Canada has just lately embarked on its own direct efforts to woo wary allies to provide more trainers and helicopters.

The notion that the two countries have, in effect, been forced to beg other European members for support was unseemly to political observers in the Netherlands.

"Solidarity within NATO should mean something," said Pels.

"Solidarity means coming forward and standing shoulder to shoulder, rather than leave the Dutch and the Canadians stumbling around crying out for help."

The Netherlands has nearly 1,800 troops in Afghanistan, backed up by fighter bombers, attack helicopters and artillery. It wants to draw down some of those forces for rest and equipment refurbishing.

The withdrawal of the Dutch AH-64 Apache attack helicopters would deprive Canadian troops of vital cover.

"We have flown more Apache missions for your forces than our own," said van Kappen.

He said one of the arguments he hears is that Dutch must stay in Afghanistan, because they owe a debt of gratitude to the Canadians and British who liberated Holland from Nazi occupation in the Second World War.

'Solidarity within NATO should mean something. Solidarity means coming forward and standing shoulder to shoulder, rather than leave the Dutch and the Canadians stumbling around crying out for help.'

Hillier denies he contradicted PM over length of Afghan mission

PUBLICATION: The Chronicle–Herald
DATE: 2007.10.27
SECTION: Canada
PAGE: A3
SOURCE: The Canadian Press
BYLINE: Terry Pedwell,
ILLUSTRATION: Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Rick Hillier (FRED CHARTRAND /CP)
WORD COUNT: 353

OTTAWA – Canada's top general is denying he is at odds with the prime minister over Canada's mission in Afghanistan.

"(There is) no difference of opinion whatsoever," Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Rick Hillier said Friday immediately upon returning to Ottawa from a visit to Kandahar.

The opposition parties Friday called on the Conservative government to explain why Hillier appeared to contradict Prime Minister Stephen Harper over how long it will take for NATO countries to withdraw troops from Afghanistan.

In his government's throne speech last week, the prime minister said the Afghan army and national police should be ready to take over security duties by 2011.

This week, however, Hillier told reporters he expected NATO forces would likely be in Afghanistan for at least another decade.

The difference in messages about the timing of the Afghan mission is a question of trust in the government, Liberal deputy leader Michael Ignatieff told the Commons.

"What's at stake here is the government's competence and its credibility," Ignatieff said. "When will the government get this mission under control?" he asked.

"Who's in charge?"

But in an interview later in the day on CBC Newsworld, Hillier made painstakingly clear that it's the government calling the shots on Afghanistan, not the military.

"I've talked to the prime minister," said Hillier.

"I'm absolutely clear where he wants to go and on what he needs and I'm absolutely in line with that, otherwise I wouldn't be his chief of defence staff."

The difference between the throne speech and his own comments, said the general, comes down to his explanation to reporters of his vision of what it will take to produce a top-notch, professional army in Afghanistan.

"What I talked about for the longer term was simply the continuation of a professional military force," Hillier explained. "Of how do you produce senior non-commissioned military officers, how do you develop staff colleges, how do you develop senior leaders," he said. "It takes us 10 plus years, 15 years to develop those kinds of people, and consistently produce them through the system so you are capable of securing your country for ever and ever.

"That's the part I'm talking about and many other countries have the lead on those things. Our job, our military mission in Kandahar province that we clearly have given to us by the government of Canada . . . that part is eminently doable."

Afghanistan highlight for veteran soldiers

PUBLICATION: The
Chronicle–Herald
DATE: 2007.10.27
SECTION: Front
PAGE: A1
SOURCE: The Canadian Press
BYLINE: Bill Graveland
WORD COUNT: 486

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WILSON, Afghanistan – War may be hell but for some Canadian troops serving in Afghanistan, getting a chance to do some actual soldiering in a war zone is a dream come true.

This is especially so for longtime career soldiers who felt they missed out on combat experience during the decades when the Canadian Forces were more involved in peacekeeping around the world.

Traditionally, it's often been young people, those just entering the first blush of adulthood, who have rushed out and enlisted for an opportunity to go to war.

But with Canada largely performing a peacekeeping role in the past 30 years, many soldiers had gone their entire careers without firing a shot at an enemy.

It has been a bitter pill for many enlisted men to swallow, given Canada's storied military past as a fierce fighting force dating back to the First, Second and Korean Wars.

Then came Afghanistan.

The conflict in the war-torn country has claimed the lives of 71 Canadian soldiers since 2002. The troops face a dangerous adversary, the Taliban, and often have to live in primitive conditions and be away from their families for months.

But the veterans are relishing the opportunity.

"This is the highlight, basically, of my career," said Master Warrant Officer Michel Carrier, whose unit is based in Valcartier, Que.

"The mission is basically the first time I go to war even though before that I went through Bosnia and Croatia three times," he said with a sigh.

"Basically at first, probably everybody wants to try it, although some of them change their minds after a few years. But after 18 years in the army, that was something important to me to do before I retire or go to an office job somewhere else."

The arrival of the Leopard tank squadron has opened a door of opportunity for Sgt. Scott Schall of Medicine Hat, Alta.

The tanks were deployed to the Panjwaii district, west of Kandahar, less than a year ago. It was the first time Canadian tanks had returned to combat operations since the Korean War more than five decades ago.

"I've just been in several actions where I consider myself to be a veteran now," said Schall.

"Before that, I had never been in anything even remotely dangerous while I was in the military. Until you start taking tours over here, you really don't understand what it is all about."

Schall was in a battle in September that claimed the life of Cpl. Nathan Hornburg of Calgary. Hornburg was trying to put a track back on a tank and was killed by a mortar.

"Lots of rockets, machine-gun fire and myself and one other tank were the only two tanks not hit that day. So you have a different reality of the whole thing," Schall said.

The experience being gained by Canadian troops seeing action in Afghanistan will make them better soldiers, said a senior officer.

"This is good, solid experience for the soldiers. It's reinforced a lot of basic lessons we've been teaching," said Maj. Warren Smith, battery commander for the Canadian Battle Group.

"It's easier to tone it down in the long term than it is to crank it up. That better prepares soldiers to go overseas and face significant obstacles."

For Carrier, the experience has taught him how to lead others in dangerous situations.

"It's a lot different to lead in war than it is in peace time back in Canada," he said.

"The pressure is a lot different. It's not only a problem of performing; it's a matter of getting them to do the job."

"The simple fact is that understanding may save lives in the end."

Defence chief denies verbal war with government; Hillier sparks controversy with remarks about Afghan timeline

IDNUMBER 200710270012
PUBLICATION: Times Colonist (Victoria)
DATE: 2007.10.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A4
ILLUSTRATION: Photo: Gen. Rick Hillier: "I talk to the prime minister.";
DATELINE: OTTAWA
BYLINE: Mike De Souza
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 617

OTTAWA — Canada's top general is denying recent suggestions that he's at war with Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government because of its optimistic assessment of progress by Canadian troops in their mission in Afghanistan.

Despite stirring up controversy for suggesting that it would take up to a decade to adequately train Afghan troops to provide security and stability in the region to support Afghanistan's new government, Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Rick Hillier insisted yesterday there was "no difference of opinion whatsoever" between his views and the position of the Harper government, which has suggested that Canadian soldiers could finish their mission in four years.

"I get my direction from the government of Canada," Hillier told CBC Newsworld's Politics yesterday after returning from a visit to Afghanistan this week. "I talk to the prime minister. I'm absolutely clear on where he wants to go and on what he needs and I'm absolutely in line with that, otherwise I wouldn't be his chief of defence staff."

Hillier said Canadian troops are making progress in training Afghans to take over the lead in combat missions and rebuild the southern part of the country, but he reiterated that it could take 10 to 15 years to train senior military leaders who would bring stability to the region.

"I think most Canadians, living in the incredible country that we have, don't always see all the complexities of trying to rebuild a country," he said, noting Afghanistan endured "25 years of destruction."

"But I think they're increasingly aware that you just don't do that overnight."

In the Commons, Conservative House leader Peter Van Loan insisted that Canadian Forces could finish training the new Afghan military troops by 2011.

"Building up the capacity of the Afghan people is obviously going to take time," Van Loan said in the Commons. "We want them to be able to defend their sovereignty. We know that will not happen overnight, but our government does believe it can happen by 2011."

In the throne speech last week, the government indicated that it did not plan to end Canada's military involvement in Afghanistan in February 2009, despite the clamouring by the three opposition parties to bring the troops home by then, if not sooner.

"Our government does not believe that Canada should simply abandon the people of Afghanistan after February 2009," the speech said.

Although Canada should shift its emphasis to training the Afghan army and police to defend their own people, the speech added: "This will not be completed by February 2009, but our government believes this objective should be achievable by 2011, the end of the period covered by the Afghanistan Compact."

The latest suggestions from the government about finishing its mission by 2011 contrast with Harper's previous statements that Canadians wouldn't "cut and run" from Afghanistan before finishing the job of stabilizing the country and preventing a return of the Taliban regime and terrorists.

The federal Liberals said the apparent contradictions between the government and Hillier are another sign that Harper is still "bungling the mission," even after replacing former defence minister Gordon O'Connor last summer in the midst of controversy over the treatment of Afghan detainees.

"We've got a situation where the chief of the defence staff is saying one thing, the prime minister and his spinmeisters are saying another and it raises serious questions about whether we have adequate civilian control of this mission," said Michael Ignatieff, deputy leader of the federal Liberals.

Hillier also said he was disappointed about the response from some of Canada's other NATO allies who haven't stepped up to take a greater role in the mission. He noted that Barnett Rubin, an academic expert on Afghanistan, had recently said that failure in the mission could result in the end of the NATO alliance.

Canadian military goes high-tech in Afghanistan

IDNUMBER 200710270101
PUBLICATION: The StarPhoenix (Saskatoon)
DATE: 2007.10.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: World
PAGE: D8
ILLUSTRATION: Colour Photo: CanWest News / Maj. Pascal Larose at his desk in the Provincial Operations Centre ;
DATELINE: KANDAHAR, Afghanistan
BYLINE: Matthew Fisher
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 515

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — Canada's military has leaped into the 21st century, trading radios and maps with pins stuck in them for ultra-high-tech war rooms where commanders have access to constant data streams, real-time digitized maps and live video feeds from drones, satellites and web cameras that travel with combat vehicles hunting the Taliban.

"We may still be in the mud and the buildings we use may be made of plywood, but what we have now is comparable to a combat battle centre on a frigate — or the bridge of the Starship Enterprise," said Lt.-Gen. Andrew Leslie, the army's top general.

"This is a huge step forward. In distance, it is light years. In time, we have moved decades with one step. In terms of information, we are right up there with the Americans and British."

To nearly universal rave reviews, several state-of-the-art operations rooms have been set up by the Quebec-based Royal 22nd Regiment battle group in southern Afghanistan.

The biggest is a digitized battle suite at the Kandahar Airfield, where soldiers have been working around the clock in shifts. Their eyes are fixed on dozens of small computer screens in a cool, hushed room.

The room is dominated by several huge computer screens hung on the walls and a red light on the ceiling that turns on whenever contact with the enemy is expected or has begun, or when there are Canadian wounded or dead.

"If that red light is on, it means 'Go to your battle stations; there is serious business to be done,' " said Maj. Pascal Larose, an armoured officer who gave the first extensive tour for a journalist of the top-secret Provincial Operations Centre. "And that light is on almost every day."

Larose's job is to keep the electronic marvels running, along with Capt. Fred Letourneau, a signaller and computer engineer.

"It is a big, big change in how we do things. What we have now is better situational awareness for everybody so everybody can make better decisions."

The close working relationship between Larose and the computer whiz, Letourneau, "was the very best thing we could have done," said Maj. Patrick St. Pierre, who oversees the main operations centre. "The match is

perfect because one of them knows the technical language, the other knows the language of combat arms."

The Athena Tactical System, which was made entirely in Canada, runs up to 100 times faster than the best Internet connection that Canadians have in their homes, Letourneau explained.

It combines telephone communication, e-mail and chat rooms for an unlimited number of people online at the same time, as well as video, data and a website loaded with background information. It cannot be hacked into because it is an entirely enclosed system.

A key feature of the new system is a "blue force tracker," which marks the position of every Canadian vehicle. The vehicles, in turn, are fitted with transponders that communicate constantly over global positioning satellites. As friendly fire incidents are known in the military as "blue-on-blue" attacks, that is also the colour used to signify friendly forces.

Other colours and symbols are used to designate the location of enemy forces, improvised explosive devices, unexploded ordnance and other threats.

All this information can be placed on digitized maps or laid over satellite images. It can also be made instantly available to commanders in their vehicles in the field.

Hillier denies war of words with gov't

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PUBLICATION: The StarPhoenix (Saskatoon)
DATE: 2007.10.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: National
PAGE: C15
DATELINE: OTTAWA
BYLINE: Mike De Souza
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 378

OTTAWA — Canada's top soldier is denying recent suggestions that he's at war with Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government because of its optimistic assessment of progress by Canadian troops in their mission in Afghanistan.

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"I get my direction from the government of Canada," Hillier told CBC Newsworld's Politics on Friday after returning from a visit to Afghanistan this week. "I talk to the prime minister. I'm absolutely clear on where he wants to go and on what he needs and I'm absolutely in line with that, otherwise I wouldn't be his chief of defence staff."

Hillier said Canadian troops are making progress in training Afghans to take over the lead in combat mission and rebuild the southern part of the country, but he reiterated that it could take 10 to 15 years to train senior military leaders who would bring stability to the region.

"I think most Canadians, living in the incredible country that we have, don't always see all the complexities of trying to rebuild a country," he said, noting Afghanistan endured "25 years of destruction."

"But I think they're increasingly aware that you just don't do that overnight."

In the Commons, Conservative House leader Peter Van Loan insisted that Canadian Forces could finish training the new Afghan military troops by 2011.

"Building up the capacity of the Afghan people is obviously going to take time," Van Loan said in the Commons. "We want them to be able to defend their sovereignty. We know that will not happen overnight, but our government does believe it can happen by 2011."

In the throne speech last week, the government indicated it did plan to end Canada's military involvement in Afghanistan in February 2009, despite the clamouring by the three opposition parties to bring the troops home by then, if not sooner.

"Our government does not believe that Canada should simply abandon the people of Afghanistan after February 2009," the speech said.

Military chief denies he's at odds with PM; Hillier says he and Harper are on same page on Afghan mission

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In the throne speech last week, the government indicated it planned to end Canada's military involvement in Afghanistan in February 2009, despite the clamouring by the three opposition parties to bring the troops home by then, if not sooner.

"Our government does not believe that Canada should simply abandon the people of Afghanistan after February 2009," the speech said.

Although Canada should shift its emphasis to training the Afghan army and police to defend their own people, the speech added: "This will not be completed by February 2009, but our government believes this objective should be achievable by 2011, the end of the period covered by the Afghanistan Compact."

The latest suggestions from the government about finishing its mission by 2011 contrast with Harper's previous statements that Canadians wouldn't "cut and run" from Afghanistan before "finishing the job" of stabilizing the country and preventing a return of the Taliban regime and terrorists.

The federal Liberals said the apparent contradictions between the government and Hillier are another sign that Harper is "bungling the mission," even after replacing former defence minister Gordon O'Connor in the midst of controversy over the treatment of Afghan detainees.

"We've got a situation where the chief of the defence staff is saying one thing, the prime minister and his spinmeisters are saying another and it raises serious questions about whether we have adequate civilian control of this mission," said Michael Ignatieff, deputy leader of the federal Liberals.

"The soldiers deserve better. They deserve effective leadership by the civilian elected government of this country, and they're not getting it."

But Hillier said he was disappointed about the response from some of Canada's other NATO allies who haven't stepped up to take a greater role in the mission. He noted that Barnett Rubin, an academic expert on Afghanistan had recently said that failure in the mission could result in the end of the NATO alliance.

Ottawa's tax haul continues as surplus rises to \$8.7B for first five months

DATE: 2007.10.26

KEYWORDS: BUSINESS ECONOMY FINANCE POLITICS

PUBLICATION: cpw

WORD COUNT: 204

OTTAWA _ The federal government's budget surplus keeps getting larger, increasing by almost \$1 billion in August, the Finance Department reported Friday.

The surplus of revenue over spending was up \$900 million during the month, bringing the year-to-date surplus to \$8.7 billion for the first five months of the fiscal year.

The department said revenue totalled \$18.6 billion in August, up \$1 billion from the same time last year, mostly due to gains from corporate income tax revenue, the GST and non-tax receipts. Corporate taxes rose by \$300 million in August, up 13.4 per cent from last August.

The year-to-date surplus is now \$1.5 billion higher than for the same period during last year's fiscal year, which resulted in a final \$13.8-billion surplus.

Program spending also increased in August by \$700 million, 5.1 per cent higher than last year, due to higher transfer payments to provinces and increased operating costs. Government spending was \$4.4 billion higher for the first five months, compared with last year, with transfers and departmental costs _ particularly military spending _ contributing the most.

Defence spending, partly to pay for the war in Afghanistan, totalled \$6.5 billion in the first five months of this fiscal year, up 5.8 per cent from the corresponding period last year.

Graphics moving on The Canadian Press GraphicsNet today

DATE: 2007.10.26
KEYWORDS: ADVISORIES
PUBLICATION: cpw
WORD COUNT: 1757

GRAPHICS ADVISORY

1:30 pm Friday, October 26, 2007

Following is a list of graphics moving today. In this menu each graphic's file name is followed by a brief description, column size and time of input. For questions or retransmission requests please call The Canadian Press Graphics Desk in Toronto at 416-507-2172.

DOWNLOAD GRAPHICS FROM CPIMAGES

All graphics are available to subscribers at www.cpimages.com. Select "Graphics" from the "Search in" drop down menu to see the thumbnails of the art. Graphics are displayed from newest to oldest. There is no charge for graphics that are less than one week old. If you have any problems call The Canadian Press Picture Desk at 416-507-2169.

THE CANADIAN PRESS GRAPHICS

National/Business/Sports

MARKET WATCH: Graphic shows closing figures for markets with charts for S&P/TSX and Canadian Dollar; 4x1c; ETA 6 p.m.

WEEKLY EARNINGS: Statistics Canada graphic lists average weekly earninging of payroll employees by province; with BC-StatsCan-Payroll; 1c; ETA 3 p.m.

TIM HORTONS EARNINGS: Chart shows Q3 earnings for Tim Horton's; 1c; with BC-Tim-Hortons; MOVED Friday, Oct. 26.

SHAW EARNINGS: Chart shows Q3 earnings for Shaw Communications; 1c; with BC-Shaw-Communciations; MOVED Friday, Oct. 26.

DALAI LAMA SKETCH: Quicksketch of the Dalai Lama who arrives in Canada on Sunday; 2c; with BC-Dalai-Lama-Canada; MOVED Thursday, Oct. 25.

OIL PRICES: Graphic shows crude oil prices; 1c; with BC-Alta-Royalty-Markets; ETA 5 p.m. SEE AP GRAPHIC BELOW

Weekly

TV RATINGS: Graphic lists the top 10 TV programs in Canada for the week; 1c; ETA 4 p.m.

BEST SELLING BOOKS: Graphic lists the Macleans top 10 fiction and non-fiction books for the week; 1c; MOVED Thursday, Oct. 25.

DVD RENTALS: Graphic lists Rogers Video's top 10 DVD rentals for the week; 1c; MOVED Tuesday, Oct. 23.

MUSIC CHARTS: Graphic lists Music World's top 10 sales of pop and country albums for the week; 1c; MOVED Tuesday, Oct. 23.

AP GRAPHICS

1:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 26.

Questions and requests for graphics should be directed to the Graphics Service Desk in New York at (212) 621-1905.

National/World

SUBPRIME IMPACT: U.S. maps show estimated cumulative loss of property value and cumulative loss of property taxes; 2c; 96.3 mm; with BC-Housing Prospects; ETA 5 p.m.

VANISHING WATER: Graphic shows future water shortage in the U.S.; size pending; with BC-Vanishing Water; ETA 6 p.m.

CHICAGO TAXES: Shows high taxes in the city of Chicago; 1c; 46.5 mm; with BC-Chicago Taxes; ETA 6 p.m.

AFGHAN VIOLENCE: Map locates Zabul and Kunar provinces in Afghanistan; 1c x 1 3/4 inches; 46.5 mm x 44 mm; with BC-Afghan-Violence; MOVED Friday, Oct. 26.

PAKISTAN BOMBING: Map locates Swat district, Pakistan, where a suicide bombing killed 20; 1c x 1 7/8 inches; 46.5 mm x 48 mm; with BC-Pakistan; MOVED Friday, Oct. 26.

Business

COUNTRYWIDE FINANCIAL: Graphic shows quarterly earnings information for Countrywide Financial; 1c; 46.5 mm; with BC-Earns-Countrywide Financial; ETA 5 p.m.

OIL PRICES: Graphic shows crude oil prices; 1c; 46.5 mm; with BC-Oil Prices; ETA 5 p.m.

Sports

NBA 2007-08 PREVIEW: Graphic shows team rankings and statistics for the upcoming NBA season; 6c x 18 inches; 295.2 mm x 457 mm; with related stories or stand-alone; ETA 4 p.m.

NBA 2007-08 PREVIEW BW: Graphic shows team rankings and statistics for the upcoming NBA season; 6c x 18 inches; 295.2 mm x 457 mm; with related stories or stand-alone; ETA 4 p.m.

NFL WK 8 MATCHUPS: ADVANCE FOR OCT. 26-27; one column graphics to accompany game stories; 1c x 2 inches; 46.5 mm x 51 mm; with related story; ETA 4 p.m.

NFL PLAYER OF WK: ADVANCE FOR OCT. 27-28; graphic profiles Patriots' QB Tom Brady; 1c x 3 3/4

inches; 46.5 mm x 95 mm; with BC–FBN—Patriots–Brady; MOVED Friday, Oct. 26.

NBA 2007–08 PREVIEW FPO: FOR PLACEMENT ONLY; graphic shows team rankings and statistics for the upcoming NBA season; with related stories or stand-alone; 6c x 18 inches; 295.2 mm x 457 mm; with related stories; MOVED Thursday, Oct. 25.

NFL WK 8: ADVANCE FOR OCT. 27–29; graphic shows Week 8 NFL team matchups; 5c x 4 1/2 inches; 245.5 mm x 114 mm; with related story; MOVED Thursday, Oct. 25.

STREET SENSE: Graphic looks at 2007 stats for Street Sense; two sizes; 1c x 2 3/4 inches; 46.5 mm x 70 mm; 2c x 2 inches; 96.3 mm x 51 mm; with BC–RAC—Breeders Cup; MOVED Thursday, Oct. 25.

NFL PICKS WK 8: Graphic shows Week 8 matchups and how they'll fare in week's play; 3c x 4 1/2 inches; 146 mm x 114 mm; with related stories; MOVED Wednesday, Oct. 24.

FBC PICKS: Chart shows the Top 25 college football teams and how they'll fare in week's play; 3c x 3 1/4 inches; 146 mm x 83 mm; with related story; MOVED Wednesday, Oct. 24.

BREEDERS CUP LOGO: 2007 Breeders Cup logo; 1c x 1 3/4 inches; 46.5 mm x 44 mm; with related story; MOVED Wednesday, Oct. 24.

CHASE FOR THE CUP: Graphic looks at the field of 12 drivers in the Nextel Cup championship; 2c x 2 1/2 inches; 96.3 mm x 64 mm; with related story; MOVED Wednesday, Oct. 24.

BREEDERS CLASSIC PP: Graphic shows post positions with silks for Saturday's Breeders' Cup Classic; 3c x 2 inches; 146 mm x 51 mm; with related story; MOVED Wednesday, Oct. 24.

CAR PEP BOYS AUTO 500: Graphic shows layout of Atlanta Motor Speedway, site of the Pep Boys Auto 500; two sizes; 2c x 2 5/8 inches; 96.3 mm x 67 mm; 1c x 4 1/8 inches; 46.5 mm x 105 mm; with auto package and related stories; MOVED Wednesday, Oct. 24.

WS 2007 MATCHUP 2: UPDATES with changes in starting pitching; graphic shows World Series matchups between the Colorado Rockies and Boston Red Sox; 6c x 11 1/2 inches; 295.2 mm x 292 mm; with related stories; MOVED Wednesday, Oct. 24.

MLS CONF SEMIS: Graphic compares MLS Eastern and Western conference semifinal matchups; 2c x 2 1/2 inches; 96.3 mm x 64 mm; with related stories; MOVED Tuesday, Oct. 23.

WS 2007 BREAKDOWNS: Graphics show stadiums and team compositions for the Colorado Rockies and Boston Red Sox; includes payrolls for all 2007 MLB postseason teams; two sizes; 2c x 2 inches; 96.3 mm x 51 mm; 2c x 2 1/4 inches; 96.3 mm x 57.2 mm; with related World Series stories; MOVED Tuesday, Oct. 23.

NEXTEL CUP TOP 12: Graphic lists Nextel Cup Top 12 drivers with stats; two sizes; 1c x 2 1/2 inches; 46.5 mm x 64 mm; 2c x 2 inches; 96.3 mm x 51 mm; with related story; MOVED Monday, Oct. 22.

Hurricane Season 2007

Editors: Hurricane graphics available for retransmission.

HURRICANE HOUSE: Graphic shows how to prepare a home for a hurricane; 3c x 6 inches; 146 mm x 152 mm; with any related story; MOVED Friday, June 1.

HURRICANE FORECAST NOAA: Graphic shows forecast for hurricanes from NOAA since 2001 versus actual hurricanes; 1c x 3 inches; 46.5 mm x 76 mm; with BC–Hurricane Forecast and related stories; MOVED Friday, June 1.

HURRICANE YEARLY STORMS: Graphic shows number of major and minor hurricanes for each year since 1900 and plots 10–year averages; 2c x 2 7/8 inches; 96.3 mm x 73 mm; with BC–Hurricane Forecast and related stories; MOVED Friday, June 1.

HURRICANE NAMES: Graphic shows storm names for the 2007 Atlantic storm season; three sizes; 1c x 5 1/4 inches; 46.5 mm x 133 mm; 1c x 4 1/4 inches; 46.5 mm x 108 mm; 1 1/2c x 2 1/2 inches; 66.5 mm x 64 mm; with BC–Hurricane Forecast and related stories; MOVED Friday, June 1.

HURRICANE SEASON: Graphic shows the number of named Atlantic storms in the past 10 years; 1c x 2 5/8 inches; 46.5 mm x 67 mm; with BC–Hurricane Forecasts and hurricane–related stories; MOVED Friday, June 1.

HURRICANE PATHS: Map shows hurricane paths since 1976; 4c x 7 3/8 inches; 195.7 mm x 187 mm; with BC–The Next New Orleans; MOVED Friday, June 1.

HURRICANE FORECAST CSU: Graphic shows hurricane forecasts from Colorado State University since 2001; 1c x 2 7/8 inches; 46.5 mm x 73 mm; with BC–Hurricane Forecast; MOVED Thursday, May 31.

COASTAL POPULATION: Map shows U.S. population living in a coastal county; 3c x 4 1/2 inches; 146 mm x 114 mm; with BC–The Next New Orleans; MOVED Wednesday, May 30.

HURRICANE LOGO: Logo to accompany coverage of the 2007 hurricane season; 1/2c x 5/8 inches; 20 mm x 16 mm; with any related stories; MOVED Friday, May 25.

HURR INSURANCE: Graphic looks at some statistics on recent hurricanes; 2c x 6 inches; 96.3 mm x 152 mm; with related hurricane stories; MOVED Thursday, May 24.

Advance and Features

COOKING DEADLINE LOGO: Logo for cooking on a deadline; 1/2c; 20 mm; with BC–Food—Deadline stories; ETA 5 p.m.

THANKSGIVING STATS: Graphic shows figures on turkeys raised, and consumed and shows production of cranberries, sweet potatoes and pumpkins; 2c; 96.3 mm; with BC–FEA Food–Easy Thanksgiving; ETA 6 p.m.

HEALTHY PLATE LOGO: Logo to move with weekly Healthy Plate stories; two sizes; 1c x 0 1/2 inches; 46.5 mm x 13 mm; 1/2c x 0 3/4 inches; 20 mm x 19 mm; with any related BC–FEA—Food–Healthy stories; MOVED Friday, Oct. 26.

COAL OVERVIEW: ADVANCE FOR OCT. 29; graphic shows world coal production, electricity generation costs by fuel, and U.S. trends of electricity generation costs; 2c x 5 inches; 96.3 mm x 127 mm; with BC–Coal–Resurgence; MOVED Wednesday, Oct. 24.

TEACHER SEX ABUSE LOGO: Logo for use with any teacher abuse related story; 1c x 0 1/2 inches; 46.5 mm x 13 mm; with any BC–Teacher Sex Abuse package or related stories; MOVED Thursday, Oct. 18.

TEACHER SEX ABUSE 2C: ADVANCE FOR OCT. 21 AND THEREAFTER; graphic shows findings of AP investigation on school teacher abuses, includes a map of abuses, statistics on victims and perpetrators; 2c

x 6 1/2 inches; 96.3 mm x 165 mm; with any BC–Teacher Sex Abuse or related stories; MOVED Thursday, Oct. 18.

TEACHER SEX ABUSE: ADVANCE FOR OCT. 21 AND THEREAFTER; graphic shows findings of AP investigation on school teacher abuses, includes a map of abuses, statistics on victims and perpetrators; 3c x 6 1/2 inches; 146 mm x 165 mm; with any BC–Teacher Sex Abuse stories; MOVED Thursday, Oct. 18.

HALLOWEEN STATS: RETRANSMITTING graphic that previously moved Oct. 1; graphic shows statistics on Halloween; two sizes; 2c x 7 3/4 inches; 96.3 mm x 197 mm; 4c x 3 1/2 inches; 195.7 mm x 89 mm; with related Halloween story; MOVED Monday, Oct. 8.

WAR WOUNDED LOGO: RETRANSMITTING graphic previously moved June 20; logo to accompany any story about the war wounded; 1c x 1 inches; 46.5 mm x 25 mm; with BC–Coming Home Wounded package or related stories; MOVED Tuesday, Oct. 2.

Weekly

SNAPSHOT: Weekly financial snapshot looks at major stock indexes; 2c x 4 3/4 inches; 96 mm x 121 mm; stand-alone; ETA 7 p.m.

FANTASY BASEBALL LOGO: Logo for placement with weekly Fantasy Baseball column; 1/2c x 1 1/4 inches; 20 mm x 32 mm; with BC–Fantasy Baseball; MOVED Friday, Oct. 26.

NIELSENS: Graphic shows the top 10 weekly television shows for the week; 1c x 5 3/4 inches; 46.5 mm x 146 mm; 2c x 2 5/8 inches; 96.3 mm x 67 mm; with BC–Nielsens; MOVED Wednesday, Oct. 24.

BOX OFFICE: Graphic shows U.S. box office sales for the past weekend; 1c x 4 3/4 inches; MOVED Monday, Oct. 22.

CYBERTRIPS LOGO: Logo for use with BC–TRV—Travel–CyberTrips; 1c; 46.5 mm; MOVED Monday, Oct. 22.

ON THE NET LOGO: Logo for placement with weekly On the Net column; multiple sizes; 1c x 1 inch; 46.5 mm x 18 mm; half-column x 1.25 inches; 17 mm x 33 mm; with BC–On the Net; MOVED Monday, Oct. 22.

IN THE PITS LOGO: Logo to accompany column on NASCAR racing; 1/2c x 1 3/8 inches; 17 mm x 35 mm; 1/2c x 2 inches; 17 mm x 51 mm; 2c x 3/4 inches; 96.5 mm x 18 mm; 3c x 3/4 inches; 146 mm x 18 mm; with weekly NASCAR column by Jenna Fryer; MOVED Monday, Oct. 22.

Blair praises all things Canadian in first post-politics visit

DATE: 2007.10.26
KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS
PUBLICATION: cpw
WORD COUNT: 507

CALGARY _ Former British prime minister Tony Blair used his first public visit to Canada since retiring from politics four months ago to heap praise on almost everything Canadian _ from its cities and soldiers to its energy reserves and wine.

Blair told a sold-out, lunchtime event in Calgary on Friday that Canada's role on the international stage is destined to grow.

"I often say to people that Canada will become one of the most powerful nations in the world," the former leader of Great Britain said to a crowd of 2,400 people who paid \$400 per plate for the privilege.

"And with it comes the responsibility."

Blair's wide-ranging speech touched on a variety of challenges facing the world, drawing on insights from his decade as prime minister and his new role as Middle East envoy for the United Nations, the European Union, the U.S. and Russia.

He said globalization is happening "at an enormous pace" and is now a fact of life. He cited a recent \$5-billion foray into the Canadian oilpatch by the Abu Dhabi National Energy Co. as proof of the inter-dependence of today's world.

Blair said countries are being forced to engage in the global agenda whether they liked it or not, and predicted that the increasing divide between open and closed societies will become more important than the left and right of the political spectrum.

But predictably, Blair saved his strongest words for the ongoing fight against global terrorism.

He said he fears that global terrorism is not abating and could take a generation to defeat because its roots are deep. And he said his one main regret was that after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, he'd not done more to prepare his country for a long-haul fight.

Blair, whose most controversial decision in his three terms as British prime minister was to get his country involved in the Iraqi war, said it was important not to give up or even show weakness in the fight against "the forces of extremism."

He praised the "marvellous" job that Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan were doing and told the crowd that the most difficult decisions a leader faces are the ones that result in the deaths of soldiers. Canada has lost 71 soldiers and one diplomat in Afghanistan to date.

He said enemies such as the Taliban were trying to kill soldiers that were trying to help Afghanistan rebuild after decades of war "because they know it hurts us."

And while acknowledging that there is widespread opposition to the Afghanistan war, he said there is no negotiating with radical Islamists.

“We should understand that if we give up in Iraq, then we’ll be under increasing pressure in Afghanistan. And if we give up in Afghanistan, then we’ll be under increasing pressure elsewhere in the region.”

Yet Blair said despite all the challenges facing the world, he remained optimistic. And he attributed the success of achieving peace in Northern Ireland to optimism and refusing to accept the divisions and hatred of the past.

“Optimism is something you get very easily when you come to Canada,” said Blair, noting there was space to expand, plenty of natural resources, strong alliances with other countries and a “can-do spirit.”

He also gushed about his first experience with Canadian wine the night before: “This is a secret you’ve just got to get out.”

Hillier denies he contradicted prime minister over length of Afghan mission

DATE: 2007.10.26

KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

PUBLICATION: cpw

WORD COUNT: 164

OTTAWA _ OTTAWA _ Canada's top general is denying he is at odds with the prime minister over Canada's mission in Afghanistan.

The opposition parties Friday called on the Conservative government to explain why Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Rick Hillier appeared to contradict Prime Minister Harper over how long it will take for NATO countries to withdraw troops from Afghanistan.

In his government's throne speech last week, the prime minister said the Afghan army and Afghan national police should be ready to take over security duties by 2011.

This week, however, Hillier told reporters he expected NATO forces would likely be in Afghanistan for at least another decade.

The difference in messages about the timing of the Afghan mission is a question of credibility in the government, Liberal deputy leader Michael Ignatieff told the Commons.

“What's at stake here is the government's competence and its credibility,” Ignatieff said.

“When will the government get this mission under control?” he asked.

“Who's in charge?”

Hillier spokeswoman Maj. Holly Apostoliuk said, however, there is no difference in what the general said and the government's official position on the Afghan mission.

“There is no contradiction,” she said.

Parcels and letters to soldiers in Afghanistan can be mailed for free

DATE: 2007.10.26
KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL
PUBLICATION: cpw
WORD COUNT: 145

EDMONTON _ Family and friends of soldiers in Afghanistan can mail them parcels and letters for free until Jan. 11, 2008, the federal government said Friday.

Families can also use the service to reach out to soldiers serving in any war zone, including Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Sinai Peninsula, Jerusalem and on Canadian ships at sea.

The service aims to give loved ones a chance to spread the holiday spirit beyond Canadian borders, said Edmonton-area member of Parliament John Williams.

“Canadian Forces members and their families are an integral part of the fabric of our community,” Williams said in a news release.

“Constituents ... welcome the opportunity to show support for the brave men and women ... serving abroad.”

To send a parcel or letter to a soldier, address it with their name, rank and mission information.

Items must be taken to Canada Post outlets in order to be shipped for free and cannot be dropped in street letter boxes without postage.

Free parcel delivery expires Jan. 11, but Canada Post will continue to mail letters to soldiers free of charge throughout 2008.

(Edmonton Sun)

Hillier denies he contradicted prime minister over length of Afghan mission

DATE: 2007.10.26
KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS
PUBLICATION: cpw
WORD COUNT: 451

OTTAWA _ OTTAWA _ Canada's top general is denying he is at odds with the prime minister over Canada's mission in Afghanistan.

“(There is) no difference of opinion whatsoever,” Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Rick Hillier said Friday immediately upon returning to Ottawa from a visit to Kandahar.

The opposition parties Friday called on the Conservative government to explain why Hillier appeared to contradict Prime Minister Stephen Harper over how long it will take for NATO countries to withdraw troops from Afghanistan.

In his government's throne speech last week, the prime minister said the Afghan army and national police should be ready to take over security duties by 2011.

This week, however, Hillier told reporters he expected NATO forces would likely be in Afghanistan for at least another decade.

The difference in messages about the timing of the Afghan mission is a question of trust in the government, Liberal deputy leader Michael Ignatieff told the Commons.

“What's at stake here is the government's competence and its credibility,” Ignatieff said.

“When will the government get this mission under control?” he asked.

“Who's in charge?”

But in an interview later in the day on CBC Newsworld, Hillier made painstakingly clear that it's the government calling the shots on Afghanistan, not the military.

“I've talked to the prime minister,” said Hillier.

“I'm absolutely clear where he wants to go and on what he needs and I'm absolutely in line with that, otherwise I wouldn't be his chief of defence staff.”

The difference between the throne speech and his own comments, said the general, comes down to his explanation to reporters of his vision of what it will take to produce a top-notch, professional army in Afghanistan.

“What I talked about for the longer term was simply the continuation of a professional military force,” Hillier explained.

“Of how do you produce senior non-commissioned military officers, how do you develop staff colleges, how do you develop senior leaders,” he said.

“It takes us 10 plus years, 15 years to develop those kinds of people, and consistently produce them through the system so you are capable of securing your country for ever and ever.

“That's the part I'm talking about and many other countries have the lead on those things. Our job, our military mission in Kandahar province that we clearly have given to us by the government of Canada . . . that part is eminently doable.”

The prime minister has pledged to hold a vote in the Commons following a debate on extending the Afghan mission. And Harper has hinted broadly to Canada's NATO allies that any such extension would depend on the outcome of that vote.

But Canada cannot complete its mission of training Afghan army and police units within the current time frame allotted by Parliament, Hillier warned.

“I'll be very clear. We're not going to be finished that train-up by February 2009,” he said.

“And if we are not going to continue in that role and shift as much weight into it and train as fast as we can, that Afghan national army, that combat brigade in the south, the police forces around it, will not be able to lead the operations by themselves in February 2009.”

Afghan president demands that US, NATO cut back on airstrikes after civilian casualties

DATE: 2007.10.26
KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL
PUBLICATION: cpw
WORD COUNT: 339

KABUL, Afghanistan _ Afghan President Hamid Karzai is calling for the U.S. and NATO to cut back on airstrikes in the battle against Taliban and al-Qaida militants, saying too many civilians have been killed.

Karzai says that six years after the U.S.-led invasion, the Afghan people ``cannot comprehend as to why there is still a need for air power."

He told the CBS news program 60 Minutes that the U.S. and coalition forces are in his country to help the Afghan people and there alternatives to the use of air forces.

At least 700 civilians have died because of insurgency-related violence this year, and about half of those deaths were caused by U.S. or NATO military action.

That's according to an Associated Press tally based on numbers from Afghan and Western officials.

The use of airpower is key to the U.S. and NATO fight against insurgents because of Afghanistan's mountainous terrain and the sheer size of the country.

U.S. and NATO officials say Taliban fighters frequently attack their soldiers from civilian homes that the insurgents have commandeered.

But such deaths incite resentment against U.S. forces and have sparked several anti-U.S. and anti-NATO demonstrations this year. Karzai has pleaded repeatedly with Western forces to do all they can to prevent such deaths, and he broke down in tears during a public speech earlier this year after recounting the deaths of Afghan children from airstrikes.

Lt. Col. David Accetta, a spokesman for the U.S. military, said he was not aware of any formal request by the Afghan government for the U.S. to curtail the use of air power.

Air power ``is part of the way that a modern military force conducts operations," he said. ``We take every precaution possible to mitigate the potential for collateral damage and non-combatant casualties."

Maj. Charles Anthony, a spokesman for NATO's International Security Assistance Force, said he was also not aware of any request to cut back the use of air assets. He said procedures were in place to ``ensure that we absolutely minimize the risk to civilians."

Violence in Afghanistan this year has been the deadliest since the U.S.-led invasion in 2001. More than 5,200 people have died because of insurgency-related violence, according to the AP count.

NATO promises just enough to keep Dutch on Afghan mission: former commander

DATE: 2007.10.26

KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

PUBLICATION: cpw

WORD COUNT: 629

AMSTERDAM _ NATO defence ministers seem to have done just enough with meagre offers of additional troops to convince the Dutch to carry on the fight in southern Afghanistan, a former military commander said Friday.

Retired Dutch Maj.-Gen Frank van Kappen's observation appeared supported by remarks from a senior member of the ruling party in the Netherlands.

Pieter van Geel, leader of the Christian Democrat party in the Dutch parliament, told reporters he expects the cabinet to extend the mission in the war-torn country past the August 2008 deadline.

A formal decision will be made by the Dutch government only after NATO holds what's called a force-generation conference early next month in Mons, Belgium.

At that meeting, NATO countries that have verbally pledged additional support for the Afghan mission are supposed to put their commitment in writing.

At this week's informal meeting of NATO defence ministers in the Netherlands, Hungary said it would deploy 150 soldiers with Dutch forces in Uruzgan province, north of Kandahar. As well, Slovakia and the Czech Republic offered a few dozen troops each.

"If you add up all of the offers, it'll meet what we require," said van Kappen, now a senior fellow at the Hague Centre for Strategic Studies and an elected senator.

The hard-fought concessions from countries reluctant to send their troops to battle the Taliban should serve as a lesson to Canada, which is about to go through its own debate about the future of its Afghan mission.

In an interview with The Canadian Press, van Kappen said the government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper shouldn't expect NATO to pay much attention to its cries for help in Afghanistan until a decision is imminent in Canada.

"As with the Dutch, they will do just enough to keep them in place," said van Kappen, who advised former UN secretary general Kofi Anan on military matters.

The fact that Canada patrols Kandahar, one of the most dangerous provinces in Afghanistan, means that Ottawa will have a harder time than the Netherlands in convincing allies to cough up what little the Dutch achieved, van Kappen said.

One of Canada's complaints has been that other NATO countries with troops in Afghanistan are refusing to send them to fight in dangerous areas.

The mandate for Canada's current military mission to Afghanistan expires in February 2009.

Although it's generally agreed to have been smart domestic politics, the Harper government's signal in the throne speech that it wants Canada to stay in Afghanistan until 2011 and its a public review of Canada's role post-2009 role may have undermined the country's bargaining position with the allies, said van Kappen.

Some NATO members are all too eager to leave the messy rebuilding of Afghanistan to someone else, he said.

“You have to play your cards close to your chest in these circumstances.”

Dick Pels, a political commentator and author at the University of Amsterdam, said he believes the Dutch government is prepared to stay despite public misgivings.

The alliance is also reviewing troop offers from non-NATO members such as Georgia, Albania and Croatia. France has also offered to send at least 50 military trainers to Uruzgan province to help get the Afghan army up and running.

The promises came only after intense bilateral discussions.

The Dutch made a strong plea to the other countries behind closed doors at this week's meeting. Canada has just lately embarked on its own direct efforts to woo wary allies to provide more trainers and helicopters.

The notion that the two countries have, in effect, been forced to beg other European members for support was unseemly to political observers in the Netherlands.

“Solidarity within NATO should mean something,” said Pels.

“Solidarity means coming forward and standing shoulder to shoulder, rather than leave the Dutch and the Canadians stumbling around crying out for help.”

The Netherlands has nearly 1,800 troops in Afghanistan, backed up by fighter bombers, attack helicopters and artillery. It wants to draw down some of those forces for rest and equipment refurbishing.

The withdrawal of the Dutch AH-64 Apache attack helicopters would deprive Canadian troops of vital cover.

“We have flown more Apache missions for your forces than our own,” said van Kappen.

He said one of the arguments he hears is that Dutch must stay in Afghanistan, because they owe a debt of gratitude to the Canadians and British who liberated Holland from Nazi occupation in the Second World War.

INDEX:Defence, International, Politics

DATE: 2007.10.26
KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS
PUBLICATION: bnw
WORD COUNT: 141

OTTAWA – OTTAWA – Canada's top general is denying he is at odds with the prime minister over Canada's mission in Afghanistan.

The opposition parties say they want to know why Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Rick Hillier is contradicting Prime Minister Harper over how long it will take before NATO can withdraw its troops from the war-torn country.

Harper said last week in his government's throne speech the Afghan army and Afghan national police should be ready to take over security by 2011.

This week, however, Hillier told reporters he expected NATO forces would likely be in Afghanistan for at least another decade.

In the Commons today, Liberal deputy leader Michael Ignatieff demanded to know who is right – Hillier or the prime minister – asking 'who's in charge?'

But a spokeswoman for Hillier says there is no contradiction between what the general has said and the government's official position on the Afghan mission.

(The Canadian Press)

Guantanamo–Prosecutor

DATE: 2007.10.26

KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE POLITICS

PUBLICATION: bnw

WORD COUNT: 112

WASHINGTON — The former chief prosecutor of Guantanamo Bay detainees says Canadian Omar Khadr's trial should be an open one.

Colonel Moe Davis, who quit last October, says lawyers spent two years getting secret information on the Canadian declassified.

But he says there's far less certainty about other Guantanamo Bay detainees.

He fears a major push for speed over transparency from the Bush administration will ensure their trials are not public.

Davis says that's one reason he resigned after just over two years on the job.

He says the Bush White House was more concerned about pushing for convictions on high–profile detainees before the 2008 elections.

Khadr, now 21, is scheduled for another hearing November 8th to determine whether he's actually an “unlawful” enemy combatant who was illegally fighting Americans in Afghanistan in 2002.

That designation has been required by Congress since the new Military Commissions Act came into force last year.

(The Canadian Press)

RPW

INDEX:Defence, International, Politics

DATE: 2007.10.26
KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS
PUBLICATION: bnw
WORD COUNT: 109

AMSTERDAM – A former Dutch military commander says NATO allies seem to be doing just enough to convince the Netherlands to continue its mission in Afghanistan.

Frank van Kappen, a retired major-general, is commenting on word from this week's NATO meeting that allied countries are promising to contribute more to the mission.

'If you add up all of the offers, it'll meet what we require,' says van Kappen, who advised former UN secretary general Kofi Anan on military matters.

Meanwhile, a senior politician in Amsterdam says he expects the cabinet to extend the Dutch mission in the war-torn country.

The prediction comes from Pieter van Geel, leader of the senior government Christian Democrat party in parliament.

The Netherland faces an August 2008 deadline for its mission unless there is an extension.

(The Canadian Press)

Afghanistan–Debate

DATE: 2007.10.26

KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS SOCIAL

PUBLICATION: bnw

WORD COUNT: 135

OTTAWA — The Conservative government is being accused of painting a misleadingly rosy picture of the situation in Afghanistan, one that contradicts the view of its own military experts.

The Tories say Afghanistan should be stable enough to handle its own security by 2011, though it's up to Parliament to decide if the Canadian mission will be extended beyond 2009.

Opposition parties pounce on far less cheerful assessments of the situation from two leading authorities — Canada's top military man and the head of NATO.

Chief of Defence General Rick Hillier says it will probably take 10 years or so for the Afghan army to meet its security demands.

NATO's secretary-general suggests it could take far longer than that.

The opposition accuses Prime Minister Harper of ignoring his own military experts and allies because the truth makes him politically uncomfortable.

Liberal defence critic Denis Coderre says Hillier is the expert and he knows better.

(The Canadian Press)

RPW

INDEX:Defence, International

DATE: 2007.10.26
KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL
PUBLICATION: bnw
WORD COUNT: 142

KABUL, Afghanistan – Afghan President Hamid Karzai is calling for the U.S. and NATO to cut back on airstrikes in the battle against Taliban and al-Qaida militants, saying too many civilians have been killed.

Karzai says that six years after the U.S.-led invasion, the Afghan people 'cannot comprehend as to why there is still a need for air power.'

He told the CBS news program 60 Minutes that the U.S. and coalition forces are in his country to help the Afghan people and there alternatives to the use of air forces.

At least 700 civilians have died because of insurgency-related violence this year, and about half of those deaths were caused by U.S. or NATO military action.

That's according to an Associated Press tally based on numbers from Afghan and Western officials.

The use of airpower is key to the U.S. and NATO fight against insurgents because of Afghanistan's mountainous terrain and the sheer size of the country.

(The Associated Press)

TOR OUT YYY

DATE: 2007.10.26
KEYWORDS: ADVISORIES
PUBLICATION: bnw
WORD COUNT: 285

Canada's oil and gas industry is giving thumbs down to Alberta's plan to boost the royalties they pay.

Premier Ed Stelmach plans to raise the amount by about 1.4 (b) billion dollars a year over the next two years.

Stelmach says Alberta cannot carve up the existing revenue pie, so it needs a bigger one.

Gary Leach, executive director of the Small Explorers and Producers Association of Canada, predicts the royalty changes will discourage new investment. (2)

(Alta–Royalty Oilpatch–Stocks)

There are fears Alberta's plans to increase royalty payments will send oil and gas stocks down sharply when the markets open this morning.

However, Peter Linder, managing director of Delta One Capital Partners in Calgary, says any dip suffered by energy stocks won't last long.

Linder says ``there should be a relief rally after the first hour" of trading. (2)

(Afghanistan–Debate) (Audio: 3)

The Harper government is accused of painting a misleadingly rosy picture of the situation in Afghanistan.

The Tories say that warn–torn nation should be stable enough to handle its own security within four years.

However, opposition M–Ps say that's nonsense, given that General Rick Hillier — the chief of defence staff — predicts it will likely be 10 years before the Afghan army can meet its security demands. (2)

(Japan Fingerprinting Foreigners)

Japan hopes to thwart potential terrorists by photographing and fingerprinting all foreigners entering that country.

The move takes effect November 20th.

Exempt are children under 16, diplomats, and some permanent residents. (2)

(BC–Gang–Violence)

The B–C government is rejecting suggestions that the greater Vancouver area have a regional police agency as a way to fight gang violence.

Criminologists say gangs have an advantage in the area because policing is divided among several forces.

However, B-C Public Safety Minister John Les says he's satisfied the different police forces in the region are working together. (2)

(China Pollution)

Thick, dusty fog is blanketing Beijing, cutting visibility to almost zero.

In an effort to put a positive spin on the situation, the city's environment bureau says the air quality is only ``slightly polluted."

It underlines a warning from Olympic officials that some events at next year's Summer Games may have to be rescheduled due to Beijing's notoriously filthy air. (2)

(NewsWatch by Bill Marshall)

INDEX:Defence, International, Justice

DATE: 2007.10.26
KEYWORDS: DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE
PUBLICATION: bnw
WORD COUNT: 133

PESHAWAR, Pakistan _ Helicopter-backed security forces have opened fire today on the stronghold of a militant cleric in northwestern Pakistan.

The assault sparked a fierce gunbattle near the scene of a suicide attack that killed 20 people yesterday.

There is no immediate word on casualties.

Earlier this week, some 25-hundred paramilitary troops were deployed in the surrounding district to combat pro-Taliban cleric Maulana Fazlullah's militant supporters.

The campaign underlines the worsening security situation in Pakistan, particularly the region near the border with Afghanistan.

Yesterday's blast came a week after the bloody assassination attempt on ex-Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, who plans to start travelling elsewhere in Pakistan tomorrow despite fears of a new attack.

Her grand homecoming after an eight-year exile was shattered by a suicide bombing that killed 143 people.

Bhutto has blamed Islamic militants for last week's attack in Karachi, but also accused elements in the government and security services of complicity.

(The Associated Press)

sw-clt

Canada's Afghan war operations go Star Trek; Digitized systems stream instant data

IDNUMBER 200710270190

PUBLICATION: Vancouver Sun

DATE: 2007.10.27

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: I11

ILLUSTRATION: Photo: Maj. Pascal Larose helps oversee the revolutionary new Canadian battlefield computer system just installed by Canadian Forces in Afghanistan. ;

KEYWORDS: !@DATELINE=KANDAHAR, Afghanistan

BYLINE: Matthew Fisher

SOURCE: CanWest News Service

WORD COUNT: 614

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — Canada's military has leaped into the 21st century, trading radios and maps with pins stuck in them for ultra-high-tech war rooms where commanders have access to constant data streams, real-time digitized maps and live video feeds from drones, satellites, and web cameras that travel with combat vehicles hunting the Taliban.

"We may still be in the mud and the buildings we use may be made of plywood, but what we have now is comparable to a combat battle centre on a frigate — or the bridge of the Starship Enterprise," said Lt.-Gen. Andrew Leslie, the army's top general.

"This is a huge step forward. In distance, it is light years. In time, we have moved decades with one step. In terms of information, we are right up there with the Americans and British."

To nearly universal rave reviews, several state-of-the-art operations rooms have been set up by the Quebec-based Royal 22nd Regiment battle group in southern Afghanistan.

RED LIGHT MEANS ENEMY CONTACT

The biggest is a digitized battle suite at the Kandahar airfield, where soldiers have been working around the clock in shifts. Their eyes are fixed on dozens of small computer screens in a cool, hushed room. The room is dominated by several huge computer screens hung on the walls and a red light on the ceiling that turns on whenever contact with the enemy is expected or has begun, or when there are Canadian wounded or dead.

"If that red light is on, it means 'Go to your battle stations; there is serious business to be done,' " said Maj. Pascal Larose, an armoured officer who gave the first extensive tour for a journalist of the top-secret Provincial Operations Centre. "And that light is on almost every day."

Larose's job is to keep the electronic marvels running, along with Capt. Fred Letourneau, a computer engineer.

"It is a big, big change in how we do things. What we have now is better situational awareness for everybody so everybody can make better decisions."

LIVE VIDEO OF BATTLES

The Athena Tactical System, which was made entirely in Canada, runs up to 100 times faster than the best Internet connection that Canadians have in their homes, Letourneau said. It combines telephone communication, e-mail and chat rooms for an unlimited number of people online at the same time, as well as video, data and a website loaded with background information. It cannot be hacked into; it is an entirely enclosed system.

A key feature of the new system is a "blue force tracker," which marks the position of every Canadian vehicle. The vehicles, in turn, are fitted with transponders that communicate constantly over global positioning satellites. As friendly fire incidents are known in the military as "blue-on-blue" attacks, that is also the colour used to signify friendly forces.

Other colours and symbols are used to designate the location of enemy forces, improvised explosive devices, unexploded ordnance and other threats. All this information can be placed on digitized maps or laid over satellite images. It can also be made instantly available to commanders in their vehicles in the field.

The live video capability is particularly dazzling when it carries images from sophisticated airborne cameras, which can reveal in amazing detail how battles with the Taliban are unfolding. There is also a video-conferencing capability lacking in similar new American and British systems. With this capability, commanders in the field do not need to make hazardous road journeys to discuss operations with their superiors.

"Before we had to call everyone by radio to know where everyone was," said Lt.-Col. Alain Gauthier, who commands the Van Doo battle group. "This could take an hour and by then everybody had moved, so the picture I got was obsolete. This gives me an instant visual that is much more effective and precise."

Things we learned this week

IDNUMBER 200710270065
PUBLICATION: Vancouver Sun
DATE: 2007.10.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Weekend Review
PAGE: C2
KEYWORDS: 0
SOURCE: Sun News Services and Online Sources
WORD COUNT: 383

– The U.S.–led war in Iraq is costing American taxpayers \$8,000 per second.

But how much is Canada's involvement in the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan costing Canadian taxpayers?

Thanks to the remarkably thorough and wholly reliable resources of the CBC, and his own math skills, the Edmonton Journal's Terry McConnell has come up with a number. He has determined that Afghanistan is costing Canadian taxpayers \$16.78 per second.

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

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

– Three flamingos have been decapitated in their pen at Frankfurt Zoo, police said on Tuesday. A fourth flamingo was strangled to death.

"We cannot explain why someone would want to murder flamingos," zoo spokeswoman Caroline Liefke said. "It's a complete mystery."

The killers sneaked into the zoo after hours and authorities are investigating how they broke in to the birds' enclosure, a spokesman for Frankfurt police said.

– Philadelphia is home to the least attractive people in the United States, a survey of visitors and residents showed.

The city of more than 1.5 million people was also found to be among the least stylish, least active, least friendly and least worldly, according to the "America's Favorite Cities" survey by Travel & Leisure magazine and CNN Headline News.

For unattractiveness, Philadelphia just beat out Washington, D.C. and Dallas/Fort Worth for the bottom spot. Miami and San Diego are home to the most attractive people, the poll found.

But Farley pointed out the results don't mean people in Philadelphia are ugly or the city is a bad place to visit.

– Not enough time to fry your own schnitzel? A German firm has come up with a frozen version that can be cooked in a pop-up toaster in just three minutes.

"We came up with them because increasingly people want something that's convenient," said Dietrich Gumpfenberg, spokesman for meat-producer Toennies. "Who has time to go to the trouble of frying something themselves?"

– An Australian barmaid has been fined for crushing beer cans between her bare breasts while an off-duty colleague has been fined for hanging spoons from her friend's nipples.

Police in Western Australia said the 31-year old barmaid pleaded guilty in the local magistrate's court to twice exposing her breasts to patrons at the Premier Hotel in Pinjarra, south of the state capital, Perth.

The woman "is alleged to have also crushed beer cans between her breasts during one of the offences," in breach of hotel licensing laws, police from the Peel district of Western Australia said in a statement.

The barmaid and the hotel manager were both fined A\$1,000 (\$900), while an off-duty barmaid was fined A\$500 for helping to hang spoons from the woman's nipples.

Recipe for disaster in Afghanistan

IDNUMBER 200710270224
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DATE: 2007.10.27
EDITION: Ont
SECTION: News
PAGE: A23
BYLINE: James Travers
SOURCE: Toronto Star
COPYRIGHT: © 2007 Torstar Corporation
WORD COUNT: 585

Let's stop fooling around and end the suspense now: Canada has no intention of leaving Afghanistan any time soon. Staying is the prohibitive preference of a Prime Minister firmly in command here and it will be a seismic shock if his handpicked panel, headed by once and perhaps future Liberal leadership contender John Manley, recommends anything else.

But it's entirely another matter if Canadian troops will be fighting there after 2009 or NATO will be training the Afghanistan army in 2016 as Gen. Rick Hillier gloomily predicts. As this country should now know from deadly experience, the mission's fate and longevity is ultimately controlled by others.

Pakistan is the best example of what's worst in the relationship. President Pervez Musharraf's inability or unwillingness to stop the Taliban and its Al Qaeda parasites from oozing across a porous frontier costs Canadian lives.

That's not the behaviour expected from an ally. But it's one of many variables Ottawa either discounted, ignored or didn't understand as a first, deceptively safe post-9/11 stabilization operation in Kabul morphed from reconstruction to war in Kandahar.

As Janice Gross Stein, the University of Toronto's justifiably revered international affairs analyst, and smart former defence insider Eugene Lang chillingly expose in their hot-selling new book, *The Unexpected War*, official Ottawa knew nothing and cared little about Afghanistan. Canada's focus was a traumatized U.S. where the trumping of security over trade threatened the free flow of prosperity across a suddenly infamously open border.

What Washington wanted from Canada was political cover for the looming Iraq invasion and a new commitment to Afghanistan that would help free U.S. troops for the toppling of Saddam Hussein. Liberals balked at the first appeal, but in bowing to the second set in motion events that now make this country as vulnerable to its friends' decisions as its enemies' assaults.

That dynamic resurfaced in the Netherlands this week where Defence Minister Peter MacKay again begged NATO members to share more of the combat burden. The small change rattling in his tin cup today is hopeful but won't buy Canada out of the box the Bush administration built when it lost interest in Afghanistan to pursue its fatal Iraq obsession.

Since then there have never been enough boots on the Afghanistan ground or dollars in the development pipeline to stabilize a country that's a loose affiliation of clans, warlords and opium traffickers or reconstruct

one devastated by decades of civil war. So even if many Canadians don't yet grasp how we unwittingly drifted into a war or why the government is determined to keep fighting it, there should be no surprise that the mission is so problematic. With scattered strategies and varying degrees of enthusiasm, coalition partners are trying to do at minimum cost a job that demands maximum effort.

That would be dangerous anywhere; it's a recipe for disaster in a fragmented neighbourhood where the jagged pieces constantly shift. Nuclear power Pakistan hangs by a thread; India, Russia as well as a slew of smaller regional states advance conflicting interests. Then, and most ominously, there is the fear that Afghanistan will become impossibly hostile to foreigners if the current U.S. economic push at Iran becomes a military shove.

Those unknowns radically rephrase Canada's question. It's not how long Ottawa plans to keep troops in Afghanistan; it's how long NATO is willing or able to stay.

James Travers' national affairs column appears Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

Defence chief gets a pay hike but will he get to stay in job?; Media fuel speculation about Hillier's future

IDNUMBER 200710270217
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EDITION: Ont
SECTION: News
PAGE: A26
BYLINE: Allan Woods
SOURCE: Toronto Star
COPYRIGHT: © 2007 Torstar Corporation
WORD COUNT: 244

Gen. Rick Hillier received a pay increase just ahead of this week's clash with the Prime Minister's Office over the length of time Canadian troops should remain fighting in Afghanistan.

A government order published last week boosted the chief of defence staff's salary to between \$199,700 and \$234,900. When named head of the Canadian Forces in 2005, Hillier's pay scale was set at between \$185,000 and \$217,000.

The raise was approved Oct. 16, the same day the government's throne speech proposed a two-year extension of Canada's Afghan mission to 2011 to help train that country's military. This week, Hillier appeared to run afoul of the government when he said that completing training for the Afghan army would take "10 years or so."

Yesterday, Hillier clarified for CBC-TV that he was referring only to training the most senior Afghan military and that there was "no difference of opinion whatsoever" between the government's 2011 deadline and his.

Hillier's future as Canada's top soldier has been in question since reports surfaced claiming the government was preparing to end his appointment after two years.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper did reiterate his confidence in Hillier but a rebuke by a PMO official, saying Parliament would decide the mission's future – raised new questions about the chief's job security.

"Clearly, there's a real division between ... Gen. Hillier and ... this government. They don't like someone deviating from the script, so it's going to be very interesting to see how this unfolds," said NDP defence critic Dawn Black.

France carrying its weight in Afghanistan

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SECTION: Letter
PAGE: AA07
COPYRIGHT: © 2007 Torstar Corporation
WORD COUNT: 152

NATO's cringe reflex

Editorial, Oct. 26

Your editorial claiming that NATO partners are "loath" to deploy aircraft in combat to help the Canadians and that the French are willing to deploy instructors "to relatively quiet zones" ignores the important contributions that France has made in this country.

France has responded to the need for aerial support in Afghanistan by delivering six Mirages to Kandahar, providing support to troops on the ground.

President Nicolas Sarkozy decided to embed 160 more instructors in Afghan battalions in order to train them. These instructors have been sent along with the Afghan army for operations throughout the country. Furthermore, following the Noordwijk NATO Summit, it has been decided that an additional team of instructors will join the Dutch in the Uruzgan Province. There are no caveats for the French troops, nor are there any deadlines imposed by our parliament.

France has been involved in Afghanistan since day one and 13 French soldiers have been killed.

Daniel Jouanneau, Ambassador of France to Canada, Ottawa

Seminars teach journalists how to behave as hostages; When you're taken into captivity, the goal is to maximize control, psychologist advises

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SECTION: World And Comment
PAGE: AA01
BYLINE: Oakland Ross
SOURCE: Toronto Star
COPYRIGHT: © 2007 Torstar Corporation
WORD COUNT: 707

Journal: JerusalemRocky Abramson's personal bottom line on being taken hostage closely parallels the commonsense attitude that prevails in most sentient parts of the globe.

"Really, you want to avoid it."

That being so, during the course of his four-hour seminar on the hostage experience, the Canadian-born organizational psychologist also examines ways of avoiding the situation entirely.

That would be Plan A.

The bulk of the program, however, is taken up with Plan B – what to do if Plan A fails – and reflects Abramson's opinion that time spent in captivity can, with the right preparation, be rendered less soul-crushing than might otherwise be the case.

It's largely a question of control.

"It won't be a pleasant experience," says Abramson, formerly of Vancouver, who moved to Israel in 1977 and has served with the Israel Defence Forces as a staff psychologist, among other roles. "You're not going to recommend it to your friends. But it doesn't have to be traumatic."

Hostage-taking has lately become a more compelling subject than perhaps it used to be, at least for some people in the Middle East and certain parts of Asia, where foreigners and locals alike are not infrequently targeted for capture by armed groups that want something, whether money or prisoner-exchanges or enhanced international stature, in return for eventually freeing their captives.

Recent hostage-taking incidents in Afghanistan and the Gaza Strip have attracted global attention. Last summer, two TV journalists with Fox News were held hostage for two weeks in Gaza. More recently, BBC correspondent Alan Johnston spent four months in Gazan captivity before finally being set free this past July.

As a result, Abramson has recently begun offering one-day seminars for journalists in the region, to help them prepare for a prospect that most intelligent people would prefer not to think about.

Seminars teach journalists how to behave as hostages; When you're taken into captivity, the goal is to maximize control, psychologist advises

"We're going to talk a lot about control today," declares the slim, soft-spoken psychologist at the beginning of his presentation, delivered at an airy, modern hotel in the hilly northwestern outskirts of Jerusalem. "You always have the option of controlling things to a certain extent."

If the worst happens and you are taken against your will, your overriding goal, apart from escaping at the first good opportunity, must be to maintain as much control over your circumstances as you possibly can.

"You'd be surprised how much of your environment you can control," says Abramson. "Every time you are told to do something, you do something a little different. They say, 'Don't move,' you move your toe."

Or, if your captors attempt to bind your wrists behind your back, you immediately place your hands out in front, so they are more likely to be tied there.

During four hours of skits, card tricks, monologue and discussion, Abramson offers a wealth of tips for coping with captivity. For example:

If you must venture into dangerous situations where kidnapping is a possibility, do so in a group, rather than on your own, because there really is strength in numbers.

If faced with capture, try to resist passively, a tactic that will at least buy extra time and may confuse your captors.

During interrogation, insert a lengthy pause before answering any question, even the most straightforward – a tactic aimed at preventing your interrogators from determining which subjects you are most reluctant to address.

Do not initiate casual conversation with your captors.

If your captors try to chat with you, do not reciprocate until you obtain some benefit, no matter how small – a loosening of your bonds, some food or drink, anything that increases your sense of control.

When speaking in your native language, try to enhance your control of the conversation by using lots of slang or rarefied constructions in order to make it difficult for your captors to understand you (assuming they do not speak your language well).

You are more likely to be hit or physically abused if you slouch, so try to maintain an erect posture with your head held high.

Make it clear to your captors that you are willing to co-operate with them but only if they do not hurt you.

Do your best, surreptitiously, if possible, to disconnect the wires from any explosive device placed near or on you; don't worry about which wires to pull out, because it is only in the movies that bombs are designed to detonate if the hero cuts the wrong strand (real bombs don't work that way).

Think – constantly – about a means of escape.

This list of dos and don'ts could go on almost indefinitely, because Abramson packs a lot of diverse material into four short hours.

But he returns again and again to his underlying theme – the importance of maintaining a sense of control by any means possible, no matter how seemingly picayune.

Seminars teach journalists how to behave as hostages; When you're taken into captivity, the goal is to maxi

The session ends on what, in this context, must qualify as a happy note.

"Generally," says Abramson, "they don't want to kill you."

There's something to be said for that.

Hillier denies rift with PM over mission

IDNUMBER 200710270016
PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Citizen
DATE: 2007.10.27
EDITION: Early
SECTION: News
PAGE: A8
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 125

Canada's top soldier is denying recent suggestions that he's at war with Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government because of its optimistic assessment of progress by Canadian troops in their mission in Afghanistan. Despite stirring up controversy for suggesting that it would take up to a decade to adequately train Afghan troops to provide security and stability in the region to support Afghanistan's new government, Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Rick Hillier insisted yesterday there was "no difference of opinion whatsoever" between his views and the position of the Harper government, which has suggested that Canadian soldiers could finish their mission in four years.

Stay in Afghanistan, Blair tells Canada

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PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Citizen
DATE: 2007.10.27
EDITION: Early
SECTION: News
PAGE: A8
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 107

Former British prime minister Tony Blair urged Canada to "stay the course" in Afghanistan as he addressed a crowd of more than 1,500 in Calgary yesterday. "The worst thing you can ever do is back away in the face of opposition just because the thing is too tough to do even, though you know it is the right thing to do. If we're going to fight this terrorism effectively, we have to show that we are as determined as they are, believe in what we're doing as much as they do."

How our troops were sent to war; The authors write that the successive, incremental decisions that drew Canada deeper into combat in afghanistan owed more to concerns about Canada–U.S. relations than to any comprehensive analysis of the situation on the ground

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DATE: 2007.10.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Weekend: Books
PAGE: I6
ILLUSTRATION: Colour Photo: COURTESY OF JANICE GROSS STEIN, VIA PENGUIN /Janice Gross Stein is the director of the Munk Centre for International Studies at the University of Toronto. ; Colour Photo: CHRISTOPHER LAWSON PENGUIN / Eugene Lang served as chief of staff to two national–defence ministers. ; Colour Photo: FINBARR O'REILLY, REUTERS / Canadian soldiers return to base after a patrol in Kandahar province last Saturday. ;
KEYWORDS: 0
BYLINE: LEVON SEVUNTS
SOURCE: Freelance
WORD COUNT: 702

In June 2005, after a dizzying flight on a U.S. military transport plane from southeastern Afghanistan and a terrifying taxi ride through

Kabul's chaotic traffic, I arrived at Camp Julien, the Canadian base in the southern part of the city.

It seemed like an oasis of calm.

Two other things distinguished the camp from the American bases along the border with Pakistan I had visited during the weeks prior. Canadian soldiers had access to beer. And, unlike their American counterparts who were serving in the volatile south and east, they didn't have to carry a loaded rifle everywhere they went, even to the loo.

But that was about to change. Canadians were preparing to leave the relative safety of Kabul to go into the hornet's nest of Taliban insurgency in Kandahar.

Having just travelled through that area, I knew that the Canadians were in for a very tough fight. Kandahar, not Kabul, was the key to Afghanistan. Whoever controlled Kandahar would eventually control Afghanistan. The Taliban knew this, too, and weren't about to give up their heartland.

Militarily, the Canadian deployment made perfect sense: Canadian Forces had done a brilliant job helping their NATO allies to secure Kabul. They were now itching for a bigger challenge.

How our troops were sent to war; The authors write that the successive, incremental decisions that drew Ca75

"Kandahar is one place where there is potential to improve the situation and where we do have the right skills and capabilities, in fact exactly the right skills and capabilities. It's a good fit," Canada's then-ambassador to Afghanistan, Chris Alexander, told me.

But I also wanted to know how and why the Canadian government came to that fateful decision, which is costing Canada so dearly in human lives (72 at this writing) and resources (billions of dollars in military expenditures alone, plus more in aid).

Only now do I have my answer. *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar*, by Janice Gross Stein and Eugene Lang reveals, in detail, the behind-the-scenes story of Canada's slide to war.

It's a riveting insider's account that will challenge any preconceived notions about the war, and might well leave you flabbergasted and hopping mad, regardless of where on the political spectrum your sympathies lie.

"Canada slipped into war in Afghanistan, step by step, incrementally, without fully understanding that it was going to war, until it woke up to mounting casualties and grim battles," Stein and Lang write.

Stein, one of Canada's best-known international security experts, and Lang, a former chief of staff to two national defence ministers, deliver a tour de force as they expose the nuts and bolts of Canadian foreign-policy making.

It isn't a pretty picture. If you believe Stein and Lang's assessment, after years of budget cuts, Canada's Foreign Affairs department has turned into "a glorified travel agency" unable to come up with bold policies and obsessed with managing the relationship with the United States.

Stein and Lang write that the successive, incremental decisions that drew Canada deeper into a combat role in Afghanistan owed more to the fact that Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin thought they needed to placate the Americans after refusing to join the war in Iraq and the ballistic-missile defence program than with any comprehensive analysis of the situation on the ground.

Still, that Canada slid, rather than dove, into this war does not make the war itself either unjust or wrong, the authors argue.

But they acknowledge that Canada is facing huge challenges in Afghanistan. One of the biggest challenges is implementing the much vaunted Three Ds: defence, diplomacy and development. It's a delicate balancing act marrying diplomacy and the military's tactical need to win hearts and minds with the long-term goals of the Canadian International Development Agency.

Stein and Lang also ask some tough and thought-provoking questions about how effective Western intervention in Afghanistan can be. Corruption and a lack of good governance there can still sabotage Canada's best efforts. And that's even without a major upheaval in neighbouring Pakistan; should that occur, the entire region would plunge into an abyss, and probably not extricate itself for decades.

The Unexpected War's publication is impeccably timed. The book is sure to provoke a lot of controversy.

One hopes it will also raise the so far uninspiring level of debate in this country about what our role should be, not only in Afghanistan, but in other failing and failed states as well.

Janice Gross Stein and Eugene Lang speak at Books & Breakfast, 10 a.m. tomorrow, at the Omni Hotel, 1050 Sherbrooke St. W. Tickets cost \$27 plus tax. Call 514-845-5811.

Levon Sevunts is a Montreal writer.

How our troops were sent to war; The authors write that the successive, incremental decisions that drew Ca

Hillier: PM and I are singing the same song; Top soldier denies he's at odds with Harper over our troops' progress in Afghanistan

IDNUMBER	200710270030
PUBLICATION:	Montreal Gazette
DATE:	2007.10.27
EDITION:	Final
SECTION:	News
PAGE:	A12
KEYWORDS:	PRIME MINISTERS; POLITICIANS; POLITICAL PARTIES; GOVERNMENT; CANADA
DATELINE:	OTTAWA
BYLINE:	MIKE DE SOUZA
SOURCE:	CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT:	481

Canada's top soldier is denying recent suggestions he's at war with Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government because of its optimistic assessment of progress by Canadian troops in their Afghan mission.

Despite stirring up controversy for suggesting it would take up to a decade to adequately train Afghan troops to provide security and stability in the region to support Afghanistan's new government, Chief of Defence Staff General Rick Hillier insisted yesterday there was "no difference of opinion whatsoever" between his views and the position of the Harper government, which has suggested Canadian soldiers could finish their mission in four years.

"I get my direction from the government of Canada," Hillier told CBC Newsworld's Politics yesterday after returning from a visit to Afghanistan this week.

"I talk to the prime minister. I'm absolutely clear on where he wants to go and on what he needs and I'm absolutely in line with that, otherwise I wouldn't be his chief of defence staff."

Hillier said Canadian troops are making progress in training Afghans to take over the lead in combat missions and rebuild the southern part of the country, but he reiterated it could take 10 to 15 years to train senior military leaders who would bring stability to the region.

"I think most Canadians, living in the incredible country that we have, don't always see all the complexities of trying to rebuild a country," he said, noting Afghanistan endured "25 years of destruction."

"But I think they're increasingly aware that you just don't do that overnight."

In the Commons, Conservative House leader Peter Van Loan insisted Canadian Forces could finish training the new Afghan military troops by 2011.

"Building up the capacity of the Afghan people is obviously going to take time," Van Loan said in the Commons. "We want them to be able to defend their sovereignty. We know that will not happen overnight, but our government does believe it can happen by 2011."

Hillier: PM and I are singing the same song; Top soldier denies he's at odds with Harper over our troops' progress

In the Throne Speech last week, the government indicated it did plan to end Canada's military involvement in Afghanistan in February 2009, despite the clamouring by the three opposition parties to bring the troops home by then, if not sooner.

"Our government does not believe that Canada should simply abandon the people of Afghanistan after February 2009," the speech said.

Although Canada should shift its emphasis to training the Afghan army and police to defend their own people, the speech added: "This will not be completed by February 2009, but our government believes this objective should be achievable by 2011, the end of the period covered by the Afghanistan Compact."

The latest suggestions from the government about finishing its mission by 2011 contrast with Harper's previous statements that Canadians wouldn't "cut and run" from Afghanistan before "finishing the job" of stabilizing the country and preventing a return of the Taliban regime and terrorists.

The Liberals said the apparent contradictions between the government and Hillier are another sign that Harper is still "bungling the mission," even after replacing former defence minister Gordon O'Connor last summer.

2 NATO soldiers slain Air strikes claim 18 militants in Afghanistan's south

SOURCETAG 0710270499
PUBLICATION: The Toronto Sun
DATE: 2007.10.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: 28
BYLINE: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
DATELINE: KABUL
WORD COUNT: 222

Insurgents ambushed NATO-led forces in eastern Afghanistan, killing two alliance troopers and wounding three others, while a coalition airstrike in the south killed 18 suspected militants, officials said yesterday.

The eastern clash occurred in the mountainous Korangal Valley in Kunar province late Thursday, after insurgents using rocket-propelled grenades and other weapons ambushed a joint NATO-Afghan foot patrol, a NATO statement said.

"The combined force repelled the insurgent attack with direct and indirect fire and close-air support," the statement said.

ASSAULT RIFLES

Several AK-47 assault rifles, used by insurgents, and the remains of at least one militant were recovered from the area of the battle, it said.

"The rough terrain in this mountainous region of Afghanistan and the time of day the engagement occurred made it difficult to confirm additional insurgent casualties," the statement said.

The wounded troops were transported to a military medical facility and were in stable condition.

NATO did not identify the nationalities of the dead and wounded soldiers. Most of the troops in that part of the country are American.

AIRSTRIKE ON TALIBAN

In the south, an airstrike on a group of Taliban fighters yesterday left 18 militants dead in the mountainous area of Daychopan district, in Zabul province, said Fazel Bari, Daychopan's district chief.

The strike follows a U.S.-led coalition and Afghan attack on a gathering of another group of Taliban militants on Wednesday in the same district that killed 10 insurgents.

Authorities recovered the dead bodies of 18 militants killed in yesterday's strike, which also included foreigners, Bari said. U.S.-led coalition and NATO-led troops could not immediately confirm that any airstrikes had taken place in that area. KEYWORDS=WORLD

2 NATO soldiers slain Air strikes claim 18 militants in Afghanistan's south

SOURCETAG 0710270194

PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Sun

DATE: 2007.10.27

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 8

BYLINE: AP

DATELINE: KABUL

WORD COUNT: 222

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On the Hill Sunflashes Column

SOURCETAG 0710270188
PUBLICATION: The Ottawa Sun
DATE: 2007.10.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: 7
COLUMN: On the Hill Sunflashes
WORD COUNT: 161

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In his government's throne speech last week, the PM said the Afghan army and national police should be ready to take over security duties by 2011.

This week, however, Hillier told reporters he expected NATO forces would likely be in Afghanistan for at least another decade.

Hillier spokeswoman Maj. Holly Apostoliuk said, however, there is no difference in what the general said and the government's official position.

ATOMIC DILEMMA

MONTREAL — Canada's nuclear industry should take a more active role in dealing with the issues related to storing atomic waste, says a U.S. environmentalist.

In recent years, the industry has promoted nuclear energy as an important source of carbon-free energy and an easy way to lower greenhouse gas emissions.

But Canada has yet to develop long-term management plans for the waste, said Thomas Cochran, nuclear program director for the American Natural Resources Defense Council. KEYWORDS=NATIONAL

Blair gives Canada pat on back

SOURCETAG 0710270368
PUBLICATION: The London Free Press
DATE: 2007.10.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A14
DATELINE: CALGARY
COLUMN: News Digest
WORD COUNT: 163

Former British prime minister Tony Blair predicts Canada will become one of the most powerful nations in the world, but said that with such power comes responsibility. Blair was in Calgary yesterday making his first public speech in Canada since resigning at the end of June. He spoke to a sold-out crowd of 2,400 who paid \$400 per plate to hear the former leader's insights from his decade as prime minister and his new role as Middle East envoy for the United Nations and European Union. He fears that global terrorism is not abating and could take a generation to defeat because its roots are deep. Blair praised the efforts of Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan and said it was crucial that allies in the fight against the Taliban be resolved and not show weakness. KEYWORDS=NATIONAL

Columnist missed part of Afghanistan poll

SOURCETAG 0710270356
PUBLICATION: The London Free Press
DATE: 2007.10.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: Editorial/Opinion
PAGE: A13
BYLINE: JOHN CRUICKSHANK, PUBLISHER, CBC NEWS TORONTO
COLUMN: Letters to the Editor
WORD COUNT: 76

Regarding the column Truth surprises CBC (Oct. 24).

Licia Corbella misunderstood an aspect of our reporting of the recent polling data to come out of Afghanistan. CBC didn't "express surprise" at the data, as she claims.

Based on separate polling data about Canadians' somewhat negative views of our troops' success in Afghanistan, we concluded, reasonably enough, that some Canadians would be surprised to hear how positively our mission was being received.

Judging by the countrywide reaction to the data, as represented in news media across the country, we were correct.

General denies contradicting PM over Afghanistan

SOURCETAG 0710270342
PUBLICATION: The London Free Press
DATE: 2007.10.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A5
BYLINE: TERRY PEDWELL, CP
DATELINE: OTTAWA
WORD COUNT: 208

Canada's top general is denying he is at odds with the prime minister over Canada's mission in Afghanistan.

"(There is) no difference of opinion whatsoever," Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Rick Hillier said yesterday immediately upon returning to Ottawa from a visit to Kandahar.

The opposition parties yesterday called on the Conservative government to explain why Hillier appeared to contradict Prime Minister Stephen Harper over how long it will take for NATO countries to withdraw troops from Afghanistan.

In his government's throne speech last week, the PM said the Afghan army and national police should be ready to take over security duties by 2011.

This week, however, Hillier told reporters he expected NATO forces would likely be in Afghanistan for at least another decade.

The difference in messages about the timing of the Afghan mission is a question of trust in the government, Liberal deputy leader Michael Ignatieff told the Commons.

"What's at stake here is the government's competence and its credibility," Ignatieff said. "When will the government get this mission under control?"

"Who's in charge?"

But in an interview later in the day on CBC Newsworld, Hillier made clear the government calling the shots on Afghanistan.

"I'm absolutely clear where he wants to go and on what he needs and I'm absolutely in line with that, otherwise I wouldn't be his chief of defence staff," Hillier said.

The difference between the throne speech and his own comments, said the general, comes down to his explanation to reporters of his vision of what it will take to produce a top-notch, professional army in Afghanistan. KEYWORDS=NATIONAL

Karzai seeks cutback in use of airstrikes

SOURCETAG 0710270340
PUBLICATION: The London Free Press
DATE: 2007.10.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A5
BYLINE: AP
DATELINE: KABUL, AFGHANISTAN
WORD COUNT: 159

Afghan President Hamid Karzai is calling for the U.S. and NATO to cut back on airstrikes in the battle against Taliban and al-Qaida militants, saying too many civilians have been killed.

Karzai says that six years after the U.S.-led invasion, the Afghan people "cannot comprehend as to why there is still a need for air power."

He told the CBS news program 60 Minutes the U.S. and coalition forces are in his country to help the Afghan people and there are alternatives to airstrikes.

At least 700 civilians have died because of insurgency-related violence this year, about half due to U.S. or NATO military action, according to an Associated Press tally based on numbers from Afghan and Western officials.

The use of airpower is key to the U.S. and NATO fight against insurgents because of Afghanistan's mountainous terrain and the sheer size of the country. U.S. and NATO officials say Taliban fighters frequently attack their soldiers from civilian homes the insurgents have commandeered.

But such deaths incite resentment against U.S. forces and have sparked several anti-U.S. and anti-NATO demonstrations this year. **KEYWORDS=WORLD**

2 NATO soldiers slain Air strikes claim 18 militants in Afghanistan's south

SOURCETAG 0710270733
PUBLICATION: The Edmonton Sun
DATE: 2007.10.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: 16
BYLINE: AP
DATELINE: KABUL
WORD COUNT: 222

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"The combined force repelled the insurgent attack with direct and indirect fire and close-air support," the statement said.

ASSAULT RIFLES

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On the Hill Sunflashes Column

SOURCETAG 0710270729
PUBLICATION: The Edmonton Sun
DATE: 2007.10.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: 12
COLUMN: On the Hill Sunflashes
WORD COUNT: 161

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Hillier spokeswoman Maj. Holly Apostoliuk said, however, there is no difference in what the general said and the government's official position.

ATOMIC DILEMMA

MONTREAL — Canada's nuclear industry should take a more active role in dealing with the issues related to storing atomic waste, says a U.S. environmentalist.

In recent years, the industry has promoted nuclear energy as an important source of carbon-free energy and an easy way to lower greenhouse gas emissions.

But Canada has yet to develop long-term management plans for the waste, said Thomas Cochran, nuclear program director for the American Natural Resources Defense Council. KEYWORDS=CANADA

Parcels to soldiers in Afghanistan go free

SOURCETAG: 0710270712
PUBLICATION: The Edmonton Sun
DATE: 2007.10.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: 4
BYLINE: BROOKES MERRITT, SUN
MEDIA
WORD COUNT: 267

Family and friends of soldiers in Afghanistan can mail them parcels and letters for free until Jan. 11, 2008, the federal government said yesterday.

Families must send mail through Canada Post full-service retail outlets, and can also use the service to reach out to soldiers serving in any war zone, including Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Sinai Peninsula and Jerusalem and on Canadian ships at sea.

The service aims to give loved ones a chance to spread the holiday spirit beyond Canadian borders, said MP John Williams, who represents constituents in St. Albert and an area in north Edmonton where many military families live.

"Canadian Forces members and their families are an integral part of the fabric of our community," Williams said in a news release.

"Constituents ... welcome the opportunity to show support for the brave men and women ... serving abroad."

To send a parcel or letter to a soldier, address it with their name, rank and mission information. Items must be taken to Canada Post outlets to be shipped for free and cannot be dropped in street letter boxes without postage.

Free parcel delivery expires Jan. 11, but Canada Post will continue to mail letters to soldiers free of charge throughout 2008.

Williams commended Canada Post for picking up the bill for the free mail service. In fact, Canadian taxpayers pay the tab, as Canada Post is an arm of the federal government.

Postal workers' union president Brian Henderson said most Edmontonians would gladly support the service.

"The Christmas season is especially difficult for our soldiers when they are away from their families.

"To be able to do something like this, and save their friends and families a few dollars while bringing them some cheer, is a great morale booster," he said.

Henderson figured at least a few Edmonton postal workers work as reservists and remain highly respected by their letter-carrying colleagues.

"It's a trying time to be a Canadian soldier. We deliver the mail, so we understand how important it can be to receive something special from a loved one over the holidays." **KEYWORDS=CANADA**

On the Hill Sunflashes Column

SOURCETAG 0710270611
PUBLICATION: The Calgary Sun
DATE: 2007.10.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: 24
COLUMN: On the Hill Sunflashes
WORD COUNT: 161

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SOURCETAG 0710270594
PUBLICATION: The Calgary Sun
DATE: 2007.10.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: 10
BYLINE: AP
DATELINE: KABUL
COLUMN: World Watch
WORD COUNT: 222

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INSIDE TODAY'S GLOBE

PUBLICATION: GLOBE AND MAIL

IDN: 073000292

DATE: 2007.10.27

PAGE: A1

BYLINE:

SECTION: News Index

EDITION: Metro

DATELINE:

WORDS: 206

WORD COUNT: 258

Exit, Sorbara Citing personal reasons, Greg Sorbara says he will not stand again in Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty's cabinet. 'There just comes a time when one hears the clock ticking a little bit,' the 61-year-old outgoing Finance Minister explained. News, Page A12 The Globe Essay A new weekend feature debuts today, with John Ibbitson's critical take on Hillary Clinton and the course of U.S. foreign policy after Bush.

In Comment, A25 Join the discussion on Monday when Walter Russell Mead, the Henry Kissinger fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, answers reader questions.

globeandmail.com Inside Afghanistan In an exclusive book excerpt, Christie Blatchford writes of exhausted troops returning from weeks of hard fighting in the field and the nightmarish day that followed.

In Focus, F1 Listen as she details her time with the troops, then send in questions for an online discussion Tuesday afternoon. globeandmail.com Plus, find her regular column, now on A2.

WEEKEND SPECIAL: CHRISTOPHER NEIL'S DOUBLE LIFE From seminary student to hunted fugitive His friends describe him as the 'guy next door.' But he was hiding dark secrets.

Joe Friesen follows the trail of the B.C. teacher who sparked a global manhunt. Pages A8–9

AFGHANISTAN Damned if we didn't, damned when we did

PUBLICATION: GLOBE AND MAIL

IDN: 073000253

DATE: 2007.10.27

PAGE: D3 (ILLUS)

BYLINE: JENNIFER WELSH

SECTION: Book Review

EDITION: Metro

DATELINE:

WORDS: 1382

WORD COUNT: 1421

JENNIFER WELSH THE UNEXPECTED WAR Canada in Kandahar By Janice Gross Stein and Eugene Lang Viking Canada, 348 pages, \$35 Events of the past few weeks illustrate the extent to which Afghanistan has come to dominate both Canadian foreign policy and domestic politics.

A Throne Speech from Stephen Harper's government suggesting a further extension of the Canadian mission. A public opinion poll showing that Afghans believe the presence of Canadian troops is vital to their security. A high-profile task force created to recommend the best policy for Canada after February, 2009. Just one month in the life of Canada's involvement in Afghanistan.

The decision in May, 2005, to send Canadian troops to Kandahar, Janice Stein and Eugene Lang argue, has single-handedly altered the public's image of its military from that of a benign peacekeeper to an army engaged in full-scale combat and counterinsurgency warfare.

It will also shape Canadians' thinking about their country's role in the world for a generation.

The Unexpected War is about the challenges of political decision-making and how Canada's capacity for effective policy choice is waning.

It is the product of fruitful collaboration between one of the country's best analysts of international security (Stein) and a former adviser to two Canadian defence ministers (Lang). It does not tell our current political masters how to "solve" the problem of Afghanistan (though it does offer some well-informed advice). Rather, it recounts the story of how our leaders chose to deploy the military in its largest combat mission since the Korean War and invest taxpayers' dollars in the most ambitious development-assistance effort in Canadian history.

Given the stakes of the Afghan campaign, and its effects on Canada's reputation and diplomacy, it is fortunate that this account has not waited years for documents to become publicly available or active participants to publish their diaries. As the authors rightly note, this is a story "that belongs to Canada's citizens." We need to hear it now.

Drawing on a wide range of interviews with key players in Ottawa, the authors counter three widely held beliefs about Canada's involvement in Afghanistan. The first is that Afghanistan is "just like Iraq." Having spent time on university campuses earlier this autumn, I was stunned at how quickly and easily young Canadians are conflating these two conflicts, with little appreciation for the differing role of the international

community in each case or for how ordinary Afghans perceive the role of foreign troops. While not experts on the region, the authors have done their homework, providing a rich picture of the country Canadian decision-makers freely admitted they knew nothing about.

The second argument debunked by Stein and Lang – a favourite among those who oppose both the war and the current government – is that Afghanistan is "Harper's War." The book chronicles how today's mission is the product and responsibility of three prime ministers, each of whom made fateful decisions that contributed to Canada's descent into war. Despite recent efforts by Jean Chretien in his memoirs to point the finger at Paul Martin, both men – along with Harper – share responsibility for the failures and achievements of Canadian policy in Afghanistan.

The *Unexpected War* is particularly valuable in detailing the Chretien era of decision-making, when the dust from the events of 9/11 had barely settled. Few Canadians know that, in early 2002, their government rejected a humanitarian and stabilization role, preferring instead to send a battle group of 800 soldiers to Kandahar to fight the Taliban and al-Qaeda. While the campaign was short-lived, its symbolic purpose in the eyes of military officials was clear: It would allow Canadian Forces to show the public that they were "not just blue beret-wearing peacekeepers." In 2003, Jean Chretien authorized Canada's participation in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan for one year, with little appreciation that this would be "the first step down a long road." For politicians and civil servants in Ottawa, this commitment helped Canada squirm out of an uncomfortable position: It allowed us to support the broader "war on terror" (maintaining our credentials as a supportive ally) without having to fight shoulder-to-shoulder with the U.S. in Iraq. Stein and Lang describe the Chretien government's decision as a textbook case of duplicitous policy: Liberal politicians spoke with a "principled voice" to Canadians about standing aside in a war not authorized by the United Nations, but with another, "pragmatic" voice to Washington about how Canada was still pulling its weight.

The third bit of folklore the authors challenge is the claim that Canada was strong-armed into Afghanistan by a ruthless thug – namely, the Bush administration. Here, the book is at its finest and most authoritative. As Stein and Lang demonstrate, Canada's deployment of troops was not the result of explicit pressure from Washington, but rather a pre-programmed deference toward the United States within our own ministries of Foreign Affairs and National Defence. Officials in Ottawa insisted that unless Canada appeased the Americans by helping out in Afghanistan, Washington would punish us for taking independent foreign policy stances on Iraq and ballistic missile defence. In reality, members of the Bush administration had a much more mature vision of the Canada-U.S. relationship; they respected our decisions and moved on. The problem is with us, not them.

At every key decision point, it was the anticipated reaction of the United States, rather than the situation on the ground in Afghanistan, that shaped Canada's choices. The authors contend that this was particularly true for Paul Martin, a man who was more concerned about conflicts elsewhere, such as Darfur and Haiti, and who feared that the commitment to Afghanistan would prevent Canada from fulfilling its other global responsibilities. (In this, the former prime minister has been proved right.) But at that time, as was so often the case with Afghanistan, there were no clear-cut options. We were damned if we did act and damned if we didn't.

The Martin era coincided with the rise of a new chief of defence staff, Rick Hillier. Some readers may take away the message that Hillier is the real culprit in the story. Through personal charisma and the force of his ideas, he convinced Martin and his cabinet to "go big" in Afghanistan in 2005. But such an interpretation is one-sided.

Stein and Lang suggest that Hillier was merely doing his job – spectacularly well, in fact. He had a compelling vision of what Canadian Forces could and needed to be in the messy post-Cold War world. Missing, though, were alternative advice and ideas about Afghanistan from Foreign Affairs (and to a lesser extent CIDA).

In a healthy parliamentary democracy, leaders need the support of a three-legged stool – defence, diplomacy and development – in order to make wise decisions about peace and war. The impression one gets is that between 2004 and 2006, the defence leg was much stronger than the other two.

The authors' greatest complaint with our leaders is that they did not foresee the campaign of counterinsurgency in which NATO forces are now engaged. "No official, civilian or military, used the word war to describe what was going on in southern Afghanistan." They should have seen it coming, Stein and Lang argue, based on Afghanistan's history and the changing nature of war in the 21st century. That may be so.

But as a Canadian sitting outside the country, I wonder how our leaders stand up against others. Were they any better at foreseeing the Taliban insurgency? Why? Or why not? Here, some reference is made to the Dutch and the British. Not enough, however, for Canadian citizens to understand their leadership in comparative perspective.

Future histories of the war in Afghanistan will pass judgment on what has ultimately been a collective gamble by Western democracies.

As the authors of this book suggest, it will be a decade or more before we know whether it has paid off.

Jennifer Welsh is professor in international relations at the University of Oxford and a Trudeau Fellow. She recently completed a study of Canada's promotion of good governance through foreign aid.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Afghanistan; Canada

SUBJECT TERM: the unexpected war: canada in kandahar

PERSONAL NAME: Janice Gross Stein; Eugene Lang

WORLD VIEW Terrorism not abating, Blair tells Calgarians

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DAWN WALTON CALGARY It will take "a generation" to stamp out terrorism, according to former British prime minister Tony Blair, who nonetheless urged world leaders yesterday to stand strong against a scourge that he says shows few signs of disappearing.

"I fear that global terrorism we are facing is not abating. Its roots are deep," Mr. Blair told a sold-out luncheon in Calgary yesterday.

"It's going to take a generation, in my view, to defeat this," he added.

Mr. Blair, speaking for the first time in Canada since retiring from politics last June, said that although terrorism plots are being foiled around the world, places like Iran continue to finance and arm terrorists.

He stood by his decision to send British troops to Iraq alongside the United States – a policy still unpopular in Britain – and reiterated the importance of not pulling out from that country or other volatile regions, such as Afghanistan, where Canadian soldiers are undertaking a hotly debated mission.

"If we give up in Iraq, we will be under increasing pressure in Afghanistan. If we give up in Afghanistan, we'll be under increasing pressure in that region," he said.

Next to the fight against terrorism, the search for a stable energy supply is at the top of the world's agenda – an area where Canada can play a key role, he told the mostly business crowd of 2,400 in Canada's energy capital who paid \$400 each to hear the talk titled "Building Global Relations." "I often say to people, Canada will be one of the most powerful nations in the world," he said, noting that the notion often provokes puzzled looks.

But he warned that when power increases, so will Canada's obligations.

"As power grows ... so does more responsibility," he said.

He highlighted Abu Dhabi National Energy Co.'s recent \$5-billion offer to buy Alberta-based Prime West Energy Trust, the third offer made by the United-Arab-Emirates-based firm since May, as evidence of Canada's increasing strategic importance in the world.

Mr. Blair, who became prime minister in 1997 and won three majorities before handing the reins of the governing Labour Party to Gordon Brown, was quickly tapped to become the new Middle East peace envoy of the diplomatic Quartet, made up of the United States, the United Nations, the European Union and Russia.

He was self-deprecating and relaxed as he peppered praise on Alberta and Canada, complimenting Canadians for their "modern" and "optimistic" spirits. He described Calgary as "one of the most significant cities" in the world, enthused about Canadian wine and paid his respects to Canadian Forces fighting in Afghanistan.

Frank McKenna, former Liberal premier of New Brunswick, once Canada's ambassador to the United States and now Toronto-Dominion Bank deputy chairman, conducted a question-and-answer session with Mr. Blair at the event sponsored by TD Bank as the pair sat in green armchairs reminiscent of the bank's advertising campaign.

Mr. Blair did not take questions from journalists, who were not allowed to use cameras or recording devices – even to ensure accuracy in reporting – precautions ordered by Scotland Yard, according to organizers.

Mr. McKenna asked Mr. Blair about Alberta's announcement this week to raise oil-and-gas royalties to collect another \$1.4-billion in taxes, which has sparked a heated debate in the province.

"I'm just glad it's not my decision," Mr. Blair said to laughter.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Calgary; Great Britain

SUBJECT TERM:politicians; political; terrorism; statements

PERSONAL NAME: Tony Blair

EXCLUSIVE EXCERPT: FIFTEEN DAYS, STORIES FROM AFGHANISTAN Friendship, stress and death: 'It was a very Afghan day'

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BYLINE: CHRISTIE BLATCHFORD

SECTION: Focus Column

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DATELINE:

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WORD COUNT: 2401

CHRISTIE BLATCHFORD On July 22, 2006, Task Force Orion, the Canadian battle group that served in southern Afghanistan from February to August that year, was returning from almost a month in the field, far beyond the safety of the large coalition base at Kandahar Air Field. After weeks of hard fighting in remote parts of the south, the exhausted troops met in a "leaguer," a traditional circle—the-wagons defensive position, for a pep talk from their commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Ian Hope, before heading back to KAF. Lt.-Col. John Conrad, who was in charge of the National Support Element, the unit responsible for keeping the fighting troops supplied with everything from bullets to fuel, drove out that day with a resupply convoy going to meet the soldiers. As the NSE commanding officer, there was absolutely no need for Lieutenant-Colonel John Conrad to go out on convoys, but he made a point of doing so at least once a week. "It wasn't about the technical things that I brought to it," he says. "To me it was about the moral plane: These guys need to see that I am here with them, I trust them, and that my life [has] exactly the same value as yours, we're in this together." Like his friend Ian Hope, Conrad knows that, as the boss, "you can't show you're afraid — and I was, every time I went out on a convoy, I was damned afraid." The resupply convoy, Conrad aboard, left KAF [Kandahar Air Field] at about 3 a.m. on July 22. They were bringing diesel, rations, water, a low-bed truck for vehicle recovery (it was already full by the time they got to the leaguer; an armoured vehicle called a Coyote had broken down) and a wrecker for towing. "It's just a package of capability," Conrad says, "like dragging a Canadian Tire store somewhere to where you're working." He and Hope had a cigar together. "It was a very long day," Conrad says. "It's a helluva long drive from KAF to where we needed to be in Helmand, but a great day. Ian's guys were coming back, they'd done battle, everyone was triumphant." As the troops were running, buoyant, to get into their trucks, Conrad pulled Hope aside, told him he had a Coyote down, and asked for a light armoured vehicle (LAV), "just so I could have two big cannons. And he said, 'Yep, no problem. Just stay with us. Just stay with us at the back of the convoy.'" But it didn't work out as they planned, because one of Conrad's cargo trucks broke down.

They had to stop and put it on the wrecker, and suddenly, they were behind the tail end of Hope's convoy.

"Then we cross the Arghendab River," Conrad says, "and generally when we crossed that river, I usually think, 'Okay, I'm out of the bad place.'" But they had to stop again: The brakes on the broken-down truck were grabbing, and the mechanics needed another 10 minutes to back them off. "And that just widened the gap between Ian and me." Conrad had gone out in a G-Wagon utility vehicle, but for the trip back had switched places with the crew of a 10-tonne diesel truck because its air conditioner was on the fritz and he wanted to give the poor guys a break. Directly in front of him was a Bison armoured vehicle.

"So we're coming into that urban sprawl that kind of gives way to Kandahar," Conrad says, "and there's a terraced village over there, like high ground, and on this side there's off in the distance three mountains, but it's kind of like an open field. And we're just moving along, a little bit slower because we've got a couple of vehicle casualties," he says, when he noticed a small cab-over truck. A Toyota Hiace, he thinks, approaching.

They were then about five kilometres west of the city.

"Right up to the time the thing detonated, you're looking at a car that's white, harmless-looking, right? Yeah, it's kind of winking its way on the left-hand side, but that's because we're taking up the entire road. . . . We actually saw him in one instant – it's a little truck," Conrad says, "and the next instant it's BOOM!" Twenty-five feet in front of him, the Bison was hit, parts of it flying into the cab of Conrad's truck, smoke rising everywhere.

The driver, 44-year-old Frank Gomez, who was in the Canadian Airborne Regiment with Ian Hope, was killed instantly by shrapnel to his head. As the Bison was blown off the road, embedding itself in a culvert, the young air sentry, 29-year-old Jason Patrick Warren, of The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Montreal, was killed too. There were wounded soldiers inside the vehicle – 10 altogether.

"You open the back, it's just a bloody mess," Conrad says. "The doors were awash in blood. Tony Ross, one of the captains, was vomiting; he had shrapnel in his ear. It was just complete hell gothic." It was only Ross's second time out; Conrad had offered him a chance to "go out and see the results of your staff work," and now he was puking his guts out.

Conrad saw Warren lying on the ground, with "a huge trauma to his shoulder, and quite obviously dead." The soldiers were enormously upset. "One of the guys says to me, he says, 'Do you smoke?' I said, 'No, but I really would love a cigarette right now.' I have no idea who he is, just some young guy." Conrad, for a time, believed Warren was Travis Boudreau, one of his own corporals. The two men looked a lot alike. Later, he found out it wasn't Boudreau. "Boudreau is standing there in the flesh, and this is a guy I've known, my soldier, I've known him a long time and he's alive. . . . In the first nanosecond, 'I'm so happy to see you, I'm so relieved,' and then immense guilt: My God, how could I feel that way?" He helped extricate Gomez from the driver's seat, out the back and into a body bag. It was the first time in his 24-year career John Conrad had done that, and "all I could do was give him a pat on the shoulder as they zippered the thing up." The next two hours were nightmarish, the Afghan National Police (ANP) trying to keep civilians back, Black Hawks circling in the air, the Immediate Reaction Force (IRF) arriving from the Canadian Provincial Reconstruction Team office not far away.

"We fumbled our way through it," Conrad says, "as best we could as soldiers, as human beings." Then, taking with them the dead and minor casualties not in need of air evacuation, the IRF pulled out. That's when a man wearing a suicide vest walked into the crowd of civilians and blew himself up.

"There were children," Conrad says, "and you know, seeing an Afghan father picking up his child, just wrapping up a dead child as if it's part of his everyday life. It's just the ANP, throwing bodies into the back of a pickup truck, and blood pouring down the tailgate.

And they just accept it, you know? It's not the way things should be." Some Afghans approached Conrad, asking for help, and he had to say, "I'm sorry, I can't help you, I can't even help myself right now." I felt really helpless. I felt I couldn't even get my own soldiers out of there, and I felt guilty afterwards, because, you know, to me it just seemed like the Taliban, they're totally playing with us. It doesn't matter how many books you read, or how you read all about Napoleon. It doesn't matter how smart you are, they're kicking our ass." Conrad was furious at the claims, afterward, that Canadian soldiers had been firing into the crowd. Steve Chao for CTV reported the allegation that night, and also that Canadian authorities denied it. The network's "fixer" – a local who can speak the languages and go places Westerners can't or won't – had arrived at the scene

quickly, and interviewed purported witnesses, one of whom said on camera that the Canadians had fired at everyone, "including women and children." As soon as Conrad arrived at the PRT, "two glorious Apache gunships" in the air above them, he called the Deputy Task Force Commander, Colonel Tom Putt, and said, "Tom, I give you my word: We didn't fire on that crowd. It was ball bearings, it was the metal that the guy was wearing." He was also furious at General Dave Fraser, who a day or so later described the aftermath and the extractions as "textbook." "Do you want to hear about it, sir?" Conrad says he thought. "Do you really want to hear about it? Of course not. I've always told General Fraser the truth, when he's bothered to ask me. I've always told him the truth.

"Sometimes, the truth is not that great." All Conrad, a father of two girls and two boys, could think of on the drive to the PRT, and for much longer, was his oldest son, Aidan, now 11.

"He's kind of a nerd," Conrad says, "plaid shirts, a bit socially inept. He's a normal child, but who's gonna put up with him like his dad? Or my second one, Morgan, the other boy, who's very, very quiet. You really need to dig to get him to do things, and who's gonna take the time to do that like I will? All I could think of was, I almost checked out there, and it made me very, very sad to think that my son, with his bolo ties – no one wears those any more – he's just gonna get even more weird without me to give him some balance." When he phoned his wife, Martha, that night, he burst into tears, and is not embarrassed about it. "We're spending human capital there," he says, "the very best that this country has to offer, and there's no harm in pausing for reflection and grief when this is being spent.

The cause is just. The Afghan people are deserving, but more important, the Canadian people are deserving of national security, and the cause is, I believe, just. But as we're spending these diamonds, it's okay to be human. In fact, it's fucking necessary." Ian Hope knew nothing of what had happened until he was pulling into KAF and got the first radio message about the bombing.

He'd been mulling over what his soldiers had accomplished, planning to get the press out to interview the returning troops so they could get some public recognition. Instead, he spent the night in the hospital, writing letters to soldiers' families and thinking, as he says, that "this indeed was 'the long war.' " I was one of a couple of reporters who had walked down to the tactical operations centre to see the convoy come back. I love watching them return from the field, the troops filthy and exhausted but always indomitable.

Hope was the first one I saw. I had some small idea of all that they'd done, and was expecting him to be excited and proud. He was quiet, so subdued. He looked miserable. Only hours later did I learn why.

All that Task Force Orion accomplished that day – defeating the logistics of that unforgiving place; kicking the snot out of the enemy; riding out all the twists and turns and complications; the protracted and painful leave-taking – had come to the same bloodied end so common in that country. "It was," as Kirk Gallinger says, "a very Afghan day." On July 23, John Conrad was back at KAF. The last thing he felt like doing was joking, but he knew he had to show his soldiers what he was made of. "By God," he says, "they've taken their hits. .

. . That was the first time I had a suicide bomber detonate right in front of me, so I wanted to show that, yeah, I'm good to go." He walked into his orderly room on the ground floor, where the task force's administration was. He knew people would be sneaking peeks at him, wondering how he was. The hellos that met him were tentative.

Corporal James Brooks was there, and "I said in a very loud voice to Corporal Brooks, 'I need a general allowance claim, right?' We have these forms – like when you have a claim against the Crown, like you had to make a phone call or whatever – we have this watershed claim to reimburse soldiers. So I said, 'Brooksie, I need a CF-152, general allowance claim.' "Brooks calls it up on his computer, starts typing in the claim: Service number, name, and says, 'Right, sir. What is it for?' " Conrad replied, "One hugely soiled pair of

underwear." Excerpted from Fifteen Days: Stories of Bravery, Friendship, Life and Death From Inside the New Canadian Army. Copyright 2007 Houndhead Enterprises Inc. Doubleday Canada. Reproduced by arrangement with the Publisher. All rights reserved.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

SUBJECT TERM:books; text; fifteen days: stories of bravery, friendship, life and death from inside the new canadian army

PERSONAL NAME: Christie Blatchford

EXCLUSIVE EXCERPT: FIFTEEN DAYS, STORIES FROM AFGHANISTAN Friendship, stress and death: "

RECKONING: TOUGH GREENS: WHAT EUROPEAN ECO-POLITICIANS CAN TEACH ELIZABETH MAY

How Greens grab power: not just hippie peaceniks any more

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DOUG SAUNDERS BERLIN The veteran politician leaned forward in his chair, his tailored shirt unbuttoned, and launched a principled attack on the current German government for its failure to help Canada. The 3,000 German troops doing peacekeeping work in the north of Afghanistan, he said, should have picked up their weapons and headed to the south, where active and deadly combat is taking place.

"I believe that the current German government missed an opportunity a year ago when the Canadians and other allies were under great pressure in the south and asked us for help," he said. "Despite the many risks, Germany should have stepped up to the plate. One day, we'll be the ones asking for help and no one will help us." What may be surprising to Canadians is that the hawkish politician, speaking last week to the magazine Der Spiegel, was Joschka Fischer of the Green Party.

This was no anomaly. Mr. Fischer is probably the most successful Green in the history of politics, after spending seven years as Germany's foreign minister (and, throughout that time, as the most popular politician in Germany). He is also the most pro-military voice on Afghanistan in mainstream German politics right now.

It's part of his history: In 1998, he led the successful campaign to use German NATO planes to bomb Belgrade and stop Slobodan Milosevic's dangerous crusade.

Then he led calls to cut social spending in Germany, a move that may have averted a fiscal crisis as bad as the one Canada faced in the early 1990s. Then he pushed for an Afghan war.

A shooter and a cutter: These, it turns out, are the characteristics of a principled Green. As we shall see, Mr. Fischer is far from alone. When Green Parties have attained power – and they have held important positions in major governments continually for the past decade – they have not done so by being passive and defensive, by curling in a ball and saying no. The ones that succeed are the Tough Greens: As pro-military and pro-business as they are ecologically and socially activist, fiscally disciplined and broadly, but critically, open to the United States.

And they can argue, quite convincingly, that these are the best paths to humanitarian and ecological justice.

RECKONING: TOUGH GREENS: WHAT EUROPEAN ECO-POLITICIANS CAN TEACH ELIZABETH MAY

I mention this because Canada's federal Green Party, under the leadership of Elizabeth May, has just launched its bid to displace the NDP as Canada's third party. The party is rising fast in the polls. Its new manifesto, Vision Green, is clearly a bid for a position in some future government – with its calls for a liberal market economy, balanced budgets and low taxes in order to finance a sustainable and socially activist policy, it has a passable chance of putting the party in the league of the world's power-sharing Greens, the next time Canadian politics creates such an opportunity.

If Ms. May wants to complete that voyage, she ought to have a long talk with her most successful international counterparts. They share a number of surprising characteristics.

The most prominent Greens in any national government today are the Czech Republic's Foreign Minister, Karel Schwarzenberg, a seasoned human-rights campaigner, and its deputy prime minister, Martin Bursik, who is chairman of the country's Green Party.

In a coalition with a very un-green conservative leader, they have carved out important niches of Green principle: ecological preservation, sustainable energy – and missile defence.

Citing their party's principles, they have pushed hard this year to bring the U.S. anti-missile-defence shield to their country.

The system, Mr. Schwarzenberg argued last month, "is meaningful and necessary for the future." I don't agree with him, but I am impressed with the direction of his argument. Greens, he asserts, do not simply prevent bad things from happening: They impose themselves upon the world. Assertive gestures are not the sole property of the other guys.

That attitude, among Greens, was begun a generation ago by Franco-German agitator Daniel Cohn-Bendit, who today is the leader of the Green Party caucus in the European Union parliament, arguably the most powerful Green group in the world at the moment.

He launched the Tough Green posture in 1992 with his argument, from Green principles, that the world ought to send troops into Bosnia to prevent the Belgrade-sanctioned ethnic cleansing of that country: "If the Serbian national fascists wanted to attack and drive out 10,000 Jews from Sarajevo, there would be an international intervention to protect those Jews. Because of Auschwitz! If we don't defeat nationalism, we shall drown in barbarism like in Yugoslavia." And just less than a decade later, he was among the first to make the same case for Afghanistan, arguing that Greens ought to oppose the "fascistoid, anti-women Taliban government" by supporting "the liberation struggle of the Afghan opposition, with planes, weapons and soldiers." He has also been a fierce opponent of the Iraq war and much of the Bush administration playbook, as any Green would be. But, like all the successful Greens, he is quick to point out that anti-Americanism is the great trap of his movement, a great principle-killing delusion that confuses Us and Them for right and wrong.

"The big weakness of the movement," Mr. Cohn-Bendit told an interviewer, "is that it counts up all the errors of American policy and turns that into its single decoding of the world. But to say that it's the same United States that represents freedom in the great historical moments when security is threatened – they don't see that." This brings us back to Mr. Fischer. He says today in his new German memoir that Greens ought to be pro-American, in the right way: At the end of the day, supporters of ecological balance "could not afford a weakened United States." This is worth considering in Canada, where reflex anti-Americanism is too often a substitute for progressive thought. Mr. Fischer feels that a return to this thinking has driven his party out of government for a long time.

"A look at the history of the Greens should teach everyone that for us the road to decline was constantly paved with illusory or radical decisions," he says – sentences that his colleagues in Canada should carve into a tree. "But now the party will have to slog its way through. I think it'll be a difficult time."

RECKONING: TOUGH GREENS: WHAT EUROPEAN ECO-POLITICIANS CAN TEACH ELIZABETH MAY

dsaunders@globeandmail.com

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Germany; Canada

SUBJECT TERM:political; government; foreign policy; environment

PERSONAL NAME: Joschka Fischer; Elizabeth May

ORGANIZATION NAME: Green Party; European Union

RECKONING: TOUGH GREENS: WHAT EUROPEAN ECO-POLITICIANS CAN TEACH ELIZABETH MAY

FOREIGN POLICY Timing in Afghanistan

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At considerable risk to their own political fortunes, Stephen Harper's Conservatives indicated in this month's Speech from the Throne that they will seek to extend Canada's military commitment to Afghanistan through to 2011. That is a noble policy; it stands by our undertaking to the Afghan people, and would signal we are not prepared to take the easy route by prematurely pulling out. But it increasingly appears the government is making its case on dubious grounds – ones that could undermine its ability to get the extension through.

"Canada should build on its accomplishments and shift to accelerate the training of the Afghan army and police so that the Afghan government can defend its own sovereignty," the Tories argued in the Throne Speech. "This will not be completed by February, 2009, but our government believes this objective should be achievable by 2011." The implication was that, in four years, Afghanistan will be ready to stand on its own. This week, Canada's Chief of the Defence Staff appeared to cast doubt on that assertion.

"It's going to take 10 years or so just to work through and build an army to whatever the final number that Afghanistan will have, and make them professional, and let them meet their security demands," Gen. Rick Hiller said while visiting Afghanistan. Yesterday, he attempted to diffuse the controversy that followed his comments, suggesting there is no contradiction between his analysis and that of the government. But the Tories do appear to be on a different page – not just from Gen. Hillier, but from most others familiar with the Afghan situation.

This week, NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer predicted the North Atlantic Treaty Organization "will have to be present in Afghanistan in the military sense for the foreseeable future." Britain's chief of defence staff, Sir Jock Stirrup, said "bringing Afghanistan into its rightful place in the 21st century" is "an enormous project that will engage the international community frankly for decades." Yet the Prime Minister's Office stood its ground yesterday, with communications director Sandra Buckler stating that "building up the capacity of the Afghan people so that they can defend their own sovereignty . . . should be achievable by 2011." The Conservatives may believe this is the only way to gain approval for an extension. But they are just giving fodder to the opposition parties, which are disinclined to keep troops in Afghanistan and have pounced on the contradictory messages. And they risk hurting the mission in the eyes of the public, who may feel the extension is being proposed on false grounds.

Canada can go much further toward stabilizing Afghanistan for an additional two years beyond the current 2009 deadline. But continued NATO efforts, if not necessarily by our country, will likely be needed beyond 2011 as well. Rather than pretend otherwise, the government should make a frank case to Canadians.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Afghanistan; Canada

SUBJECT TERM:foreign policy; defence; strife; political

PERSONAL NAME: Stephen Harper

ORGANIZATION NAME: North Atlantic Treaty Organization

FIVE THINGS: YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TORONTO THIS WEEKEND

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1 BATS ON THE AIR Hockey sticks will be put aside for a little pastime from down south called the World Series. Baseball fans will mob sports joints like Shoeless Joe's and Wayne Gretzky's for Saturday's Game 3 showdown between the Colorado Rockies and Boston Red Sox, at 8 p.m., and Game 4 on Sunday, same time.

2 ZOMBIES ON THE STREET For the weekend night closest to Halloween, the costumed populace will be out, dressed in their sexiest personae for parties like the Muzik Mansion Masquerade Ball, or as zombies for the Thrill the World event at York University, celebrating the Michael Jackson tune's 25th anniversary.

3 PEACE ON THE MARCH You already know that a few Canadians are against the war in Afghanistan.

It'll be more obvious today when the traffic is interrupted as part of a Canada-wide day of protest. The Toronto Coalition to Stop the War expects thousands of marchers, meeting at the U.S. Consulate on University at 1 p.m., then heading to Gerrard, over to Yonge, and ending at the Moss Park Armoury on Queen Street.

4 AUTHORS ON THE LOOSE For one more day, the streets – well, more likely the bar at the Westin Harbour Castle – will be populated by scribes such as Ian Rankin or actor-turned-writer David Thewlis who are in town for the International Festival of Authors. Keep your ear out for slurred Shakespearean references and bitter comments about publishers.

5 WINE ON THE BLOCK Fine wine connoisseurs will be considering lots – the auction sort, not the parking kind – tonight at the Ritchies Auctioneers' 17th Annual Fine Wine Auction, presented by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. One lucky bidder will leave with two magnums of a 1964 Mazis Chambertin Grand Cru, valued at \$2,400. See M6 for more info.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Toronto

SUBJECT TERM:entertainment; events; list

THE AFGHAN MISSION Hillier denies contradicting Prime Minister's timeline Top general counters opposition criticism by saying his long-haul prediction referred to securing the whole country, not just Kandahar

PUBLICATION: GLOBE AND MAIL

IDN: 073000170

DATE: 2007.10.27

PAGE: A3 (ILLUS)

BYLINE: BILL CURRY

SECTION: International News

EDITION: Metro

DATELINE: Ottawa ONT

WORDS: 913

WORD COUNT: 868

BILL CURRY OTTAWA General Rick Hillier, Canada's military leader, made a series of television appearances last night as he attempted to stem a growing controversy over his relationship with the Prime Minister.

The televised comments were made at the end of a difficult day for the general, who was portrayed by the opposition as being at odds with the Prime Minister's proposed timeline for leaving the battlefields of Afghanistan.

Defending his position that he believes it could take at least a decade for Afghanistan to be a stable country, Gen. Hillier was at pains to make clear he had not intended to undermine the Conservative Throne Speech earlier this month that had set out a timetable of troop withdrawal for 2009, and 2011 at the latest.

"I have not contradicted anybody," said Gen. Hillier, who had just returned from an unexpected visit to the battlefields of Kandahar province.

"The last time I saw the Prime Minister was the night from the Speech from the Throne and we had a conversation about a whole variety of things. I'm very clear on where the direction comes from. . .

. We're on exactly the same page and I believe actually we see things exactly the same way." All three opposition parties were demanding answers yesterday in the House of Commons as to why Gen. Hillier and the government appeared at odds over how long it will take before the Afghan army is ready to take over.

Gen. Hillier said yesterday he agrees with the government that the Afghan army will be ready to take the lead in military efforts in Afghanistan's Kandahar province, where Canadian troops are stationed.

His estimate of 10 years referred to how long it would take for the Afghan army to be ready to defend the entire country. The Throne Speech estimate makes no distinction between Kandahar and the entire country. It predicts that by 2011, "the Afghan army can defend its own sovereignty." Michael Ignatieff, the deputy leader of the Liberal Party, said the confusion is a troubling sign.

"You can't go out in a Throne Speech and say 2011 and then have your Chief of the Defence Staff saying well, actually, it's 2017," he said.

Cabinet ministers and the Prime Minister's Office stood by their original estimate.

"Building up the capacity of the Afghan people is obviously going to take time," Government House Leader Peter Van Loan told the House of Commons yesterday morning. "We want them to be able to defend their sovereignty. We know that will not happen overnight, but our government does believe it can happen by 2011, the end of the period that is covered in the Afghanistan Compact." Ultimately, the Prime Minister's Office said, the decision will be made by the House of Commons.

Retired Major-General Lewis MacKenzie said yesterday that he could understand the distinction Gen. Hillier was making. He dismissed the debate as a "tempest in a teapot" but said small defence issues do sometimes explode into far bigger political stories.

His main issue with the comments is the notion that an end date can be predicted at all.

"Nobody can predict when NATO's mission is going to be over," he said. "It will go on forever unless we get enough troops on the ground to win this thing." Gen. Hillier's free-speaking demeanour has provided regular fodder for the opposition. Former defence minister Gordon O'Connor is widely believed to have been shuffled out of the job earlier this year partly because of a series of public contradictions with the Chief of the Defence Staff.

While seen as a strong and independent communicator, Gen. Hillier has been accused of straying too far at times into the political realm.

In August, Mr. O'Connor said Canadian troops could "basically be in reserve" by early next year as Afghan soldiers move to the front lines. Before long, Gen. Hillier seemed to contradict the minister by saying the process would take a long time.

In July, Gen. Hillier shot down the Conservative government's promise to create 14 territorial defence battalions, saying "we don't need new units." ***** TWO SIDES OF STORY? The Conservative government's Oct. 16 Throne Speech stated that Canada should not abandon the people of Afghanistan in February, 2009, when the mission is scheduled to end.

"Canada should build on its accomplishments and shift to accelerate the training of the Afghan army and police so that the Afghan government can defend its own sovereignty. This will not be completed by February, 2009, but our Government believes this objective should be achievable by 2011, the end of the period covered by the Afghanistan Compact.

Our Government has appointed an independent panel to advise Canadians on how best to proceed given these considerations," the speech stated.

Then on Thursday, General Rick Hillier said it would take 10 years for the Afghan army to be ready to defend itself.

"It's going to take 10 years or so just to work through and build an army to whatever the final number that Afghanistan will have, and make them professional and let them meet their security demands here," Canada's Chief of Defence staff said.

"I think most Canadians, living in the incredible country that we have, don't always see all the complexities of trying to rebuild a country and, in some cases, build a country from the 25 years of destruction that took place

in Afghanistan."

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Afghanistan; Canada

SUBJECT TERM: defence; foreign policy; political; throne speech; statements

PERSONAL NAME: Rick Hillier

ORGANIZATION NAME: Armed Forces; Conservative Party of Canada

POETIC JUSTICE Down to Business

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DATE: 2007.10.27

PAGE: F2

BYLINE: JOHN ALLEMANG

SECTION: Focus

EDITION: Metro

DATELINE:

WORDS: 202

WORD COUNT: 228

JOHN ALLEMANG The North Atlantic Treaty Organization plans to rent 20 helicopters from private security firms after alliance members refused to contribute to the fighting in southern Afghanistan. – news report The war's been great for rental shops And all the private–sector cops Who earn ungodly rates of pay By keeping native mobs at bay.

Your stripped–down army's stretched too thin? Your weak–kneed allies won't kick in Their share of terror–fighting gear? The profit motive knows no fear, And with our shoot–first action plan We'll put paid to the Taliban, And set a shackled people free (Please note that there's no guarantee).

Big business knows what must be done To make sure that a war's well run And when your leaders come up short, Just count on us to hold the fort With all the latest high–tech frills, (For which, of course, you'll pay the bills).

Admit it! You can't stand to fight, So let us, with lax oversight, Relieve you of both hard–earned cash, And any cares when 'copters crash.

For both sides it works out just fine: Your peace of mind's our bottom line.

jalleman@lobeandmail.com

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Afghanistan

SUBJECT TERM: strife; helicopters; poetry; text

ORGANIZATION NAME: North Atlantic Treaty Organization

SOCIETY: GRANO SPEAKERS SERIES Salon sparks great debate Controversial author Shelby Steele wasn't afraid to make bold statements.

PUBLICATION: GLOBE AND MAIL

IDN: 073000046

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PAGE: M2 (ILLUS)

BYLINE: DEIRDRE KELLY

SECTION: Globe Toronto

EDITION: Metro

DATELINE:

WORDS: 244

WORD COUNT: 271

DEIRDRE KELLY Shelby Steele, in his lecture on race relations at the Grano Speakers Series on Wednesday night, got the capacity crowd hopping on the subject of affirmative action.

Mr. Steele, a fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University and a published author whose books explore a central thesis of white guilt, expanded on the issue to the crowd at the Grano. "As a black American, I dislike today's liberalism because it fails to see blacks as free men and women; rather it exploits us as a means to an impossible national redemption," he said. As most in the room were white, many may have found Mr. Steele's pill hard to swallow.

In fact, Bob Kaplan, Canada's former solicitor-general, challenged him on the point. But Mr. Steele was made of steel, and didn't back down. The fervour unleashed by the ensuing debate befit an evening that began with a bustling pre-dinner cocktail party. Even a tall drink of water like Monsignor Frederick Dolan, Opus Dei's head honcho in Canada, got lost in a crowd that included Pamela Wallin, newly appointed to a five-person panel to review Canada's role in Afghanistan, and John Laschinger, John Tory's campaign manager who, as former Ontario premier David Peterson quipped, is now seriously out of a job, "and with no prospects whatsoever." Father Dolan allowed that the evening was a "blast." And that was coming from the highest of authorities.

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Toronto

SUBJECT TERM:events

PERSONAL NAME: Shelby Steele

OTTAWA NOTEBOOK Dion takes gamble at Press Gallery dinner

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IDN: 073000030

DATE: 2007.10.27

PAGE: A13 (ILLUS)

BYLINE: JANE TABER

SECTION: Column

EDITION: Metro

DATELINE:

WORDS: 723

WORD COUNT: 703

JANE TABER Liberal Leader Stephane Dion is venturing out on a limb tonight; he is the only political leader who will make a speech (he will be judged on his humour and self-deprecation) at the annual black-tie Press Gallery Dinner. It's a tough crowd and there will be television cameras to record his every word.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper is not attending, nor is Governor-General Michaëlle Jean, who was criticized in the French-language press after her 2005 performance during which she made fun of former PQ leader Andre Boisclair's use of cocaine. NDP Leader Jack Layton is attending but not speaking. His people say that's because the PM and GG are not.

No show Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier couldn't duck out early from a Harper cabinet meeting to attend Thursday night's inaugural Canadian International Council (CIC) gala fundraising dinner in Toronto, where he was to speak. The CIC is a new, high-powered think tank on foreign policy, supported in part by Research in Motion's Jim Balsillie.

The dinner was full of senior business people, some of whom managed to get there in time from Vancouver, and Liberals, including former prime minister Paul Martin and former foreign affairs minister Bill Graham.

Few Tories were about. And so this was Mr. Bernier's chance to outline the Harper foreign policy to this prominent group. Instead, a foreign affairs spokesman said that "urgent matters required him to remain in Ottawa." A CIC spokesperson said they were told the cabinet meeting ran late so he couldn't make it.

And the Tories want to break through in 416? Bob Rae: Dion's favourite Bob Rae's growing influence on Stephane Dion is being noticed by Grits on the Hill. Since his return from heart surgery, Mr. Rae has become the go-to guy for Mr. Dion.

Insiders say that Mr. Dion turned to the Chretien people, many of whom supported Mr. Rae's leadership, after last month's devastating Quebec by-election loss. In the recent critics' shuffle, Mr. Rae was given the prestigious foreign affairs critic role and he is in Ottawa regularly now, focusing on the election platform.

In addition to that, Mr. Dion's new principal secretary, Johanne Senecal, was a Rae supporter, contributing \$500 to his leadership.

And the new national director of the party, Greg Fergus, also worked for, and contributed to, Mr. Rae; he donated \$1,000.

Hot and Not Hot : Chief Government Whip Jay Hill and his wife, Leah Murray . As the whip, Mr. Hill plays the heavy, ensuring that all of his MPs are present for votes in the House, or else. Proof of his power came last Thursday night when Tory MPs appeared in droves to an event at the National Arts Centre to raise money for women's literacy in Afghanistan.

Silk shawls, woven in Afghanistan and brought to Canada as part of an initiative by Khorshied Samad , the wife of the Afghan Ambassador to Canada, were sold. More than \$20,000 was raised (mostly from Tory MPs) at the event. The hosts? Mr. Hill and Ms. Murray.

Not: Michael Ignatieff . The deputy Liberal leader can't get a break; he continues to be accused of undermining the leader. So sensitive is he to these charges that he is trying to do what he can to be, and to be seen to be, a team player.

For example, Mr. Ignatieff decided not to attend Question Period the day after the Throne Speech as Mr. Dion was not attending either.

Usually, Mr. Ignatieff leads off the questioning in the leader's absence but he did not want to be seen as usurping Mr. Dion's role.

So, he helped the leader with his reply to the Throne Speech. What happened? He was accused of disloyalty for not clapping enough for the leader during the speech. Ridiculous.

Hot: John Baird . The Environment Minister gets tied up as a part of a hostage rescue segment on this week's The Rick Mercer Report on CBC TV. Mr. Baird says, "It's hilarious how Rick paints this picture of me as someone who screams and yells all the time (uh, watch the daily Question Period) . . . then I fall right into his trap." jtaber@globeandmail.com

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:

GEOGRAPHIC NAME: Canada

SUBJECT TERM: government; political

What will it take to defeat the Taliban?; It's likely Afghan people will decide

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COPYRIGHT: © 2007 Torstar Corporation
WORD COUNT: 525

The first flakes of snow are settling in the high passes along Afghanistan's eastern border. Within a few weeks the infiltration routes from Pakistan will be blocked to the Taliban, and the upland areas of Afghanistan will become unsuited to guerrilla warfare until the spring thaw.

Despite the Taliban's bold predictions of an apocalyptic "spring offensive" earlier this year, the NATO commanders leading the fight against them feel they were on the front foot during the summer.

Since January, almost 6,000 people have been killed, a 50 per cent increase over last year. They included 200 NATO soldiers and more than 3,000 alleged Talibs. Insurgent violence is up by 20 per cent on 2006. NATO claims this is largely because its forces have pushed into former Taliban areas.

Nonetheless, as NATO's defense ministers gathered this week in Noordwijk in the Netherlands, few observers doubt that the Afghan insurgency has years to run. The Taliban seem to have enough recruits, as well as a refuge and logistical base in Pakistan's lawless tribal areas. They also have enough funds, an estimated 40 per cent coming from the drug trade.

"The only way the Taliban can be defeated is with strong Afghan government, strong Afghan security forces and a wedge driven between the insurgents and the people," says NATO's commander in Afghanistan, General Dan McNeill. He accepts that NATO's role is that of stopgap, as billions of dollars go into building the Afghan security forces.

An estimated 20–30 per cent of the population in the south support the Taliban. The number of Taliban fighters lies between 6,000 and 20,000. Some 6,000 Taliban have been reported killed since 2005, with no sign that has dented the insurgents' capability.

Suicide bombings were all but unknown in Afghanistan until 2005. This year has seen more than 120. Roadside bombings are also increasing, as the Taliban adopt the tactics that have worked for Iraqi insurgents. NATO commanders claim this is a sign of desperation.

British and American special forces have focused on attacking the Taliban leadership. In May they killed the Taliban's ground commander in the south, Mullah Dadullah Akhund. By one estimate, more than 50 mid-level commanders have been killed in Helmand province alone.

Local tribal elders say that the Taliban has taken severe punishment in the south. In Helmand, there are reports of a lack of local willingness to fight for the Taliban. There is much talk of prising away "moderate Taliban" through negotiation.

But Taliban fighters are now appearing in previously placid provinces such as Herat, Wardak and Badghis. General McNeill admits that NATO's nearly 35,000 troops are not enough to take and hold all parts of the country.

The insurgency now has more clearly the form of a single, loosely co-ordinated insurrection spanning western Pakistan and southern and eastern Afghanistan. NATO is publicly divided. The Taliban, too, are fragmented. Far from being the monolithic Islamists they were in 2001, they now span various groups with differing motivations.

Many Afghans in the south would support any force offering a real hope of security and justice. On those counts, neither the Taliban nor the Western-backed Afghan government have yet made a convincing case.

The Economist

Move to technology or manpower?; The United States wants to be prepared for any kind of conflict, on any scale

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ILLUSTRATION: Photo: Larry Downing, Reuters / U.S. Secretary of Defence Robert Gates speaks at the Association of the United States Army annual meeting Oct. 10, 2007. ;
SOURCE: The Economist
COPYRIGHT: © 2007 Torstar Corporation
WORD COUNT: 998

Another debate to do with Iraq and Afghanistan is building in America, one that could have important consequences for the West. This debate is being conducted in the Pentagon — and it has to do with the future shape of America's armed forces.

With its far-flung alliances and commitments, the superpower rightly wants a "full spectrum" of military capabilities to deal with everything from an all-out war to a small policing action. But precisely what the mix should be is increasingly contentious — and could prove expensive.

If the biggest threat comes from rising powers, such as a belligerent Russia or a pushy China, America and its allies will need to invest in aircraft, ships and advanced weapons to cope.

If the greatest challenge is the fight against militants and insurgents around the world — seen by some as a new and different "fourth generation" of warfare — then they will need more boots on the ground and, crucially, different sorts of soldiers wearing them.

Sadly for taxpayers everywhere, the emerging answer from America is that a modern power needs to prepare for both challenges. But there has been a clear swing towards manpower from technology.

The change has been striking. The "transformation" advocated by Donald Rumsfeld, George Bush's first defence secretary, envisaged that the armed forces would be slimmed down and money invested in "smart" weapons, reconnaissance systems and data links. Speed, stealth, accuracy and networks would substitute for massed forces.

The Army's idea of its "future warrior" was a kind of cyborg, helmet stuffed with electronic wizardry and a computer display on his visor, all wirelessly linked to sensors, weapons and comrades. New clothing would have inbuilt heating and cooling. Information on the soldier's physical condition would be beamed to medics, and an artificial "exoskeleton" (a sort of personal brace) would strengthen his limbs.

The initial success in toppling first the Taliban in Afghanistan and then Saddam Hussein in Iraq seemed to vindicate such concepts. But the murderous chaos in Iraq, and the growing violence in southern Afghanistan, have shown that America is good at destroying targets, and bad at rebuilding states. Firepower is of little use, and often counterproductive, when the enemy deliberately mingles among civilians.

Move to technology or manpower?; The United States wants to be prepared for any kind of conflict, on any scale

Robert Gates, Rumsfeld's successor, is thus presiding over something of a counter-revolution. Technological tricks are not being abandoned. But the Army is to get a bigger share of the defence budget and has been told to recruit more soldiers with it.

Precisely because America is so powerful against conventional armies, Gates expects its enemies to rely on asymmetric warfare. In other words, America must expect to fight protracted, enervating counter-insurgency wars that offer no clear-cut victories and risk the prospect of humiliation.

A new manual on counter-insurgency co-authored by the man now in charge of the war in Iraq, General David Petraeus, overturns the notion that America doesn't "do nation-building." Counter-insurgency, it says, is "armed social work." It requires more brain than brawn, more patience than aggression.

The model soldier should be less science-fiction Terminator and more intellectual for "the graduate level of war," preferably a linguist, with a sense of history and anthropology.

In general, the shift from technology to manpower is welcome. Some skeptics will argue that America's first future priority should be to avoid smallish wars of choice altogether. Even if that were sensible, history suggests it is unlikely to happen: American troops have kept on getting involved in foreign conflicts. The military planners' job is to cope with the likely, not to restrict democratically elected politicians' options.

From that perspective, two doubts come to the fore. The first is whether the Pentagon is right to focus so heavily on creating more combat brigades. With American units serving 15 months in the field and a year at home at best, the Army understandably wants more front-line soldiers to ease the strain.

But large armies have often found it extremely hard to fight guerrillas in faraway places — ask the French in Algeria, the Russians in Afghanistan and, not least, the Americans themselves in Vietnam. With the possible exception of the British in Malaya, it is hard to think of many insurgencies in modern times that have been crushed by a Western occupying power.

Post-colonial politics, stronger concerns for human rights, the rapid dispersal of news: all these (good) things make today's conflicts even harder to win for occupiers. So it may well be better to step back and work through local allies. Few insurgencies have unseated existing governments.

In the "war on terror" most of the important al-Qaeda suspects have been rounded up for America by local allies. Strengthening local forces is the best way of salvaging Iraq and Afghanistan, and may help avoid the need for future interventions.

To be fair, the Pentagon talks about building "partner capacity," but it may need more radical steps — in particular creating new specialist units to train allies, embed Western soldiers in local forces to improve their performance and be able to call in air strikes, and help organize civil reconstruction.

Generals complain about splitting the Army, but they already oversee a myriad of specialist units. It is at least worth trying.

The other lingering concern with the shift in focus from destruction to construction has to do with skimping on conventional weaponry. At the margin, it is certainly worth putting more money into manpower at the expense of some futuristic projects.

The prospect of an all-out war with Russia or China is distant for now; the risk of losing in Iraq and Afghanistan is acute. But raiding other defence programs can only go so far. At 4 per cent of GDP, America's defence spending is low by historical standards: it was 9 per cent during the Vietnam War and 14 per cent during the Korean War.

Move to technology or manpower?; The United States wants to be prepared for any kind of conflict, on any s

The problem is worse in Europe: many of America's allies spend less than the 2 per cent minimum target set by NATO. If the West wants to build a smarter army of the future, it will have to pay for it.

Foreigners entering Japan will be fingerprinted

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Japan hopes to thwart potential terrorists from entering the country by fingerprinting and photographing all foreigners.

A Japanese immigration official said the measures will apply to all foreigners over the age of 16 starting Nov. 20.

Only some permanent residents, diplomatic visitors and children under 16 will be exempt.

Incoming aircraft and ship operators also will be obliged to provide passenger and crew lists before they arrive.

Immigration officials will run the images and data through a database of international terror and crime suspects as well as against domestic crime records.

People matching the data on file will be denied entry and deported.

Tokyo's staunch support of the U.S.-led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq have raised concerns that Japan could become the target of terror attacks.

Remember to buy your poppy

IDNUMBER 200710270014
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PAGE: A5
ILLUSTRATION: Photo: Sheryl Nadler, the Hamilton Spectator / GoldieRobbins, whose late husband Harry and whose late brother Albert Garshowitz both served in the Second World War, sells poppies at Fortinos in Dundurn Plaza yesterday afternoon. The annual poppy campaign gets in full swing today. ;
BYLINE: John Burman
SOURCE: The Hamilton Spectator
COPYRIGHT: © 2007 Torstar Corporation
WORD COUNT: 220

Put some spare change in your pockets and buy a poppy.

The Royal Canadian Legion's poppy campaign started yesterday and will be in full swing today as about 1,000 volunteers fan out across Hamilton and Burlington to begin distribution of 1.5 million poppies in this area.

Remembrance is on the rise and the number of poppies distributed has been increasing in each of the last five years.

But there's been a decline in the number of veterans who are able to stand outside a store for hours on end and take donations which help veterans and their dependents as well as pays for Remembrance projects, various scholarships and hospital works.

Don Hubbs, commander of district 6 — which includes Hamilton and Burlington and is part of the Legion's B district in south central Ontario — says his district needs about 1,000 volunteers to distribute poppies during the campaign which started yesterday and ends Nov. 11.

Hubbs is thrilled more of us are wearing poppies. He's delighted to see more children turning up at Remembrance Day services with their parents.

Sadly, he feels interest has begun to rise after soldiers' caskets started coming home from Afghanistan.

"It makes people think about the ones who are wounded too and they and their families will need help, which is what the poppy distribution funds," he said.

Anyone who wants to help the veterans and cadets distributing poppies can call the Legion branch closest to them and ask to "speak to the poppy chairman," says Hubbs.

jburman@thespec.com

905-526-2469

Fumbling the PR campaign

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DATE: 2007.10.27

PAGE: A1

SECTION: Canada Wire

WORD COUNT: 591

None AT first it seemed like the same old government spin: admonitions from officials, gentle suggestions from diplomats, and urgings from military commanders. It all amounted to this: Canadians aren't hearing the good stories out of Afghanistan.

And the blame lies with the media, too obsessed with casualties to care about aid and reconstruction.

It's tough criticism, especially if you happen to be a reporter.

Imagine a nurse getting blamed for the state of hallway medicine, or a construction worker accused of causing potholes, and you've got a rough idea of the inner bristling from the journalistic camp.

But as our trip in Afghanistan progressed, we heard the same words from the mouths of dozens of soldiers, disappointed that the work they do seemed so far below the public radar.

"Combats, coffins and controversy," said one soldier wryly, his take on the topics that get the most coverage at home.

Most journalists in Afghanistan are based at the combat-focused Kandahar Airfield. But for our group, this was a different journey — a whirlwind "familiarization visit" organized by the Department of National Defence as a chance for smaller media outlets to see Canada's development and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan.

It was an intense and eye-opening experience that took us to the northern capital of Kabul, where Canadian aid money is helping with mine-clearing and microcredit projects, and south to the mammoth Kandahar Airfield. Then it was on to the Provincial Reconstruction Team base in Kandahar City, a dangerous journey by light armoured vehicle down dusty back roads.

The reward was the fascinating stories inside every tent, and a real sense that development work was being accomplished in Afghanistan, little by little. But breaking through the bureaucracy to tell the stories was a whole new challenge — and a hint that the media blame-game might not be the full story, either.

For all the insightful conversations I had with soldiers from Kabul to Kandahar, there were numerous background briefings with top-ranking officials, experts who often weren't allowed to be named or quoted, with information that couldn't be printed.

One meeting with top staff from the Canadian International Development Agency and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade — departments helping to channel \$1 billion in aid into Afghanistan through to 2011 — could have offered a wealth of context beyond the usual feel-good statistics.

Instead, we got a fast-paced, off-the-record briefing and a panoply of Powerpoint charts. Requests for additional information were directed to Ottawa, a tall order when you're without a satellite phone in a country half a world away.

Development is an important facet of Canada's mission in Afghanistan, and admittedly one that rarely makes the top headlines. Some responsibility for that does lie with the journalists who prefer battles to culvert inspections, media outlets that play up stories of casualties over aid projects, and perhaps even Canadians, whose reading habits dictate which stories garner the most attention.

But the federal government also needs to re-examine its media machinery: a system of intense control that leaves the higher-ups gagged. The government inexplicably devotes most of its resources to hosting media at the combat-oriented Kandahar Airfield, rather than at the development-centred Provincial Reconstruction Team camp.

The Canadian soldiers I encountered in Afghanistan were refreshingly frank, with no qualms about discussing the successes and failures they'd encountered during their tours, the risks in their work, and concerns about the future of the mission.

I just wish we could have experienced the same level of transparency and openness from the people with the bird's-eye view of Canada's role in Afghanistan — the ones most capable of providing the full story Canadians are missing.

Tomorrow: Canadians care for Afghans at Kandahar Airfield hospital.

Canadians take on a new kind of soldiering Trained for fighting, soldiers find themselves guarding construction crews

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PAGE: A1

SECTION: Canada Wire

WORD COUNT: 751

Lindsey Wiebe
Lindsey Wiebe KANDAHAR — Five minutes ago, the Canadian soldiers were thrust out the top of a light armoured vehicle, guns trained on the roadside, sizing up every Afghan on the streets of Kandahar City for threat potential.

Now they stand guard while an engineering team inspects a new wall at a school outside the city, their weapons down but still gripped lightly, while inquisitive, giggling children gather around them.

The jarring transition is daily routine for Canadians in Kandahar's Provincial Reconstruction Team, especially for soldiers assigned to protect the patrols involved in aid projects.

"The guys are constantly working on the edge," said Maj. Jason Langelier, in charge of the roughly 150 soldiers involved in "force protection" at the PRT. They keep the camp secure, and looking after the safety of civilians, engineers and other soldiers involved in reconstruction.

"As an infantry, a lot of people would prefer to be working in a hostile environment where all they know is enemy, which is not the case here," said Langelier.

Juggling security duty with reconstruction poses a challenge for the roughly 400 soldiers and civilians who make up the PRT, whose duties include digging wells, designing new police stations and meeting with local shuras, or community councils.

It's the kind of humanitarian work favoured back home — polls have found Canadians increasingly leery about a continued combat role in Afghanistan, but positive about peacekeeping.

With polls suggesting the majority of Canadians believe too many of our soldiers have died in Afghanistan — 71 since the mission began — positive work like that of the Provincial Reconstruction Team has received more attention by politicians hoping to increase support for a continued presence in Afghanistan.

In the eyes of Sgt. Richard Tangalin, 29, reconstruction at the camp is inextricably linked to the onsite battle group. Tangalin has worked in Kandahar since mid-July as a section commander, leading a dozen soldiers in the force protection unit.

They're highly trained and armoured bodyguards for groups that venture outside the relative safety of Camp Nathan Smith, where the PRT is based.

"We assume security for the entire patrol, so they can have freedom of movement for what they have to do," he said.

It's not the combat duty that appeals to some soldiers, he admits, but it's work he and others say is essential for staying safe in unstable Kandahar.

Kidnappings and suicide bombings are on the rise in the volatile south, once the Taliban heartland and still home to a stubborn level of insurgent activity.

Improvised explosive devices continue to threaten even routine drives on the rough roads between Camp Nathan Smith and the Kandahar Airfield, where most Canadians are based.

Having groups like Tangalin's travel with patrols is a relatively new development, one he said was born of necessity.

Prior to late 2006, the reconstruction team was basically on its own, and when the situation got too risky in Kandahar, groups wanting to leave the camp had to request protection through military headquarters.

Whether it was granted depended on the availability of protection, and even if the request was approved, it might still be bumped if a more important job came up.

"The CIMIC (civil–military co–operation) teams were going out without protection, or they wouldn't go out at all," said Tangalin.

After the security unit was put in place, there was an "exponential increase in activity," with more new projects being completed around Kandahar province.

Capt. Barbara Honig leads 13 members of the special engineering team at the PRT. They're the ones responsible for designing the new structures contracted out around Kandahar, and she often relies on units like Tangalin's to protect her team.

Honig, who totes her own weapon while out inspecting projects, said her team's work couldn't happen without protection.

"Kandahar's not secure enough yet for that," she said. "This PRT couldn't operate without the battle group." It's a sentiment echoed by Capt. Bruno Talbot, project manager for the civil–military co–operation unit. The unit is responsible in part for building relationships with community groups in Kandahar province, work Talbot says depends on protection from the battle group.

"They create the sandbox, and after that we play inside," he said.

The idea of soldiers taking on combat, peacekeeping and development work interchangeably is increasingly accepted as part of the job by soldiers in Afghanistan, but is a tough sell for some non–governmental organizations, who've argued there should be a greater separation between the roles.

Senior representatives with CARE Canada declined to be interviewed, citing security concerns. But in a statement made last year to the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence, CARE Canada's interim CEO Kevin McCort argued that the tasks should be kept distinct.

"I know that security is needed for development, just as I know that development can reduce insecurity," he said. "But I also am convinced that organizations specialized in one should not assume they can take on the roles and responsibilities of the other." lindsey.wiebe@freepress.mb.ca

Hillier denies war of words with PM

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DATE: 2007.10.27
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PAGE: A11
DATELINE: OTTAWA
BYLINE: Mike De Souza
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OTTAWA – Canada's top soldier is denying recent suggestions that he's at war with Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government because of its optimistic assessment of progress by Canadian troops in their mission in Afghanistan.

Despite stirring up controversy for suggesting that it would take up to a decade to adequately train Afghan troops to provide security and stability in the region to support Afghanistan's new government, Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Rick Hillier insisted Friday there was "no difference of opinion whatsoever" between his views and the position of the Harper government which has suggested that Canadian soldiers could finish their mission in four years.

"I get my direction from the government of Canada," Hillier told CBC Newsworld's Politics on Friday. "I talk to the prime minister. I'm absolutely clear on where he wants to go and on what he needs and I'm absolutely in line with that, otherwise I wouldn't be his chief of defence staff."

Hillier said Canadian troops are making progress in training Afghans to take over the lead in combat mission and rebuild the southern part of the country, but he reiterated that it could take 10 to 15 years to train senior military leaders who would bring stability to the region.

"I think most Canadians, living in the incredible country that we have, don't always see all the complexities of trying to rebuild a country," he said, noting Afghanistan endured "25 years of destruction."

Australia gambles; Despite a strong economy, John Howard looks doomed

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COLUMN: Peter GoodspeedG

ILLUSTRATION: Black & White Photo: / 'I'm up against a clever, cunning politician.' —Kevin Rudd, whose party leads Australia's election campaign ; Black & White Photo: Mustafa Ozer, AFP, Getty Images / John Howard, leader of the Liberal party, has led a coalition government since 1996 and is Australia's second-longest-serving prime minister. ; Graphic/Diagram: Source: Newspan Richard Johnson, National Post / Howard's End? His poll numbers say so Percentage Of Votes ;

BYLINE: Peter Goodspeed

SOURCE: National Post

WORD COUNT: 1022

Australia, the "lucky country," is full of inveterate gamblers. These days, they are betting heavily that Prime Minister John Howard's career as the country's leader is coming to an ignominious end.

Tradition suggests that when two Aussies get together they are likely to bet on anything — even flies climbing a wall. In a country awash in lotteries, casinos, high-stakes horse races, sporting events and "pokies" (poker machines), it is not surprising bookmakers are doing a booming business with bettors trying to handicap the Nov. 24 federal election.

The bad news for Mr. Howard is that online bookmakers are reporting a massive swing to the opposition Labor party as punters echo the polls and pundits in predicting a humiliating defeat.

Mr. Howard, a 68-year-old lawyer, is Australia's second-longest-serving prime minister, despite the struggle it took him to win his Liberal party's leadership. At one point his political future was so bleak he referred to himself as "Lazarus with a triple bypass."

But he has been a survivor in the cutthroat world of Australian politics, going on to become prime minister and heading a coalition government with the rural-based National party in 1996.

He has also presided over the strongest economic performance in the country's history — 16 years of growth, with unemployment at a 33-year low of 4.3%.

Now Mr. Howard and the Liberals are running scared. Voters, uncharacteristically, appear eager to embrace change.

Traditionally, Australians opt for the status quo and rarely throw out governments unless there is an economic crisis, glaring incompetence or corruption. Since 1949, Australia has changed governments only four times in 23 elections.

But punters and public opinion polls are predicting a landslide loss to Kevin Rudd, a Mandarin-speaking former diplomat, and his Australian Labor Party.

Poll results this week gave Labor a 58% to 42% lead over the Liberals.

Mr. Rudd has consistently maintained similar leads in every poll since he became party leader last December.

To form the next government, Labor needs to win only 16 more seats in the 150-seat parliament. That's a swing of just 4.8 percentage points in the polls.

Mr. Howard is even threatened with losing his own riding, the north Sydney seat of Bennelong, where Maxine McKew, a former television news anchor, has built up a commanding lead.

Two weeks into a six-week campaign, Australian newspapers are using the word "panic" to describe the Liberals' reaction to the possibility of defeat.

"According to the wisdom prevailing among some Liberal MPs, the Prime Minister must 'save the furniture,' " said John Roskam, executive director of the Melbourne-based Institute of Public Affairs.

"Given the latest polls, few Liberals are contemplating a fifth term. Instead, success for the Prime Minister will be defined as preventing the annihilation of the coalition, keeping his own seat and gaining an outcome that will give Liberal MPs some chance of regaining power in their lifetime."

For a brief moment early in the campaign it looked like Mr. Howard might resurrect his reputation as a political wizard. He used the political equivalent of "shock and awe" to throw the opposition off balance.

In the first two days of the campaign, he proposed amending the constitution to seek reconciliation with the Aboriginal people and unveiled a A\$34-billion (\$30-billion) tax cut that would see nearly half the country's wage earners pay a minimum rate of 15% while low-income workers paid no tax.

This has been followed by a A\$4-billion (\$3.5-billion) plan to provide additional benefits for pensioners, and Mr. Howard toured the country promising new infrastructure projects.

Campaigning under the slogan "Go for Growth," he insists only his government can drive the economy without risking disaster.

The Liberals launched a withering ad campaign portraying Mr. Rudd as inexperienced and his party as dominated by labour unionists.

One ad brands Mr. Rudd, 50, and his deputy Julia Gillard with an L-plate, normally reserved for novice car drivers.

Another asks, "How many of Labor's front bench were union bosses? — 70%! That's right," and flashes photographs of 14 leading Labor politicians each stamped with the slogan "Trade Unionist — Anti-Business."

"If Labor is elected, Mr. Rudd's inexperience and lack of judgment would leave a vacuum at the heart of Australia's government," Mr. Howard says.

"That vacuum would be filled by a trade union movement determined to take back the running of the country."

Australian politics has never been delicate. Within hours, Mr. Rudd responded with a counterattack ad in

which he warns voters the Liberals are about to launch the "mother of all fear campaigns."

"I know I'm up against a clever, cunning politician who's been in politics for 30 to 40 years," he says, underlining Labor's claims Mr. Howard is a political dinosaur.

"Our country has a future too full of promise to allow a government that's been in office for 11 years, a government that's lost touch and a government that's gone stale just to continue on."

The most popular opposition leader in Australia in 30 years, Mr. Rudd seeks to portray himself as the leader of a new generation, pushing such issues as climate change and education and calling for spending A\$4.7-billion (\$4.1-billion) to revolutionize the country's Internet infrastructure with a new national broadband network.

He presents the proposal as a nation-building project similar to constructing railways in the 19th century.

While Mr. Howard tries to portray himself as an international statesman who helped lead the war on terror and sent Australians into battle in Iraq and Afghanistan, Mr. Rudd has promised to withdraw an Australian army battle group from Iraq.

He will, however, maintain 300 troops in Baghdad and 700 navy and air force personnel stationed in the Persian Gulf.

Both leaders say they will continue the deployment of 1,000 troops in Afghanistan.

But it is domestic politics that dominate Australian elections, and Mr. Howard has hung his political future on the performance of a booming economy.

While most indicators point to continued growth fuelled by demand for Australia's resources from China and India, there is a creeping element of uncertainty tied to a rise in inflation and predictions interest rates will hit an 11-year high just days before the election.

An interest-rate hike will damage Mr. Howard's credibility and undermine his claim to superior economic management.

Recent Labor ads feature a video clip of Mr. Howard in the 2004 election promising interest rates will not rise under a Liberal government.

Australian economists believe the Reserve Bank will soon raise official interest rates by a quarter of a percentage point to 6.75%, the sixth increase in three years.

For homeowners in the "mortgage belt" — 30 suburban ridings outside major cities — that will mean a standard variable rate mortgage of 8.55%, the highest since 1996.

The decision on a rate hike will be made the day after Australia comes to a halt for the annual running of the Melbourne Cup, the country's biggest horse race — a day commonly known as "hangover morning."

Speculation on a rate hike is already driving bettors to desert Mr. Howard.

"We've taken almost \$100,000 of bets in just 24 hours," said Michael Sullivan, head of the online bookmaker Sportingbet Australia. "Ninety-nine per cent of that money has been for Labor."

pgoodspeed@nationalpost.com

KEYWORDS: WAR; IRAQ; ARMED FORCES; UNITED STATES

Australian PM firm on Afghan mission; Calls for greater commitment from NATO allies

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DATELINE: SYDNEY
BYLINE: Michael Heath
SOURCE: Bloomberg News, With Files From Reuters
WORD COUNT: 414

SYDNEY – Prime Minister John Howard reaffirmed Australia's military commitment in Afghanistan yesterday after a second Australian soldier in a month was killed in action, while his Foreign Minister urged NATO countries to send more forces to Afghanistan's troubled south.

Sergeant Matthew Locke, of the elite Special Air Service, was pursuing Taliban fighters in the southern province of Uruzgan on Thursday when he was wounded by small-arms fire and later died at a medical post. Trooper David Pearce was killed by a roadside bomb in the province on Oct. 8.

They are the first Australians killed in action in Afghanistan, although a third Australian soldier died in 2002 when his vehicle hit an old land mine from an earlier conflict.

Sgt. Locke received Australia's Medal of Gallantry in December for bravery under fire during an earlier tour with Australian forces in Afghanistan.

His death "is not going to alter our commitment" of troops, Mr. Howard said. "We're not planning to send more, but equally we're not planning to pull it back."

Australia has almost 1,000 soldiers in Afghanistan and about 1,600 personnel in Iraq. Opposition leader Kevin Rudd has pledged to withdraw troops from Iraq and bolster the force in Afghanistan if his Labour Party wins the Nov. 24 election.

Mr. Howard has refused to set a timetable for withdrawing Australian forces from Iraq. Some 68% of voters oppose Australia's role in Iraq, according to a Newspan survey in February.

Alexander Downer, Australia's Foreign Minister, said European NATO countries need to send more troops to Afghanistan, and to lift restrictions on their activities that keep them out of the more dangerous southern part of the country.

"At the moment in the south, you have the Australians, the Canadians — who have lost a large number of soldiers — the Americans, the British, the Dutch of course," he said.

"But many of the European NATO countries have their troops in the north, which is not free of Taliban activity, of course, but it is a good deal quieter and a less-threatening environment.

"We would like to see some of the restrictions that particularly European parliaments have placed on their troops lifted ... so that the European NATO countries that aren't making a big contribution in the south could make a more active contribution in the south."

The Taliban, ousted from power in 2001, stepped up its insurgency in Afghanistan's southern and eastern provinces last year in response to military operations led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's 35,000-strong ISAF force.

Coalition forces in Afghanistan are doing "very dangerous things at present," Mr. Howard said. "It's getting more difficult because the Taliban attacks are becoming more intense."

KEYWORDS: WAR; IRAQ; ARMED FORCES; UNITED STATES

'I'm in line' with PM on Afghanistan, Hillier says; Dissension Denied

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DATELINE: OTTAWA
BYLINE: Mike De Souza, with files from Mike Blanchfield and Kelly Cryderman
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 533

OTTAWA – Canada's top soldier is denying recent suggestions that he's at war with Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government because of its optimistic assessment of progress by Canadian troops in their mission in Afghanistan.

Despite stirring up controversy for suggesting that it would take up to a decade to adequately train Afghan troops to provide security and stability in the region to support Afghanistan's new government, Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Rick Hillier insisted yesterday there was "no difference of opinion whatsoever" between his views and the position of the Harper government, which has suggested that Canadian soldiers could finish their mission in four years.

"I get my direction from the government of Canada," Gen. Hillier told CBC Newsworld's Politics after returning from a visit to Afghanistan this week. "I talk to the Prime Minister. I'm absolutely clear on where he wants to go and on what he needs and I'm absolutely in line with that, otherwise I wouldn't be his Chief of Defence Staff."

Gen. Hillier said Canadian troops are making progress in training Afghans to take over the lead in combat mission and rebuild the southern part of the country, but he reiterated that it could take 10 to 15 years to train senior military leaders who would bring stability to the region.

"I think most Canadians, living in the incredible country that we have, don't always see all the complexities of trying to rebuild a country," he said, noting Afghanistan endured "25 years of destruction."

"But I think they're increasingly aware that you just don't do that overnight."

In the Commons, Conservative House leader Peter Van Loan insisted that Canadian Forces could finish training the new Afghan military troops by 2011.

"Building up the capacity of the Afghan people is obviously going to take time," Mr. Van Loan said in the Commons. "We want them to be able to defend their sovereignty. We know that will not happen overnight, but our government does believe it can happen by 2011."

In a speech in Calgary last night, former British Prime Minister Tony Blair urged Canada to "stay the course" in Afghanistan.

"The worst thing you can ever do is back away in the face of opposition just because the thing is too tough to do even though you know it is the right thing to do."

Mr. Blair also paid tribute to the "marvellous job" Canadian Forces are doing.

In the Throne Speech last week, the government indicated that it did plan to end Canada's military involvement in Afghanistan in February, 2009, despite the clamouring by the three opposition parties to bring the troops home by then, if not sooner.

"Our government does not believe that Canada should simply abandon the people of Afghanistan after February 2009," the speech said.

The federal Liberals said the apparent contradictions between the government and Gen. Hillier are another sign that Mr. Harper is still "bungling the mission," even after replacing former defence minister Gordon O'Connor last summer in the midst of controversy over the treatment of Afghan detainees.

"We've got a situation where the Chief of the Defence Staff is saying one thing, the Prime Minister and his spinmeisters are saying another and it raises serious questions about whether we have adequate civilian control of this mission," said Michael Ignatieff, deputy Liberal leader.

"The soldiers deserve better. They deserve effective leadership by the civilian elected government of this country, and they're not getting it."

KEYWORDS: 0

Military memories

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Two days a week, a modest sandwich board appears outside St. Andrew's Church at King and Simcoe, just across from Roy Thomson Hall. It signals that the 48th Highlanders Museum is open. Few lunching office workers turn in to the iron-gated entrance; maybe they know they couldn't take in the whole collection in just a few minutes.

Founded in 1891, the 48th Highlanders of Canada have taken part in most of this country's signal military events, from the Boer War to Afghanistan. (Corporal Ainsworth Dyer, killed by "friendly fire" near Kandahar in 2002, was with the Regiment.)

Small as it is, the 48th Highlanders Museum is packed with artifacts: uniforms and medals, musical instruments, weapons and equipment, including samples of the ration kits carried by soldiers of various periods. (Some received tins of hearty soup and brand-name chocolate; others just got bars of anonymous pressed food.) Deeply resonant are the clearly inadequate "gas hoods" distributed in the First World War. Then there are watercolours from the Italian front, ink drawings of the First World War and poignant trench art: intricate keepsakes made painstakingly from engraved shell casings, charms crafted from scrap tin, a wooden portrait bust complete with wire glasses and even an inscribed animal bone reminiscent of the scrimshaw of the 19th-century sailors.

And it may be a Highland regiment, but the 48th is all-Canadian Check out the photo of the presentation of the original regimental col-ours; the presiding Governor General is none other than Lord Stanley -- the man who gave us the cup.

--For hours of the 48th Highlanders Museum call 416-596-1382 or visit 48highlanders.com. Admission is free; donations are welcome.

Sarah B. Hood, National Post

KEYWORDS: 0

Mission shows NATO tensions; Canada should take the lead in reforming alliance

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SOURCE: Calgary Herald
WORD COUNT: 484

Ninety years ago today, Canadian troops were in Day 2 of their First World War assault on Passchendaele Ridge, a German stronghold that for three months had defied British and Australian troops. By Nov. 6 it was theirs, but at the cost of 15,654 men killed or wounded.

One wonders if Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Rick Hillier was thinking last Thursday about Canada's tradition of extraordinary military effort for a country its size when he appealed in strong terms for this country's NATO allies to pick up their end of the log in Afghanistan.

"This is a NATO mission and that means it requires all of the NATO countries to do their utmost to be successful," said Hillier, concluding a three-day visit to Canadian troops there.

Translation: Canada's doing a lot of the bull-slugging around Kandahar. When are you coat-holders going to throw a few punches yourselves?

It's a fair question. Apart from what the answer means to Afghanistan, NATO's future depends on mutual trust among members.

The reticence among some NATO countries to make it easy for the Taliban to achieve martyrdom has exposed the organization's institutional weakness.

Will Afghanistan be the making of NATO or the breaking?

It is not that there aren't NATO troops in Afghanistan. Including the 2,500 Canadians, the total force is around 32,000.

But too many of them appear to have been deployed on the clear understanding that for the sake of domestic politics, they wouldn't be put in harm's way.

Technically, this is called a caveat — a restriction on the use or type of activity that can be assigned to these troops.

In practice, it means garrison duty in parts of the country that, by Afghan standards at least, are quiet.

Granted, somebody needs to do the easy work, as well as the high-risk pursuit of terrorists in which Canadian troops are daily engaged around Kandahar.

But that's a load that needs to be shared out, too.

Hillier was suitably diplomatic and named no names.

However, once one recognizes that the British, the Americans and the Dutch are as busy as the Canucks, by a process of elimination it looks as though Germany, France, Spain and Italy have more to offer.

That would include underutilized equipment in Europe, according to Hillier.

And as the majority of Canadian casualties have been caused by improvised land mines placed where military convoys were likely to travel, the argument for borrowing helicopters to airlift them around is a strong one.

As it is, NATO is considering hiring privately owned helicopters. Hillier confirms that's an option: But how bizarre it is, when the right machines for the job are parked on military airfields all over Europe.

It is, in fact, typical of the internal politics that have bedevilled the alliance since it was formed in 1949 on the basis of one for all and all for one, to confront the former U.S.S.R.

There's nothing wrong with its new role, applying a la carte force where needed. But it suffers from a plethora of internal difficulties, such as national sensitivities — one cannot draft the Muslim Turks for service in Kandahar — and an absence of common funding.

Thus Canada has not only lost 71 soldiers in Afghanistan since 2002, it has also paid real taxpayers' money for the privilege.

Hillier didn't say NATO needs a shakeup. But it does: There are a dozen other serious issues to address.

Canada, with its troops once more doing the same kind of yeoman service today as they did 90 years ago, has earned the right to push the point.

It should.

Top general 'absolutely' in line' with Harper; Canada making progress training Afghan troops

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ILLUSTRATION:	Photo: Gen. Rick Hillier;
KEYWORDS:	PRIME MINISTERS; POLITICIANS; POLITICAL PARTIES; GOVERNMENT;CANADA
DATELINE:	OTTAWA
BYLINE:	Mike De Souza, with files from Mike Blanchfield, OttawaCitizen and Kelly Cryderman, Calgary Herald
SOURCE:	CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT:	489

Canada's top soldier is denying suggestions he's at war with Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government because of its optimistic assessment of progress by Canadian troops in their mission in Afghanistan.

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"I talk to the prime minister. I'm absolutely clear on where he wants to go and on what he needs and I'm absolutely in line with that, otherwise I wouldn't be his chief of defence staff."

Hillier said Canadian troops are making progress in training Afghans to take over the lead in the southern part of the country, but he reiterated it could take 10 to 15 years to train senior military leaders who would bring stability to the region.

"I think most Canadians, living in the incredible country that we have, don't always see all the complexities of trying to rebuild a country," he said, noting Afghanistan endured "25 years of destruction. But I think they're increasingly aware that you just don't do that overnight."

In the Commons, Conservative House leader Peter Van Loan insisted Canadian Forces could finish training the new Afghan military troops by 2011.

"Building up the capacity of the Afghan people is obviously going to take time," he said. "We want them to be able to defend their sovereignty. We know that will not happen overnight, but our government does believe it can happen by 2011."

In the throne speech last week, the government indicated it planned to end Canada's military involvement in Afghanistan in February 2009 and shift its emphasis to training the Afghan army and police to defend their own people, an objective that should be "achievable by 2011."

The latest suggestions from the government about finishing its mission by 2011 contrast with Harper's previous statements that Canadians wouldn't "cut and run" from Afghanistan before "finishing the job" of stabilizing the country and preventing a return of the Taliban regime and terrorists.

The federal Liberals said the apparent contradictions between the government and Hillier are another sign that Harper is "bungling the mission," even after replacing former defence minister Gordon O'Connor last summer amid controversy over the treatment of Afghan detainees.

"We've got a situation where the chief of the defence staff is saying one thing, the prime minister and his spinmeisters are saying another and it raises serious questions about whether we have adequate civilian control of this mission," said Michael Ignatieff, deputy leader of the federal Liberals.

There are approximately 2,500 Canadian troops in Afghanistan, most in the volatile south.

Canadian troops on cutting edge with 'Starship Enterprise' system; Web cameras display battles, troop positions

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ILLUSTRATION: Photo: Matthew Fisher, CanWest News Service / Maj. Pascal Larose helps oversee the revolutionary new Canadian battlefield computer system in Afghanistan. ;
KEYWORDS: WAR; CANADIANS
DATELINE: KANDAHAR, Afghanistan
BYLINE: Matthew Fisher
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 1020

Canada's military has leaped into the 21st century, trading radios and maps dotted with pins for ultra-high-tech war rooms where commanders have access to constant data streams, real-time digitized maps, and live video feeds from drones, satellites and web cameras that travel with combat vehicles hunting the Taliban.

"We may still be in the mud, and the buildings we use may be made of plywood, but what we have now is comparable to a combat battle centre on a frigate — or the bridge of the Starship Enterprise," said Lt.-Gen. Andrew Leslie. "This is a huge step forward. In distance, it is light years. In time, we have moved decades with one step. In terms of information, we are right up there with the Americans and British."

To nearly universal rave reviews, several state-of-the-art operations rooms have been set up by the Quebec-based Royal 22nd Regiment battle group in southern Afghanistan.

The biggest is a digitized battle suite at the Kandahar Airfield, where soldiers have been working around the clock in shifts. Their eyes are fixed on dozens of small computer screens in a cool, hushed room dominated by several huge computer screens on the walls and a red light on the ceiling that glows when contact with the enemy is expected or has begun, or when there are Canadian wounded or dead.

"If that red light is on, it means 'Go to your battle stations; there is serious business to be done,'" said Maj. Pascal Larose, an armoured officer who gave the first extensive tour for a journalist of the top-secret Provincial Operations Centre. "And that light is on almost every day."

The job of Larose and Capt. Fred Letourneau, a signaller and computer engineer, is to keep the electronic marvels running.

"It is a big, big change in how we do things. What we have now is better situational awareness for everybody so everybody can make better decisions."

The close working relationship between Larose and the computer whiz, Letourneau, "was the very best thing we could have done," said Maj. Patrick St. Pierre, who oversees the main operations centre. "The match is perfect because one of them knows the technical language, the other knows the language of combat arms."

The Athena Tactical System, which was made entirely in Canada, runs up to 100 times faster than the best Internet connection Canadians have in their homes, Letourneau explained. It combines telephone communication, e-mail and chat rooms for an unlimited number of people online at the same time, as well as video, data and a website loaded with background information. It cannot be hacked into because it is an entirely enclosed system.

A key feature of the new system is a "blue force tracker," which marks the position of every Canadian vehicle. The vehicles, in turn, are fitted with transponders that communicate constantly over global positioning satellites. As friendly fire incidents are known in the military as "blue-on-blue" attacks, that is also the colour used to signify friendly forces.

Other colours and symbols are used to designate the location of enemy forces, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), unexploded ordnance and other threats. All this information can be placed on digitized maps or laid over satellite images. It can also be made instantly available to commanders in their vehicles in the field.

The live video capability is particularly dazzling when it carries images from airborne cameras, which can reveal in amazing detail how battles with the Taliban are unfolding. There is a video-conferencing capability lacking in similar new American and British systems. With this, commanders in the field do not need to make hazardous road journeys to discuss operations with superiors.

The video can be rewound and replayed so senior officers can see how a battle developed, and learn what was done right or wrong.

"Before we had to call everyone by radio to know where everyone was," said Lt.-Col. Alain Gauthier, who commands the Van Doo battle group. "This could take an hour and by then everybody had moved, so the picture I got was obsolete. This gives me an instant visual that is much more effective and precise. It gives me the capacity to trace the threat and warn all our vehicles instantly."

Gauthier conceded the digital revolution will "not solve all the problems of Afghanistan."

"It is a tool in decision making. The threat of this insurgency remains real. We still have to dismount."

Larose, who was involved in the first experiments with Athena two years ago, returned recently from a week in Alberta, where he briefed the next Canadian battle group about the system it will inherit in February.

It is "ironic," Larose acknowledged, "that we are still getting killed by low-tech (attacks) while putting a high-tech system in place. But what are the number of IED explosions this high-tech capability is preventing? We will never really know, but hopefully this has stopped more explosions from hitting us than have hit us."

The Athena system, named after the Greek goddess of wisdom and war, is certainly impressive. But it has also suffered teething problems.

"There have been a lot of little glitches," Larose acknowledged. "Training during a three-week exercise and sustaining a system for nine months are not the same."

Indeed, he noted, one of the breakdowns the system suffered once it was up and running "was caused by sand."

If there is a power failure, the new electricity-hungry system has several backup generators. There are also backups for the system, and backups to the backups. Before deploying, troops are also trained the old way, with maps and stickers.

"To be honest, everybody was a bit afraid when we started with this," Larose said, "but it has been one of our success stories."

Even so, information overload is another potential issue that "can make a problem seem more complex." But he added, "if there is discipline, the solution will be based on better information."

The Athena system heralds a new era in soldiering. One suggestion has been to install printers in vehicles so troops can be given the latest situational data or images of wanted Taliban insurgents, information they can use when they leave their vehicles.

Another possibility is the situation in Afghanistan could be streamed live back to commanders in Canada.

"They have videos from soldiers' helmets in the movies, and we have not done that yet," Letourneau said, adding it is now technically feasible.

"If a commander in the field needs to watch CNN, we will plug it in. Why not?" Larose noted. "We could always go back to the old way, but why have a '56 Mustang when you can have the latest model?"

Keep fighting terrorism, Blair tells Calgary crowd; Former British PM salutes sacrifices of Canadian troops

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ILLUSTRATION: Photo: CNW Group—TD Bank Financial Group / Former British prime minister Tony Blair said Friday in Calgary that efforts to defeat the global forces of extremism and terrorism could take a generation. ;

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BYLINE: Paula Beauchamp and Jason Fekete

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Former British prime minister Tony Blair urged Canada to "stay the course" in Afghanistan at his only address on Canadian soil before more than 1,500 people at the Telus Convention Centre.

Blair, who increasingly came under attack during his final term in office over his support for the war in Iraq, said the efforts to defeat the global forces of extremism and terrorism could take a generation.

"The worst thing you can ever do is back away in the face of opposition just because the thing is too tough to do even though you know it is the right thing to do," he said to applause from the crowd.

"If we're going to fight this terrorism effectively we have to show that we are as determined as they are, believe in what we're doing as much as they do — and do not give up but stay the course."

Blair paid tribute to the "marvellous job" Canadian Forces are doing in Afghanistan, saying the fight in the Taliban stronghold is essential to stability in the region.

He acknowledged the lives of the 71 Canadian soldiers lost in Afghanistan, saying there is nothing more difficult than losing soldiers.

It was hard on everybody and done because the enemy "know it hurts us," he said. Blair said he was concerned countries engaged in the fight on terror too often sent out signals of weakness to the people they are fighting.

"If we give up in Iraq, then we will be under increasing pressure in Afghanistan," he said,

"If we give up in Afghanistan then we will be under increasing pressure right around that region."

Referring to the murder of an Afghan teacher who was shot by Taliban fighters in front of his class because he taught girls, Blair said negotiation was not an option.

"We have to beat and defeat (them)," he said.

Keep fighting terrorism, Blair tells Calgary crowd; Former British PM salutes sacrifices of Canadian troops

"It's a battle of ideas, not just a battle of arms."

The sold-out \$400-a-plate luncheon sponsored by TD Bank, drew a moneyed crowd from Calgary's oil and finance sectors, with Blair speaking for more than 30 minutes on a range of topics — from globalization to energy policy and immigration.

The event comes four months after Blair stepped down as Prime Minister and was appointed official envoy of the quartet on the Middle East on behalf of the United Nations, the European Union, the United States and Russia.

He said Calgary had put itself on the map and "thoroughly deserves to be here".

Mayor Dave Bronconnier said Blair's decision to speak only in Calgary showed Canada's energy capital had become a "focal point on the international stage" and a "city to go to".

Blair had earlier warned Bronconnier — fresh from his third term election win — that "now is when it really gets tough", referring to his own third-term popularity slump as PM.

Of particular interest to Albertans, energy policy was now at the top of the agenda for European countries, and at the G8, Blair said, where high energy prices and the instability of source countries is a concern.

The question of how to obtain energy sources in a stable manner is a growing concern for many countries, he said.

Blair said the Middle East peace process was obviously important to people in Calgary because of the city's energy focus. He predicted Canada would become one of the most powerful countries in the years to come because it has the right natural resources, space to expand its population base, its alliances and a 'can do' type of spirit.

Blair said Canada had at times been diffident on the world stage and now has to assert itself and become a major world player. An important role building a bridge between the U.S. and Europe and strengthening the trans-Atlantic alliance could loom in Canada's future, he suggested.

pbeauchamp@theherald.canwest.com

jfekete@theherald.canwest.com

Blair Commends Canadian Military

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ILLUSTRATION: Colour Photo: Former British prime minister Tony Blair urgedCanada to "stay the course" in Afghanistan at a Calgary luncheon Friday. Calling the mission "a battle of ideas, not just a battle of arms," Blair said the West couldn't back down in the fight against extremism. News, Page A8 ;

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