

# Table of Contents

<u>Military mourns soldier deaths; Steels itself for 'future challenges'!</u> .....	1
<u>A note to our soldiers</u> .....	3
<u>Get out of Afghanistan</u> .....	4
<u>Region refuses yellow ribbons; Police cruisers, ambulances can't display decals in support of troops</u> ....	5
<u>Suicide attack kills 10 police</u> .....	8
<u>Ex-general says NATO needs 15,000 more troops</u> .....	10
<u>Soldiers need support, not doubt: generals</u> .....	12
<u>Harper won't alter Afghan plan; PM says mounting casualties not enough to force withdrawal from NATO mission</u> .....	14
<u>Al-Qaida No. 2 seeks recruits in new video</u> .....	16
<u>Layton hopes to exploit Quebec's antiwar sentiments</u> .....	17
<u>NATO soldier, 10 police killed in separate attacks in Afghanistan</u> .....	19
<u>Remembering the fallen; Officer still has confidence in vehicle, despite six Canadians dying when their RG-31 Nyala was ripped apart by bomb</u> .....	20
<u>Slim chances for a graceful retreat</u> .....	22
<u>Military mourns most recent soldier deaths; Families and friends remember the fallen and troops steel themselves for 'future challenges'</u> .....	24
<u>Troops honour fallen comrades; Officer remembers Canadian soldiers killed by roadside bomb</u> .....	27
<u>Army braces for more deaths; Comrades killed   Edmonton Garrison tries to come to grips with casualties</u> .....	30
<u>Today's military families are better off, war widow says</u> .....	32
<u>Officer has complete faith in RG-31; Lt.-Col. Wayne Eyre says no vehicle in world can answer every threat</u> .....	34
<u>'The army was their life'; Military steels itself for future challenges after loss of six soldiers</u> .....	37
<u>Sentenced soldier still wants to serve</u> .....	40
<u>Growing opposition to Afghan war gives Harper a weapon</u> .....	41

# Table of Contents

<u>A sense of loss – and purpose.....</u>	43
<u>RMC grapples with news; Possibility of tragedy understood.....</u>	45
<u>A passion for military service; Matthew Dawe remembered as dedicated, generous.....</u>	48
<u>Operation H.....</u>	53
<u>Al-Qaida seeks more Muslim support in Iraq; Group's second in command seeks to bolster terror network's wing.....</u>	54
<u>Soldiers remain focused; 'We have to dig deeper than we've ever dug before and carry on with our task here!'.....</u>	56
<u>Harper restates Canada's military obligation.....</u>	59
<u>Francis, 34, grew up in Halifax, leaves wife, 8-month-old baby; Francis, 34, grew up in Halifax, leaves wife, 8-month-old baby.....</u>	61
<u>Officer remembers fallen Canadians during bumpy Nyala ride on Afghan road.....</u>	62
<u>Soldier sentenced in sex-assault case still wants to serve in Afghanistan.....</u>	65
<u>Cpl. Cole Bartsch remembered as outgoing, outdoorsy and reliable.....</u>	67
<u>Defence Department releases name of sixth soldier killed in Afghan bombing.....</u>	69
<u>Retired general says Afghan mission's future depends on NATO's commitment.....</u>	70
<u>Officer killed in Afghanistan was in charge when 3 died last month.....</u>	72
<u>Al-Qaida No. 2 seeks to bolster terror network's wing in Iraq in new video.....</u>	74
<u>Canadian soldier volunteered for Afghan patrol that took his life: newspaper.....</u>	76
<u>Military mourns soldier deaths, steels itself for 'future challenges'.....</u>	77
<u>Canadian death toll in Afghanistan: 66 soldiers, one diplomat.....</u>	80
<u>Afghan bomber kills 10 policemen; NATO soldier kill in eastern Afghanistan.....</u>	83
<u>Harper reflects on Afghanistan deaths, restates Canada's military commitment.....</u>	85
<u>Manitoba soldier killed in Afghanistan was a new uncle; community in mourning.....</u>	87
<u>Afghan-Cda-Roundup.....</u>	89

# Table of Contents

<u>INDEX:International, Defence, Politics</u> .....	91
<u>Afghan–Violence–Update (details, additional injuries)</u> .....	92
<u>Update:ADDS details on frigate announcement</u> .....	93
<u>CORRECTION–Afghan–Cda–Mourning</u> .....	94
<u>Capt. Matthew Dawe remembered as a family man who loved his work</u> .....	95
<u>Cpl. Cole Bartsch remembered as outgoing, outdoorsy and reliable</u> .....	96
<u>Edmonton base pays heavy price; Nearly half of Canada's casualties in Afghanistan originated here; community mourns its latest loss</u> .....	97
<u>Families mourn their heroes; 'It's going to be tough when she asks why she doesn't have a daddy,' says soldier's wife</u> .....	99
<u>Too soon to leave, PM says; Pressure growing on Harper to review Canada's mission in Afghanistan</u> .....	101
<u>10 policemen, 1 NATO soldier killed in separate attacks</u> .....	103
<u>NDP leader is worth watching</u> .....	104
<u>Reality too often a casualty of war in films; Standards set to fool viewers</u> .....	106
<u>Too high a price to pay</u> .....	108
<u>Afghanistan</u> .....	110
<u>All the polish, none of the blood</u> .....	111
<u>Retired Canadian colonel described Taliban tactics</u> .....	113
<u>Tributes for soldier; Anderson attended Notre Dame before joining the military</u> .....	114
<u>Armed Forces celebrate with air show</u> .....	116
<u>Army stoic in face of losses</u> .....	118
<u>No consensus, no mission Liberals to PM: Troops should count on return in February 2009</u> .....	120
<u>Death toll</u> .....	122
<u>Armour no match for bomb 'They have managed to kill 6 great young Canadians today and that is an absolute tragedy'</u> .....	125

# Table of Contents

<u>Frontpage Numb with pain 6 more of our boys killed in Afghanistan KEYWORDS=WORLD.....</u>	128
<u>Military family mourns fallen Captain 'prided himself on serving from the front'.....</u>	129
<u>Harper vows to soldier on.....</u>	131
<u>Al-Qaida urges Muslims to rally.....</u>	132
<u>MacKenzie calls for 15,000 more troops.....</u>	133
<u>Harper stands by Afghan mission.....</u>	135
<u>Soldiers' bravery earns praise Military officials extol their dedication, while families begin to speak of their dependability.....</u>	136
<u>Experienced soldier confident in Nyala vehicle.....</u>	138
<u>No ballots for overseas troops October municipal elections.....</u>	140
<u>'The saddest of days' Commanders speak of loss of comrades and need to show support for families.....</u>	142
<u>Failed armour defended All vehicles called vulnerable.....</u>	144
<u>MASTER CPL. COLIN BASON.....</u>	145
<u>CAPT. MATTHEW DAWE.....</u>	146
<u>CAPT. JEFFERSON FRANCIS.....</u>	147
<u>PTE. LANE WATKINS.....</u>	148
<u>Navy to get \$3.1B facelift Prime minister promises 15-year-old Canadian frigates will get retrofit...149</u>	149
<u>Military 'needs our love' Commander says Canadians must support soldiers in 'saddest of days!'.....</u>	150
<u>Harper won't back down on mission.....</u>	152
<u>Canada has veered off course in Afghanistan.....</u>	153
<u>Canadians urged to rally around families; Despite debate over Afghan mission, 'soldiers working on behalf of all Canadians'.....</u>	154
<u>Comrade's death adds to resolve; Colin Bason's regiment 'will carry on with task at hand'.....</u>	156
<u>He knew the danger—and liked being a soldier; Slain city infantryman was proud of Afghan mission.....</u>	158

# Table of Contents

<u>Families, friends mourn loss of dedicated soldiers.....</u>	161
<u>Homemade bombs more sophisticated; Soldiers in Iraq, Afghanistan face lethal array of new threats.....</u>	164
<u>'Today is not the day to have a debate'; Harper urges public to grieve fallen soldiers, not argue about mission in Afghanistan.....</u>	167
<u>Death strengthens resolve of comrades.....</u>	169
<u>Afghan mission complex, but vital.....</u>	170
<u>It all changes 'in a heartbeat'; Slain soldier knew risk, but was proud of Afghan mission.....</u>	172
<u>Local help risk it all for \$40 a day.....</u>	174
<u>'Soldiers died in a mission they believed in': commander; Loved ones share stories of fallen men.....</u>	176
<u>Aid and comfort to the enemy.....</u>	179
<u>Soldiers get help as they recuperate; Family friend inspired to raise funds for wounded.....</u>	181
<u>Three NATO soldiers die; mass grave found.....</u>	183
<u>Blasts kill 11, including NATO soldier.....</u>	184
<u>'A clarion call of love, support' issued for families of the fallen; Members of Royal Westminster Regiment undeterred in desire to serve mission.....</u>	185

# Military mourns soldier deaths; Steels itself for 'future challenges'

---

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

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**SECTION:** National/World

**PAGE:** A7

**SOURCE:** CP

**BYLINE:** Bob Weber

**DATELINE:** Edmonton

**ILLUSTRATION:** Then-Lt. Matthew Dawe reaches out for his son, Lucas, 1, during a briefing at CFB Edmonton in this Feb. 17 file photo. – Photo by The Canadian Press

**WORD COUNT:** 655

---

A Canadian military leader says the army grieves for the soldiers who were killed in Afghanistan this week, but will also steel itself for future challenges.

Brig.-Gen. Mark Skidmore says the six who died – at least four of them based at Edmonton Garrison – were dedicated to their job and committed to the task Canada had set before them.

"We're proud to have known these soldiers. We are privileged to have served alongside them and we would be honoured to replace them in their noble cause in the accomplishment of our shared mission," Skidmore, the commander of Land Force Western Area, said Thursday.

"The army was their life, the army is our life and Canada is No. 1. And with those anchor points in our thoughts, we'll tend to our fallen and steel ourselves for the future challenges."

Skidmore called on Canadians to honour the memory of the young soldiers who "have given so much and asked for so little."

The debate about Canada's mission in Afghanistan arose again immediately after the deaths, with Liberal Leader Stéphane Dion and NDP Leader Jack Layton saying Canada needs to reconsider its military commitment to Afghanistan.

But Prime Minister Stephen Harper restated his determination Thursday to keep troops there until 2009 despite mounting casualties. Harper, in Halifax to make a \$3.1-billion funding announcement for the navy, said his government doesn't treat military deaths lightly, but they won't alter his plan to maintain the current operation.

"Obviously, as prime minister, casualties of any kind weigh heavily upon my mind," he said. "But today is not the day to have a political debate on the future of the mission. Today is a day to express our condolences for these soldiers, to their families."

The six soldiers, along with an Afghan interpreter, died Wednesday in a roadside explosion as they were returning from a mission southwest of Kandahar.

Cpl. Jordan Anderson, Capt. Matthew Dawe, Cpl. Cole Bartsch and Pte. Lane Watkins were all members of the 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry based in Edmonton.

Master Cpl. Colin Bason was a reservist with the Royal Westminster Regiment based in New Westminster, B.C.

At the request of the family, the name of the remaining soldier was being withheld.

The family of Dawe, one of the highest-ranking Canadian officers to be killed in Afghanistan since the war began, remembered him as a dedicated soldier who wouldn't let something as minor as a ruptured Achilles tendon get in his way.

Family members were not speaking to the media, but released a statement praising his love for the soldiers who worked under him.

"Matt was a superb soldier. He was very fit and prided himself on leading from the front," the statement read. "He loved his soldiers very much and we know that this feeling was reciprocal."

The statement said Dawe, 27, ruptured his achilles tendon in the months leading to his deployment to Afghanistan, but he recovered faster than expected because he "didn't want his boys to go without him."

Dawe comes from a prominent military family in Kingston, Ont. His father is a retired lieutenant-colonel, and all three of his older brothers are enlisted with the Canadian Forces. Two of them served in Afghanistan in 2002. Dawe was reportedly badly shaken when three other Canadian soldiers under his command were killed by a roadside bomb June 20.

Bartsch, from Whitecourt, Alta., was remembered by his aunt as a much-loved young man whom friends could count on when they needed him.

"He was always the reliable one," said Karen Shilson in a tearful telephone interview from Calgary. "He would think nothing of taking the shirt off his back and giving it to you if you needed it worse than him. He was a good kid. He was one you could trust anywhere, any time."

"His belief was, even if it cost him his life, he was going to help his country. And it did."

Watkins, 20, who grew up in Clearwater, Man., was characterized as sometimes being shy, although he was also remembered as someone everybody liked.

"I find it very hard to look at his picture on the news and think of him as gone, being so young," said Lynn Galbraith, who taught Watkins at Pilot Mound Collegiate high school.

"He was well-liked by all his classmates. He was a big strapping lad. He was a good-sized kid. He could be shy at times, but he was outgoing with his friends."

Sixty-six Canadian soldiers and one diplomat have been killed in Afghanistan since the war began in 2002.

# A note to our soldiers

---

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

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**SECTION:** Editorial

**PAGE:** A6

**COLUMN:** Letters to the editor

**WORD COUNT:** 481

---

While I have not met you, I do know you. You are the people who sit out there on the wall at the edge of freedom protecting us from the aggressors. You are not an average Canadian; you are to be revered by average Canadians, as you are willing, with full understanding of the possible perils that face you, to meet the aggressor, the oppressor, the terrorist and work with all your abilities to push them back. You are our protectors.

Canada is a great nation to call home. This did not happen by evolution or divine intervention. We, the people of Canada, choose the direction we wish to go; we, the people, choose the government to take us there; and you are the people who courageously protect our right and freedom to get there.

Ever since the concept of freedom, individual rights and peace was created, you have been there to protect it for all. Afghanistan is not a new war; it is just a battle in a war which has raged for more than a thousand years and will rage on as long as humans wish to be free from terror and oppression. Your comrades have fought back many aggressors of the past, such as Communists, the Nazis, the Huns, the Mongols, the Vikings and the list goes on. You stand shoulder to shoulder with these protectors. As long as there is aggression, terror or oppression in the world, we need you to stay on station, wherever that is, to protect us and a way of life.

I, and millions of Canadians, get up every day with the full knowledge and peace of mind that we need not worry about our office building being shelled, a roadside bomb on our street or small arms fire at the local coffee shop. You and your comrades have given us that peace, and we all owe you a great debt.

The job that you do is, and always has been, the most important job in society. It takes a high level of selflessness to stand on the edge and protect people and things you have never seen nor possibly will ever see. You must smile, however, when you see people protesting your efforts, as you have the full knowledge that they are proof that you have done your job well. They have the right to protest because you went to the edge of freedom and secured it for them. They do not understand that fact, but it is OK because you are there to protect all, including the dim-witted.

As I sit here, well within the walls of freedom and security, I wish to thank you for standing on the edge and being Canada's protector. From a free Canadian ...

Anthony W. Patey

Mount Pearl



# Get out of Afghanistan

---

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

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**SECTION:** Editorial

**PAGE:** A6

**COLUMN:** Letters to the editor

**WORD COUNT:** 305

---

To keep Canadian troops in Afghanistan is an irresponsible waste of Canadian resources and of the lives of young people from Newfoundland and the rest of Canada.

Afghanistan was progressing well toward more democracy and better living conditions for her people under the rule of her last king. Then some fellow, apparently a relative of the king, seized power and, knowing that he did not have the support of the population, asked the Soviet Union for help. The Soviets moved into Afghanistan with their tanks and troops and tried to establish a Communist regime. The Americans did not like that, and when fundamentalist Muslim rebels started to fight the Soviet troops, America provided these insurgents with arms and other supplies and, incredibly, that ragtag Taliban force managed to drive the Soviets out and establish itself as the government of the country.

But then the Americans did not like that Taliban government, either, and supported a revolt against the Taliban regime by various dissatisfied leaders who have no common vision of the future of Afghanistan. It seems clear that the present Afghan government cannot survive without foreign troops which, in the name of democracy, try to kill all opposition. The Americans may organize another revolt to bring a group they like better to power, or they may suddenly pull out. Whatever the ultimate outcome, Canada is losing her reputation as a fair peacekeeper in the Muslim world, and is increasingly seen as American today.

Canada should be no more involved in Afghanistan as she is in Iraq. The American attempt to bomb and shoot people into democracy, in both places, is not something that Canada should be part of.

Randy E. Lieb

Ramea

# Region refuses yellow ribbons; Police cruisers, ambulances can't display decals in support of troops

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060119  
**PUBLICATION:** The Record (Kitchener, Cambridge And Waterloo)  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Front  
**PAGE:** A1  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Photo: PETER LEE, RECORD STAFF / Kerry Townson holds a yellow ribbon Support Our Troops sticker. ;  
**DEADLINE:** WATERLOO REGION  
**BYLINE:** MELINDA DALTON  
**SOURCE:** RECORD STAFF  
**NOTE:** INSIDE: FALLOUT FROM DEADLY ATTACK, A3  
**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation  
**WORD COUNT:** 826

---

Waterloo Region police cruisers and ambulances will remain ribbon-free despite growing support for the yellow decals as the death toll in Afghanistan rises.

Regional Chair Ken Seiling remains steadfast that putting Support Our Troops magnets on municipal vehicles would be unfair to other groups, despite a recent Toronto council vote in favour of the ribbons as well as support in Cambridge and Waterloo.

"The issue for us is not whether or not we support the soldiers," he said.

"We're not prepared to put ribbons on the vehicles because we would then be forced to accept any and all causes."

He cited the no-proclamation policy for individual groups that Waterloo Region and the three cities adhere to as the deciding factor in keeping the ribbons off regional vehicles.

The policy was implemented after an Ontario Human Rights Commission ruling in the 1990s.

The municipalities of London and Hamilton were refused requests to proclaim Gay Pride weeks — the commission cited the decisions as discriminatory.

Whether adding the ribbons constitutes a proclamation is open to interpretation, however.

A local support group said they're simply asking for municipal employees to have the option of showing their support.

Kerry Townson, spokesperson for Families of Canadian Soldiers in Afghanistan said supporting Canadian soldiers shouldn't be lumped in the same group as "a cause" or a charity.

"We're talking about duty, about emotions, empathy and understanding. We're not asking for money. It's not a campaign to get elected. It's not about policy.

Region refuses yellow ribbons; Police cruisers, ambulances can't display decals in support of troops

"We simply want Canadians to understand that these are men and women who are doing what we've asked them to do and are risking their lives doing it."

At the end of June, Toronto city council voted unanimously in favour of extending the one-year term of yellow ribbons on ambulances and fire trucks.

Mayor David Miller cited recent Canadian deaths as the reason behind his change of heart in support of the extension.

On Wednesday, six more Canadian soldiers were killed in Afghanistan, bringing the total to 66 soldiers and one diplomat.

Last Friday, Peel regional police rolled out their own yellow ribbons, affixing the decals to all marked police vehicles.

In London — a city that also chilled to the idea of proclamations in the wake of the Human Rights Commission decision—the decals have been on police cruisers for months and city council will vote on adding them to fire trucks and all municipal vehicles.

"I don't expect that will be a vote that will lose," said London's deputy mayor, Tom Gosnell.

He said the message behind the ribbons and behind proclamations are distinct and likening them amounts to a "spurious argument."

"This has nothing to do with some of the old proclamations we had in the past," he said. "It's not an endorsement of government policy. It's a show of support for the men and women who are putting themselves in harm's way."

Despite the decisions of the London and Peel services, Waterloo Regional police — as well as the Toronto police service — have opted to uphold their policy of limiting decals on cruisers.

"We receive multiple requests monthly asking us to add decals to our cruisers," said Insp. Bryan Larkin. "With the exception of Crime Stoppers, and to be fair to all involved, we've not added any symbols to our police cars."

Instead, regional police have opted to show their support for groups and ideas in other ways, he said.

Non-uniformed members of the service are encouraged to wear red in support of the troops on Fridays and the service has sent care packages overseas, he said.

"We're trying to balance the needs of our community and trying to be as inclusive as we can," he said.

For Kitchener Mayor Carl Zehr the issue is the potential for imposition of values on city employees.

He said he couldn't speak for the rest of council, but personally was "of the same mind," as the regional chair.

"When we put something like this on vehicles, that individual is making a statement also," he said. "I understand it has become controversial. We're just concerned about individual choice here."

The decision made earlier this year to affix yellow ribbons to City Hall was different, he said, because, "on a building, it doesn't affect any individual member of our staff."

Region refuses yellow ribbons; Police cruisers, ambulances can't display decals in support of troops

Townson said she has e-mailed Waterloo Mayor Brenda Halloran, requesting she look into the issue.

Earlier this year, Waterloo tied yellow ribbons to municipal buildings and honoured local soldiers who recently return home at a council meeting.

Halloran could not be reached for comment yesterday, but Coun. Ian McLean said he would be open to the idea of the decals.

"I'd be willing to consider it," he said, adding he hadn't seen himself. "I know we don't issue formal proclamations, but I think this is something different . . . I think we should be supporting our troops while they're overseas and in harm's way."

In Cambridge, where yellow ribbons were also affixed to municipal buildings as well as fire stations earlier this year, politicians and emergency staff were receptive to the decals.

Mayor Doug Craig said council would likely support adding the ribbons to vehicles, but, as of yesterday, no one had asked them to.

"Cambridge council is a very strong supporter of our troops and their families," he said. "There is no doubt that Cambridge city council would be very supportive of any appropriate way to honour our troops if asked."

Cambridge deputy fire chief, Bill Chesney, said if city residents supported the idea, they would look into it.

He wasn't aware of anything that would prevent the fire service from displaying the decals and there are already yellow ribbons on the outside of the fire station, he said.

He said after 9/11, the trucks did display decals to show solidarity with New York City emergency workers, but they have since been taken off.

Townson said the family support group is looking into bringing the idea to Cambridge and Waterloo councils at the final meeting before the summer break on Monday.

"This is about Canadians supporting Canadians," she said.

"All we're asking is if the firefighters so wish, if the people so wish, they can support their brothers and sisters in the military."

mdalton@therecord.com

# Suicide attack kills 10 police

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060112  
**PUBLICATION:** The Record (Kitchener, Cambridge And Waterloo)  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Front  
**PAGE:** A3  
**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR, AFGHANISTAN  
**SOURCE:** Associated Press  
**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation  
**WORD COUNT:** 247

---

A suicide bomber blew up a room full of police officers eating lunch at a southern Afghan checkpoint yesterday, killing 10 persons and wounding 11, while a roadside bomb in the east killed a NATO soldier, authorities said.

In the west, kidnappers released a German man and his translator, hours after demanding \$40,000 US for their freedom, officials said.

The latest violence brought to over 3,000 the number of people — mostly militants — killed in insurgency-related violence in Afghanistan this year, according to an Associated Press tally of numbers provided by western and Afghan officials.

The suicide attack occurred near Spin Boldak, a town in the southern province of Kandahar near the Pakistan border.

The blast killed 10 policemen, wounded 11 and destroyed two rooms, said Sayeed Agha Saqib, the provincial police chief. Spin Boldak's district police chief was among the wounded.

Suicide attacks have become a prime tactic of Taliban militants, who have dramatically stepped up their violent campaign against the government of President Hamid Karzai and its western backers.

Militants deployed a roadside bomb against NATO-led forces in eastern Afghanistan yesterday, leaving one soldier dead and wounding two others, the alliance said.

The wounded soldiers were taken to a medical facility for treatment and were in stable condition, NATO said in an e-mailed statement.

It did not release the soldiers' nationalities. Most foreign troops in the east are American.

The blast raised the number of foreign soldiers killed this year to at least 103.

In the western province of Farah, kidnappers released a German man, believed to work for a company that builds roads, and his translator, after making the ransom demand, officials said.

It was not immediately clear if any money had changed hands.

The two men were freed a week after being seized in western Afghanistan, said Zemrai Bashary, a spokesperson for the Interior Ministry.

# Ex-general says NATO needs 15,000 more troops

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060111  
**PUBLICATION:** The Record (Kitchener, Cambridge And Waterloo)  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Front  
**PAGE:** A3  
**DATELINE:** TORONTO  
**SOURCE:** Canadian Press  
**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation  
**WORD COUNT:** 388

---

In the wake of six more Canadian deaths in Afghanistan, a retired army general said the military mission in that country can only be successful if NATO doubles the number of troops on the ground.

"We need more boots on the ground," said retired Canadian Maj.-Gen. Lewis MacKenzie, who has commanded troops in some of the world's most dangerous places.

"I know the commanders (in Afghanistan) can't ask for the numbers they would like because it's politically sensitive to do that, but they need another 15,000 troops, a division in the south, to help the Dutch, the Canadians, the Brits and the Americans do their jobs."

Canada has about 2,500 troops in Afghanistan, most of them based in the southern province of Kandahar.

MacKenzie insisted the mission has achieved significant successes, citing the return of over three million refugees to their homes, the opening of 300 new schools and the fact that girls are now free to go to school, something unimaginable under the Taliban.

"Kabul was almost abandoned when I first went there, and when I was there last year it was a bustling city," MacKenzie said.

However, he is highly critical of NATO's handling of the war in the impoverished country.

MacKenzie said that there are more than a million troops available throughout NATO, but only about 35,000 in Afghanistan.

He said that the ratio of soldiers to the population in an insurgency is the lowest in the history of warfare.

The retired major-general said he is frustrated that NATO has failed to make good on its promise for more troops for the Afghan mission.

"For some reason we have a tiny, tiny force and an alliance that was supposed to preach one for all and all for one — well, it sure in hell hasn't turned out that way," MacKenzie said.

He says it's clear some NATO members are not doing enough and should step up to the plate.

If NATO as an alliance fails to generate the troops necessary, MacKenzie said, "then I would agree that the time has come to part (leave Afghanistan)."

Canada has one of the highest death tolls of any NATO member in Afghanistan, with 66 soldiers killed since 2002.

The latest victims were six soldiers killed Wednesday.

MacKenzie said the loss of Canadian lives in Afghanistan is something that had to be expected and there have already been warnings by both the Conservative and the former Liberal governments.

"The centre of gravity of this operation are the hearts and minds of the Canadian public. It's just like Vietnam and the American public," said MacKenzie, warning that calls for withdrawal would give the wrong signals to the insurgents.

The Afghan society is a warrior society, said MacKenzie.

"They understand insurgency and they understand where they should attack, and attacking the soldiers is an indirect way of attacking the morale of the Canadian public."



# Soldiers need support, not doubt: generals

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060110

**PUBLICATION:** The Record (Kitchener, Cambridge And Waterloo)

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** Front

**PAGE:** A3

Photo: DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE / Cpl. JordanAnderson, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry ; Photo: DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE / Cpl. Cole Bartsch, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry ; Photo: DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE / Master Cpl. Colin Bason, Royal Westminster Regiment ;  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Photo: DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE / Capt. Matthew Dawe, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry ; Photo: DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE / Capt. Jefferson Francis, 1st Royal Canadian Horse Artillery ; Photo: DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE / Pte. Lane Watkins, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry ;

**DATELINE:** EDMONTON

**SOURCE:** Canadian Press

**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation

**WORD COUNT:** 560

---

Still grieving for its last group of Afghanistan casualties, the army will steel itself for future challenges even as it mourns new losses, a Canadian military leader said yesterday.

Brig.-Gen. Mark Skidmore says the six who died — four of them based at Edmonton Garrison — were dedicated to their jobs and committed to the task Canada had set before them.

"We're proud to have known these soldiers. We are privileged to have served alongside them and we would be honoured to replace them in their noble cause in the accomplishment of our shared mission," Skidmore, the commander of Land Force Western Area, said yesterday.

"The army was their life, the army is our life and Canada is No. 1. And with those anchor points in our thoughts, we'll tend to our fallen and steel ourselves for the future challenges."

Col. Jon Vance, commander of 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade, the formation to which the dead soldiers belonged, agreed.

"The greatest and immediate impact on the soldiers is the sense of loss and grief, but they very quickly recover from that and steel themselves for the continuation of the mission," he said. "We're in the business of hard and we know that this is a complex and long-term engagement.

"We grieve, we lay soldiers to rest properly, we support the families and get on with the mission."

Vance said the families are well aware that there is a debate about Canada's mission in Afghanistan, but the most sensitive and mature approach right now is for Canada to offer support, not doubt.

"At this particular juncture, the focus must be on repatriating these valiant soldiers and ensuring that their families hear a clarion call of love and support from Canada."

The six soldiers died Wednesday in a roadside explosion southwest of Kandahar.

Cpl. Jordan Anderson, Capt. Matthew Dawe, Cpl. Cole Bartsch and Pte. Lane Watkins were members of the 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry based in Edmonton.

Capt. Jefferson Francis was with the 1st Royal Canadian Horse Artillery based in Shiloh, Man.

Master Cpl. Colin Bason was a reservist with the Royal Westminster Regiment based in New Westminster, B.C. Bason, the father of a baby daughter, was a history buff who made his family proud, his mother, Ann Bason, said from Abbotsford, B.C.

"Here he is fulfilling something — democracy — trying to get democracy and peace established in another land and fighting terrorists."

The family of Dawe, one of the highest-ranking Canadian officers to be killed in Afghanistan since the war began, remembered their son, brother and husband as a dedicated soldier.

Family members were not speaking to the media but released a statement praising his love for the soldiers who worked under him.

"Matt was a superb soldier. He was very fit and prided himself on leading from the front," the statement read. "He loved his soldiers very much and we know that this feeling was reciprocal."

Dawe came from a prominent military family in Kingston. His father is a retired lieutenant-colonel, and all three older brothers are enlisted with the Canadian Forces. Two of them served in Afghanistan in 2002.

Bartsch was remembered by his aunt as a much-loved young man whom friends could count on when they needed him.

"He was always the reliable one," said Karen Shilson from Calgary.

"He would think nothing of taking the shirt off his back and giving it to you if you needed it worse than him. He was a good kid. He was one you could trust anywhere, any time."

Watkins, 20, who grew up in Clearwater, Man., was characterized as sometimes being shy, although he was also remembered as someone everybody liked.

"I find it very hard to look at his picture on the news and think of him as gone, being so young," said Lynn Galbraith, who taught Watkins at Pilot Mound Collegiate. "He was well-liked by all his classmates. He was a big strapping lad. He was a good-sized kid. He could be shy at times, but he was outgoing with his friends."

# Harper won't alter Afghan plan; PM says mounting casualties not enough to force withdrawal from NATO mission

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060109

**PUBLICATION:** The Record (Kitchener, Cambridge And Waterloo)

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** Front

**PAGE:** A3

**DATELINE:** HALIFAX

**SOURCE:** Canadian Press

**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation

**WORD COUNT:** 370

---

Prime Minister Stephen Harper restated his determination yesterday to keep Canadian troops in Afghanistan until 2009 despite mounting casualties at the hands of an enemy emboldened by a lethal shift in tactics.

Harper, in Halifax to make a \$3.1 billion funding announcement for the navy, said his government doesn't treat military deaths lightly, but they will not alter his plan to maintain the current operation even as opposition calls grow louder for a withdrawal from the war-torn nation.

"Obviously as prime minister casualties of any kind weigh heavily upon my mind, " he said on the flight deck of the frigate HMCS Halifax.

"But today is not the day to have a political debate on the future of the mission. Today is a day to express our condolences for these soldiers, to their families."

The pledge to stay on followed one of the deadliest days in Afghanistan for Canadian troops. Six soldiers and their Afghan interpreter were killed Wednesday when they hit a potent roadside bomb in Kandahar's Zhari district.

They were travelling in a RG-31, a heavily armoured patrol vehicle with a V-shaped hull that's designed to withstand mine blasts.

But the explosion managed to engulf the Nyala in flames, leaving the soldiers little chance of survival and raising fears that the insurgents have adopted the same kind of deadly tactics used in Iraq.

"There's a real danger that Afghanistan starts to look more and more like Iraq," Steven Staples of the Rideau Institute, an Ottawa-based think-tank, said in an interview.

"It's pretty clear that insurgents are learning from the experience in Iraq, where road side bombs have proven to be incredibly lethal at striking back against the foreign militaries there. So Canadians are going to confront this a lot more often."

Already, the numbers seem to bear this out.

Sixty-six Canadian military personnel have been killed in Afghanistan since the start of the mission in 2002. Of those, 24 have died as a result of improvised explosive devices. One-third of the fatalities have taken place this year alone.

Harper said tactics will be reviewed in the wake of the most recent fatalities.

Harper said Ottawa has provided Canada's soldiers with a full range of equipment -- including tanks -- but he declined to discuss how the military should respond to the Taliban's use of larger, more powerful roadside bombs.

"In terms of the operational details of the mission and how the military limits casualties, these are military decisions," he said under grey skies on the city's waterfront.

# Al-Qaida No. 2 seeks recruits in new video

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060104  
**PUBLICATION:** The Record (Kitchener, Cambridge And Waterloo)  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Front  
**PAGE:** A5  
**DATELINE:** BAGHDAD  
**SOURCE:** Associated Press  
**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation  
**WORD COUNT:** 309

---

Al-Qaida's deputy leader sought to bolster the terror network's main arm in Iraq in a new video released yesterday, calling on Muslims to rally behind it at a time when the group is on the defensive, faced with U.S. offensives and splits with other insurgent groups.

Ayman al-Zawahri defended the Islamic State of Iraq — the insurgent umbrella group headed by al-Qaida — against critics among Islamic militant groups, saying it was a vanguard for fighting off the U.S. military and eventually establishing a "caliphate" of Islamic rule across the region.

Al-Zawahri, the top deputy of Osama bin Laden, called on Muslims to follow a two-pronged strategy: work at home to topple "corrupt" Arab regimes and join al-Qaida's "jihad," or holy war, in Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia to fight and train "to prepare for the next jihad."

He urged Hamas not to compromise and bend under Arab and international pressure to end its rule in the Gaza Strip and make way for a unified Palestinian government that could pursue peace with Israel.

"As for the leadership of Hamas, I tell it: return to the truth, for you will only get something worse than what (late Palestinian leader Yasser) Arafat got" from the Israelis in negotiations, he said. The peace process, he said, is a U.S. attempt to "deceive the Islamic nation and say that America solved the issue of Palestine, so what need is there to fight it and wage jihad against it?"

In an earlier message after its seizure of Gaza, al-Zawahri urged Hamas to form an alliance with al-Qaida, a call the Palestinian militant group shunned.

The Egyptian militant did not mention last week's failed car bombing attempts in Britain, which British authorities are investigating for al-Qaida links. That suggested the video, posted yesterday on an Islamic militant website, was made before the events in London and Glasgow.

# Layton hopes to exploit Quebec's antiwar sentiments

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060090  
**PUBLICATION:** The Record (Kitchener, Cambridge And Waterloo)  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Opinion  
**PAGE:** A10  
**DATELINE:** OTTAWA  
**BYLINE:** CHANTAL HEBERT  
**SOURCE:** TORS TAR NEWS SERVICE  
**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation  
**WORD COUNT:** 512

---

According to Decima's Bruce Anderson, more voters say that their opinion of NDP Leader Jack Layton is improving rather than fading, a distinction he shares only with Green Leader Elizabeth May these days.

That is particularly true in Quebec, where Layton now ranks second to the Bloc Quebecois' Gilles Duceppe.

This summer, Layton will attempt to parlay that personal appreciation into votes for the NDP by turning three soon-to-be-called Quebec byelections into a mini-referendum on the Afghan mission.

Over the course of a news conference (scheduled before the latest casualties in Afghanistan came to light), Layton made his intentions crystal clear Wednesday. And he reiterated his call for bringing the troops home before Canada's current commitment to NATO ends in February 2009.

The NDP seized on the Afghan issue last summer in part to stake distinct ground from the surging Green party. To this day, its position also sets it apart from the bulk of Quebec's establishment.

Although the Bloc Quebecois voted against the extension of the mission last year, it has not been pushing for its early termination.

As one Bloc MP put it in a conversation this week, the party agrees that the government has a parliamentary mandate to pursue the deployment until 2009.

Beyond that, Duceppe is pretty much on the same page as Liberal Leader Stephane Dion. Both oppose another extension of the deployment in Kandahar province but could support an alternative role for Canada in Afghanistan.

Duceppe has so far begged to differ with the vocal section of Quebec public opinion that sees Afghanistan as just an extension of the American-led Iraq war.

In a major speech last January, he stressed that, like Canada, a sovereign Quebec would have signed on to the international coalition in Afghanistan.

For his part, Quebec Premier Jean Charest just attended the send-off ceremonies for the Valcartier-based contingent that will be off to Afghanistan next month. When a group of battle-bound soldiers visited the National Assembly, Health Minister Philippe Couillard, whose son is an officer-in-training, berated the handful of PQ members who declined to applaud.

He is not the only supporter of the mission within the Quebec government.

Culture Minister Christine St-Pierre, who served as a reporter on Parliament Hill until she ran in the provincial election, wrote a letter to the editor of La Presse in support of the deployment last fall. (She was briefly suspended from her Radio-Canada duties for this breach of journalistic neutrality.)

This may be a case where Quebec's sovereigntist and federalist tenors are totally out of sync with mainstream voters.

Or it could be that the 70 per cent of Quebecers who tell pollsters that they oppose the mission are answering a black-and-white question that leaves no room for nuances.

The byelections will provide part of the answer.

Against the sobering backdrop of probable Quebec casualties, Layton will be making the case that the lives of young soldiers are being squandered on a misguided mission. And while it is a prospect that makes every other party privately squirm, there is no question that the Afghan issue has not been well served by the rhetorical shortcuts that have been offered by both sides in the debate to date.

But there is at least one other reason why the distinctive NDP contribution to this debate should be welcome and it has to do with peace on the Canadian home front. But more on that in another column.

Chantal Hebert writes on national affairs.

# NATO soldier, 10 police killed in separate attacks in Afghanistan

---

**PUBLICATION:** The Guardian (Charlottetown)

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**SECTION:** World

**PAGE:** B8

**COLUMN:** Around the globe

**SOURCE:** AP

**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR, Afghanistan

**WORD COUNT:** 117

---

A suicide bomber blew up a room full of policemen eating lunch at a southern Afghan checkpoint Thursday, killing 10 officers and wounding 11, while a roadside bomb in the east killed a NATO soldier, authorities said.

In the west, kidnappers released a German man and his translator, hours after demanding US\$40,000 for their freedom, officials said.

The latest violence brought to over 3,000 the number of people – mostly militants – killed in insurgency-related violence in Afghanistan this year, according to an Associated Press tally of numbers provided by western and Afghan officials.

The suicide attack occurred near Spin Boldak, a town in the southern province of Kandahar near the Pakistan border. The blast killed 10 policemen, wounded 11 and destroyed two rooms.



# Remembering the fallen; Officer still has confidence in vehicle, despite six Canadians dying when their RG-31 Nyala was ripped apart by bomb

---

**PUBLICATION:** The Guardian (Charlottetown)

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**SECTION:** Canada

**PAGE:** A8

**SOURCE:** CP

**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR, Afghanistan

**ILLUSTRATION:** Then-Lt. Matt Dawe reaches out for his son, Lucas, 1, during a briefing at CFB Edmonton in this Feb. 17 file photo. A powerful roadside bomb killed six Canadian soldiers, including Capt. Dawe, and an Afghan interpreter Wednesday. Canadian Press photo

**WORD COUNT:** 581

---

Bumping along on a gravel road Thursday morning, the RG-31 Nyala vehicle shook and shuddered.

Lt.-Col. Wayne Eyre was uncomfortable, but unfazed.

On Wednesday, six Canadians died when their vehicle, also a Nyala, was ripped apart by a roadside bomb.

Eyre said he still has complete faith in the RG-31 as his vehicle slammed into potholes and thunked over speed bumps en route back to Kandahar Airfield from Spin Boldak, on the Pakistan border.

The Nyala armoured patrol vehicle is considered by the military as its heaviest protection against the scourge of improvised explosive devices or IEDs – commonly known as roadside bombs.

"I still have confidence in the vehicle," he said as the driver squawked out commands over the intercom.

"It's getting us from point A to point B. There's no vehicle in the world that will be an answer for every threat out there."

His sentiment was shared by retired Maj.-Gen. Lewis MacKenzie back in Canada.

"You'll never have a military vehicle that's 100-per-cent safe," MacKenzie said in a telephone interview. "It's just never been invented."

"They all have their vulnerabilities. And in this particular case, with the IED probably being based on an artillery shell that causes penetration, the result was as we saw it yesterday."

Tired from their drive and shaken by the latest deaths, soldiers gathered quietly to the side of the sand-coloured vehicles in Kandahar early Thursday. Like the six men killed Wednesday, members of the force-protection unit navigating the rugged terrain in this RG-31s were due to return home in August.

"This is a wake-up call," said one soldier who didn't want his name used. "What we thought was the safest thing out there maybe isn't." Tucked into the window panelling of their vehicle were two woollen teddy bears, a gift from a female soldier for good luck.

Remembering the fallen; Officer still has confidence in vehicle, despite six Canadians dying when their RG-

It was the only soft touch inside the harsh, cramped Nyala, with its plastic seats and awkward seatbelts taking away some of the charm of seeing the Afghan countryside go by through its tinted windows.

The seatbelts are designed to keep soldiers from slamming their heads into the metal ceiling of the vehicles, if and when a blast strikes and pressure waves fill the narrow interior.

The young soldier said it was hard for him to climb into the Nyala in the morning, hard to keep going when the end of his mission is only weeks away.

But Eyre said now is the time for soldiers to work harder than ever before.

"There is a hollow spot, make no doubt about that," he told The Canadian Press in an exclusive interview. "But what we need to do is be strong, and we have to dig deeper than we've ever dug before and carry on with our task here."

In his more than 20 years with the Canadian Forces, Eyre has seen death many times.

In Afghanistan, he heads up the Operational Mentor Liaison Team which helps train the Afghan Army. He's been to farewell ceremonies for their soldiers, and countless ramp ceremonies for his own.

But soldiers of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry are special to him.

At least four of those killed Wednesday were from the 3rd Battalion of the Princess Patricia. He had come to know and respect them during his time as commanding officer of the Edmonton-based regiment.

Upon learning of the deaths, Eyre went straight to their side – even though he had left his role as their commanding officer behind in Canada. He did the same in the last week of June when three other men from the battalion were also killed by an IED.

He carries the memories of all the lost soldiers with him.

"You'll never forget them, they'll be with us forever," he said. "We have fairly formalized memorial services but that still doesn't replace personal memories."

The gentle way Eyre called up the memories made the crunching noise of the Nyala moving over gravel fade into the background, the ever-present danger of an IED buried in the loose stones of the unpaved road forgotten for a moment.

He remembered Capt. Matt Dawe as a superb athlete and "a real people person, an all-around great guy."

Eyre served alongside two of Dawe's brothers.

He was "extremely dedicated, a devoted family man, very proud of his family, a young wife, a young son. A tremendous officer, loved by his troops," Eyre said.

Remembering the fallen; Officer still has confidence in vehicle, despite six Canadians dying when their RG-

# Slim chances for a graceful retreat

---

**PUBLICATION:** The Guardian (Charlottetown)

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**SECTION:** Opinion

**PAGE:** A7

**COLUMN:** National Affairs

**BYLINE:** Travers, James

**DATELINE:** Ottawa

**WORD COUNT:** 602

---

In one of those mistakes that expose inexperience, a new prime minister just months into the job declared in October 2006 that dying in Afghanistan is the price Canadians pay for world leadership. Then the cost was 39 lives, today it's 67. High and rising fast, that total is a tragedy for families facing what every parent, wife, husband and child fears most. But on a distant end of the scale of human horrors there's also a political predicament growing with each heartbreaking dispatch.

A war Stephen Harper inherited from Liberals and chose to make his own is expanding exponentially to fill the space a government that labels itself "new" now needs for renewal. Required for redefinition and a return to the basics of family values, law and order and tax cuts, that elbow room will shrink if climbing casualties keep Conservatives on the defensive.

Sadly for those serving their country, that's the forecast. All the optimistic talk about reconstruction isn't making Afghanistan any safer, a reality certain to have even greater political implications in August when Quebec's Van Doos regiment rotates into enemy range. As if that isn't worrying enough for a minority prime minister hunting a majority among Quebec voters, six more deaths in a single incident Wednesday is another blow to already slim Canadian hopes of a graceful Kandahar retreat. Those few NATO members militarily able to do the job aren't willing to take the political risks of filling a breach that opens in February 2009 when the current mission ends. There's no obvious escape from that dilemma or from the coming debate. As the prime minister insists, Canada can't walk away without replacements or stay longer without Parliament's approval.

NATO needs to know Ottawa's decision by early 2008 at the latest, a collapsing time frame forcing an autumn deconstruction of the mission, its defining purpose and its chances of success. Having avoided a full debate once by threatening an unwanted election, Harper now must find political cover in an elusive consensus.

There's rough justice in the prime minister's problem. Instead of using the war to drive a wedge between his opponents, Harper could have built broad support around extending the mission, something that would now serve him well.

But that's not this prime minister's style. Playing to his core constituency, Harper consistently looks for political advantage by publicly doubting the patriotism of those who question the mission. That was more effective in October last year. Canadians knew less about Afghanistan's complexities and corruption while a death total still below 40 somehow seemed more manageable if no less wrenching. Today, jingoism is a failed substitute for analysis and for the compelling narrative that's always been missing and mandarins are now struggling to write. Taliban tactics imported from Iraq are evolving dangerously and the expectation here is that more fatalities are inevitable and demand a detailed explanation of what can reasonably be achieved at what cost.

Canada has legitimate security and human rights interests in Afghanistan. Even if it never becomes the model Asian democracy of Western fantasy, a less violent, more stable country is a worthy objective.

But interests, like world leadership, have a price. It's paid in lives as well as political capital and at some point exceeds what leaders dare ask and democracies are willing to pay.

James Travers is a national affairs columnist. Copyright 2007 Torstar Syndication Services.

# Military mourns most recent soldier deaths; Families and friends remember the fallen and troops steel themselves for 'future challenges'

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060081

**PUBLICATION:** Times & Transcript (Moncton)

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**SECTION:** News; News

**PAGE:** A2

**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Times & Transcript (Moncton)

**WORD COUNT:** 701

---

Still grieving for its last group of Afghanistan casualties, the army will steel itself for future challenges even as it mourns new losses, a Canadian military leader said yesterday.

Brig.-Gen. Mark Skidmore says the six who died — four of them based at Edmonton Garrison — were dedicated to their jobs and committed to the task Canada had set before them.

"We're proud to have known these soldiers. We are privileged to have served alongside them and we would be honoured to replace them in their noble cause in the accomplishment of our shared mission," Skidmore, the commander of Land Force Western Area, said yesterday.

"The army was their life, the army is our life and Canada is No. 1. And with those anchor points in our thoughts, we'll tend to our fallen and steel ourselves for the future challenges."

Col. Jon Vance, commander of 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade, the formation to which the dead soldiers belonged, agreed.

"The greatest and immediate impact on the soldiers is the sense of loss and grief, but they very quickly recover from that and steel themselves for the continuation of the mission," he said. "We're in the business of hard and we know that this is a complex and long-term engagement.

"We grieve, we lay soldiers to rest properly, we support the families and get on with the mission."

Vance said the families are well aware that there is a debate about Canada's mission in Afghanistan, but the most sensitive and mature approach right now is for Canada to offer support, not doubt.

"At this particular juncture, the focus must be on repatriating these valiant soldiers and ensuring that their families hear a clarion call of love and support from Canada."

That debate arose again immediately after the deaths, with Liberal Leader Stephane Dion and NDP Leader Jack Layton both saying Canada needs to reconsider its military commitment to Afghanistan.

But Prime Minister Stephen Harper restated his determination Thursday to keep troops there until 2009 despite mounting casualties.

Harper, in Halifax to make a \$3.1-billion funding announcement for the navy, said his government doesn't treat military deaths lightly but won't alter its plan to maintain the current operation.

"Obviously as prime minister casualties of any kind weigh heavily upon my mind, " he said. "But today is not the day to have a political debate on the future of the mission. Today is a day to express our condolences for these soldiers, to their families."

The six soldiers, along with an Afghan interpreter, died Wednesday in a roadside explosion as they were returning from a mission southwest of Kandahar.

Cpl. Jordan Anderson, Capt. Matthew Dawe, Cpl. Cole Bartsch and Pte. Lane Watkins were all members of the 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry based in Edmonton.

Capt. Jefferson Francis was with the 1st Royal Canadian Horse Artillery based in Shiloh, Man.

Master Cpl. Colin Bason was a reservist with the Royal Westminster Regiment based in New Westminster, B.C.

Bason, the father of a baby daughter, was a history buff who made his family proud, his mother said from Abbotsford, B.C.

"Here he is fulfilling something — democracy — trying to get democracy and peace established in another land and fighting terrorists."

Ann Bason said her son devoted his life to the military.

"He knew the chances that he was taking going over there," she said. "But my son was a history buff. He liked to travel. He liked everything about army. He had tons of army books.

"He enjoyed that kind of thing. He was fulfilling something he wanted to do and we're proud of him."

His regiment held a gathering yesterday in New Westminster, B.C. Commanding officer Lt.-Col. Matthew Haussmann said Bason loved his job. "He was a reserve soldier, which means he didn't do this full time. Although in his case it was hard to tell. He loved soldering and made this pretty much his passion and his primary vocation."

Bason's friend and fellow reservist Colin Baglaw said his buddy liked to "goof off."

"He was a bit of a trickster. He always seem to find a gem of humour in the worst situations."

The casualties came 15 days after another roadside bomb killed three soldiers as they drove an unarmoured four-wheel-drive utility vehicle between checkpoints.

The family of Dawe, one of the highest-ranking Canadian officers to be killed in Afghanistan since the war began, remembered their son, brother and husband as a dedicated soldier who wouldn't let something as minor as a ruptured Achilles tendon get in his way.

Family members were not speaking to the media, but released a statement praising his love for the soldiers who worked under him.

"Matt was a superb soldier. He was very fit and prided himself on leading from the front," the statement read. "He loved his soldiers very much and we know that this feeling was reciprocal."

The statement said Dawe, 27, ruptured his Achilles tendon in the months leading to his deployment to Afghanistan, but he recovered faster than expected because he "didn't want his boys to go without him."

Military mourns most recent soldier deaths; Families and friends remember the fallen and troops send them

– Troops in Afghanistan remember their fallen comrades.

# Troops honour fallen comrades; Officer remembers Canadian soldiers killed by roadside bomb

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060030  
**PUBLICATION:** Times & Transcript (Moncton)  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** C1  
**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Times & Transcript (Moncton)  
**WORD COUNT:** 690

---

Bumping along on a gravel road yesterday morning, the RG-31 Nyala vehicle shook and shuddered.

Lt.-Col. Wayne Eyre was uncomfortable, but unfazed.

On Wednesday, six Canadians died when their vehicle, also a Nyala, was ripped apart by a roadside bomb.

Eyre said he still has complete faith in the RG-31 as his vehicle slammed into potholes and thunked over speed bumps en route back to Kandahar Airfield from Spin Boldak, on the Pakistan border.

The Nyala armoured patrol vehicle is considered by the military as its heaviest protection against the scourge of improvised explosive devices or IEDs — commonly known as roadside bombs.

"I still have confidence in the vehicle," he said as the driver squawked out commands over the intercom.

"It's getting us from point A to point B. There's no vehicle in the world that will be an answer for every threat out there."

His sentiment was shared by retired Maj.-Gen. Lewis MacKenzie back in Canada.

"You'll never have a military vehicle that's 100 per cent safe," MacKenzie said in a telephone interview. "It's just never been invented."

"They all have their vulnerabilities. And in this particular case, with the IED probably being based on an artillery shell that causes penetration, the result was as we saw it yesterday."

Tired from their drive and shaken by the latest deaths, soldiers gathered quietly to the side of the sand-coloured vehicles in Kandahar early yesterday. Like the six men killed Wednesday, members of the force-protection unit navigating the rugged terrain in this RG-31s were due to return home in August.

"This is a wake-up call," said one soldier who didn't want his name used. "What we thought was the safest thing out there maybe isn't."

Tucked into the window panelling of their vehicle were two woollen teddy bears, a gift from a female soldier for good luck.

It was the only soft touch inside the harsh, cramped Nyala, with its plastic seats and awkward seatbelts taking away some of the charm of seeing the Afghan countryside go by through its tinted windows.



The seatbelts are designed to keep soldiers from slamming their heads into the metal ceiling of the vehicles, if and when a blast strikes and pressure waves fill the narrow interior.

The young soldier said it was hard for him to climb into the Nyala in the morning, hard to keep going when the end of his mission is only weeks away.

But Eyre said now is the time for soldiers to work harder than ever before.

"There is a hollow spot, make no doubt about that," he told The Canadian Press in an exclusive interview. "But what we need to do is be strong, and we have to dig deeper than we've ever dug before and carry on with our task here."

In his more than 20 years with the Canadian Forces, Eyre has seen death many times.

In Afghanistan, he heads up the Operational Mentor Liaison Team which helps train the Afghan Army. He's been to farewell ceremonies for their soldiers, and countless ramp ceremonies for his own.

But soldiers of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry are special to him.

At least four of those killed Wednesday were from the 3rd Battalion of the Princess Patricia. He had come to know and respect them during his time as commanding officer of the Edmonton-based regiment.

Upon learning of the deaths, Eyre went straight to their side — even though he had left his role as their commanding officer behind in Canada. He did the same in the last week of June when three other men from the battalion were also killed by an IED.

He carries the memories of all the lost soldiers with him.

"You'll never forget them, they'll be with us forever," he said. "We have fairly formalized memorial services but that still doesn't replace personal memories."

The gentle way Eyre called up the memories made the crunching noise of the Nyala moving over gravel fade into the background, the ever-present danger of an IED buried in the loose stones of the unpaved road forgotten for a moment.

He remembered Capt. Matt Dawe as a superb athlete and "a real people person, an all-around great guy."

Eyre served alongside two of Dawe's brothers.

He was "extremely dedicated, a devoted family man, very proud of his family, a young wife, a young son. A tremendous officer, loved by his troops," Eyre said.

He broke into a smile remembering Corp. Jordan Anderson — the smile turned into a slight grimace when the Nyala swerved around the washed-out road.

"He was one of the most articulate soldiers I've ever had the privilege to serve with," Eyre said. "Extremely intelligent. I'm going to miss him giving me good ideas on how to run the battalion."

Pte. Lane Watkins was a quiet team player. "Extremely strong," Eyre said. "He could fire a machine-gun like a pistol."

Cpl. Cole Bartsch always had a smile. "He was always happy, never complaining ... No task was too hard for

him."

Eyre said he didn't know Master Cpl. Colin Bason, a reservist from New Westminster, B.C., as well as the others. But he had tremendous respect for him all the same.

A sixth soldier who died fit in well with his company, Eyre said.

He was identified later Thursday as Capt. Jefferson Francis of 1 Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, based in Shilo, Man.

"Their dedication is something else, to sign up for something like this," Eyre said.

# Army braces for more deaths; Comrades killed | Edmonton Garrison tries to come to grips with casualties

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060069  
**PUBLICATION:** The Daily Gleaner (Fredericton)  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A7  
**BYLINE:** The Canadian Press  
**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 The Daily Gleaner (Fredericton)  
**WORD COUNT:** 623

---

Grieving for its last group of Afghanistan casualties, the army will steel itself for future challenges even as it mourns new losses, a Canadian military leader said Thursday.

Brig.-Gen. Mark Skidmore said the six who died — four of them based at Edmonton Garrison — were dedicated to their jobs and committed to the task Canada had set before them.

"We're proud to have known these soldiers. We are privileged to have served alongside them and we would be honoured to replace them in their noble cause in the accomplishment of our shared mission," Skidmore, the commander of Land Force Western Area, said Thursday.

"The army was their life, the army is our life and Canada is No. 1. And with those anchor points in our thoughts, we'll tend to our fallen and steel ourselves for the future challenges."

Col. Jon Vance, commander of 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade, the formation to which the dead soldiers belonged, agreed.

"The greatest and immediate impact on the soldiers is the sense of loss and grief, but they very quickly recover from that and steel themselves for the continuation of the mission," he said. "We're in the business of hard and we know that this is a complex and long-term engagement.

"We grieve, we lay soldiers to rest properly, we support the families and get on with the mission."

Vance said the families are well aware that there is a debate about Canada's mission in Afghanistan, but the most sensitive and mature approach right now is for Canada to offer support, not doubt.

"At this particular juncture, the focus must be on repatriating these valiant soldiers and ensuring that their families hear a clarion call of love and support from Canada."

That debate arose again immediately after the deaths, with Liberal Leader Stephane Dion and NDP Leader Jack Layton both saying Canada needs to reconsider its military commitment to Afghanistan.

But Prime Minister Stephen Harper restated his determination Thursday to keep troops there until 2009 despite mounting casualties.

Harper, in Halifax to make a \$3.1-billion funding announcement for the navy, said his government doesn't treat military deaths lightly but won't alter its plan to maintain the current operation.

"Obviously, as prime minister, casualties of any kind weigh heavily upon my mind, " he said. "But today is not the day to have a political debate on the future of the mission. Today is a day to express our condolences for these soldiers, to their families."

The six soldiers, along with an Afghan interpreter, died Wednesday in a roadside explosion as they were returning from a mission southwest of Kandahar.

Cpl. Jordan Anderson, Capt. Matthew Dawe, Cpl. Cole Bartsch and Pte. Lane Watkins were all members of the 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry based in Edmonton.

Capt. Jefferson Francis was with the 1st Royal Canadian Horse Artillery based in Shiloh, Man.

Master Cpl. Colin Bason was a reservist with the Royal Westminster Regiment based in New Westminster, B.C.

Bason, the father of a baby daughter, was a history buff who made his family proud, his mother said from Abbotsford, B.C.

"Here he is fulfilling something — democracy — trying to get democracy and peace established in another land and fighting terrorists."

Ann Bason said her son devoted his life to the military.

"He knew the chances that he was taking going over there," she said. "But my son was a history buff. He liked to travel. He liked everything about army. He had tons of army books.

"He enjoyed that kind of thing. He was fulfilling something he wanted to do and we're proud of him."

The casualties came 15 days after another roadside bomb killed three soldiers as they drove an unarmoured four-wheel-drive utility vehicle between checkpoints.

The family of Dawe, one of the highest-ranking Canadian officers to be killed in Afghanistan since the war began, remembered their son, brother and husband as a dedicated soldier who wouldn't let something as minor as a ruptured Achilles tendon get in his way.

Family members were not speaking to the media, but released a statement praising his love for the soldiers who worked under him.

"Matt was a superb soldier. He was very fit and prided himself on leading from the front," the statement read. "He loved his soldiers very much and we know that this feeling was reciprocal."

The statement said Dawe, 27, ruptured his Achilles tendon in the months leading to his deployment to Afghanistan, but he recovered faster than expected because he "didn't want his boys to go without him."

# Today's military families are better off, war widow says

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060063  
**PUBLICATION:** The Daily Gleaner (Fredericton)  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**SECTION:** News;News  
**PAGE:** A3  
**BYLINE:** MICHAEL STAPLES staples.michael@dailygleaner.com  
**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 The Daily Gleaner (Fredericton)  
**WORD COUNT:** 422

---

Recent tributes made to Canadian soldiers killed in Afghanistan have stirred up a mix of feelings for a Fredericton woman.

Izetta Gorman said she was in her early 20s when she received word during the Second World War that her husband, Waldo Richardson of Millville, had been killed in combat while serving with the Canadian military in Holland.

The tragedy left the mother of two children with no means of support and she had to scramble to make ends meet.

After reading about the deaths of Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan and learning about everything that's being done to help affected families, Gorman said she wonders why more couldn't have been done for people like her.

Unlike today, Gorman said, she had no contact with the military when word came of her spouse's death.

Instead, municipal officials were contacted by the government and she was informed of the tragedy by the postmaster.

Gorman said she was left to cope with two children — one an infant.

"It was pretty hard with two kids," she said, fighting back tears.

"If they (the affected spouses) can get help now and not have to leave the children to go to work, they're lucky. They have it made today. They don't have to split wood or lug water."

Janice Summerby, a spokeswoman for Veterans Affairs Canada, said there are a number of support programs under the New Veterans Charter for military family members killed in Afghanistan or elsewhere.

They include a death benefit, a tax-free, lump-sum payment of \$255,729.25, and other aids.

For its part, the Department of National Defence confirmed last month that it has more than doubled the burial stipend given to families of soldiers killed in the line of duty to \$12,700.

Also included in the package are items not previously covered, such as obituary notices, flowers and receptions following the service.

Although Gorman said she realizes the difficulty of returning her husband's body and that of thousands of other Canadians killed during the war back home, it still bothers her.

"I don't think that it's right," she said. "Our boys got wrapped in a blanket and buried."

Gorman, 83, said she received a widow's pension following her spouse's death.

The widow's pension was taken away from her after she married her current husband Arden Gorman, but it was later returned.

Arden Gorman, 83, who also served in the Armed Forces during the Second World War with a special-transport company, said there's no question that military families are treated better now.

But, he said, Veterans Affairs has taken great steps forward in recent years to look after those who served their country.

"Veterans Affairs have used me well," he said.

"But for years I couldn't get anything from them."

Harold Villers, 86, who served with the 6th Field Regiment out of Regina during the Second World War, said any neglect of soldiers or the families of fallen soldiers during or directly after the Second World War was a reflection of the times.

"Canada couldn't afford to do anything better back then," he said. "But the government of Canada has made up for all those times they never paid anything out."

Villers said veterans are well taken care of now and that's because times are better.

Veteran Dan Leeming, 87, who served with the Carleton York Regiment during the war, said certain services were still made available to soldiers at the time.

# Officer has complete faith in RG-31; Lt.-Col. Wayne Eyre says no vehicle in world can answer every threat

---

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

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**SECTION:** National/World

**PAGE:** B1

**SOURCE:** CP

**BYLINE:** Stephanie Levitz

**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR, Afghanistan

**WORD COUNT:** 765

---

Bumping along on a gravel road yesterday morning, the RG-31 Nyala vehicle shook and shuddered.

Lt.-Col. Wayne Eyre was uncomfortable, but unfazed.

On Wednesday, six Canadians died when their vehicle, also a Nyala, was ripped apart by a roadside bomb.

Eyre said he still has complete faith in the RG-31 as his vehicle slammed into potholes and thunked over speed bumps en route back to Kandahar Airfield from Spin Boldak, on the Pakistan border.

The Nyala armoured patrol vehicle is considered by the military as its heaviest protection against the scourge of improvised explosive devices or IEDs – commonly known as roadside bombs.

"I still have confidence in the vehicle," he said as the driver squawked out commands over the intercom.

"It's getting us from point A to point B. There's no vehicle in the world that will be an answer for every threat out there."

His sentiment was shared by retired Maj.-Gen. Lewis MacKenzie back in Canada.

"You'll never have a military vehicle that's 100-per-cent safe," MacKenzie said in a telephone interview. "It's just never been invented."

"They all have their vulnerabilities. And in this particular case, with the IED probably being based on an artillery shell that causes penetration, the result was as we saw it yesterday."

Tired from their drive and shaken by the latest deaths, soldiers gathered quietly to the side of the sand-coloured vehicles in Kandahar early yesterday. Like the six men killed Wednesday, members of the force-protection unit navigating the rugged terrain in this RG-31s were due to return home in August.

"This is a wake-up call," said one soldier who didn't want his name used. "What we thought was the safest thing out there maybe isn't." Tucked into the window panelling of their vehicle were two woollen teddy bears, a gift from a female soldier for good luck.

It was the only soft touch inside the harsh, cramped Nyala, with its plastic seats and awkward seatbelts taking away some of the charm of seeing the Afghan countryside go by through its tinted windows.

Officer has complete faith in RG-31; Lt.-Col. Wayne Eyre says no vehicle in world can answer every threat

The seatbelts are designed to keep soldiers from slamming their heads into the metal ceiling of the vehicles, if and when a blast strikes and pressure waves fill the narrow interior.

The young soldier said it was hard for him to climb into the Nyala in the morning, hard to keep going when the end of his mission is only weeks away.

But Eyre said now is the time for soldiers to work harder than ever before.

"There is a hollow spot, make no doubt about that," he told The Canadian Press in an exclusive interview. "But what we need to do is be strong, and we have to dig deeper than we've ever dug before and carry on with our task here."

In his more than 20 years with the Canadian Forces, Eyre has seen death many times.

In Afghanistan, he heads up the Operational Mentor Liaison Team which helps train the Afghan Army. He's been to farewell ceremonies for their soldiers, and countless ramp ceremonies for his own.

But soldiers of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry are special to him.

At least four of those killed Wednesday were from the 3rd Battalion of the Princess Patricia. He had come to know and respect them during his time as commanding officer of the Edmonton-based regiment.

Upon learning of the deaths, Eyre went straight to their side – even though he had left his role as their commanding officer behind in Canada. He did the same in the last week of June when three other men from the battalion were also killed by an IED.

He carries the memories of all the lost soldiers with him.

"You'll never forget them, they'll be with us forever," he said. "We have fairly formalized memorial services but that still doesn't replace personal memories."

The gentle way Eyre called up the memories made the crunching noise of the Nyala moving over gravel fade into the background, the ever-present danger of an IED buried in the loose stones of the unpaved road forgotten for a moment.

He remembered Capt. Matt Dawe as a superb athlete and "a real people person, an all-around great guy."

Eyre served alongside two of Dawe's brothers.

He was "extremely dedicated, a devoted family man, very proud of his family, a young wife, a young son. A tremendous officer, loved by his troops," Eyre said.

He broke into a smile remembering Corp. Jordan Anderson – the smile turned into a slight grimace when the Nyala swerved around the washed-out road.

"He was one of the most articulate soldiers I've ever had the privilege to serve with," Eyre said. "Extremely intelligent. I'm going to miss him giving me good ideas on how to run the battalion." Pte. Lane Watkins was a quiet team player. "Extremely strong," Eyre said. "He could fire a machine-gun like a pistol."

Cpl. Cole Bartsch always had a smile. "He was always happy, never complaining ... No task was too hard for him."

Officer has complete faith in RG-31; Lt.-Col. Wayne Eyre says no vehicle in world can answer even the most serious threat



Eyre said he didn't know Master Cpl. Colin Bason, a reservist from New Westminster, B.C., as well as the others. But he had tremendous respect for him all the same.

A sixth soldier who died fit in well with his company, Eyre said.

He was identified later Thursday as Capt. Jefferson Francis of 1 Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, based in Shilo, Man.

"Their dedication is something else, to sign up for something like this," Eyre said.

The tension inside the Nyala eased slightly once it's back on paved road, the threat of explosives diminished.

Eyre reflected on grieving with his men.

"There's a significant sense of frustration that the guys can't strike back," he said.

"But they understand the reasons why they can't, and in that their discipline is amazing."

Fighting a war against insurgents means the threat is ever-present, Eyre said.

"I talked to their commanders out there and said you can make every single right decision out there and people still get killed. It's the nature of conflict."

# 'The army was their life'; Military steels itself for future challenges after loss of six soldiers

---

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

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**SECTION:** National/World

**PAGE:** B1

**SOURCE:** CP

**BYLINE:** Bob Weber

**PHOTO:** Chuck Stoody/The Canadian Press

**DATELINE:** EDMONTON

Lt.–Col. Matthew Haussmann (above), commanding officer of The Royal Westminster Regiment, pauses while speaking to the media at the Armoury in New Westminster, B.C., yesterday about the death of Master Corp Colis Bason, one of six Canadian soldiers killed

**ILLUSTRATION:** by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan Wednesday. Brig.–Gen. Mark Skidmore (inset), Commander of Land Forces Western Area, speaks in Edmonton about the four Edmonton–based soldiers killed in the blast.; CPL. JORDAN ANDERSON; CAPT. JEFFERSON FRANCIS

**WORD COUNT:** 956

---

Still grieving for its last group of Afghanistan casualties, the army will steel itself for future challenges even as it mourns new losses, a Canadian military leader said yesterday.

Brig.–Gen. Mark Skidmore says the six who died – four of them based at Edmonton Garrison – were dedicated to their jobs and committed to the task Canada had set before them.

"We're proud to have known these soldiers. We are privileged to have served alongside them and we would be honoured to replace them in their noble cause in the accomplishment of our shared mission," Skidmore, the commander of Land Force Western Area, said yesterday. "The army was their life, the army is our life and Canada is No. 1. And with those anchor points in our thoughts, we'll tend to our fallen and steel ourselves for the future challenges."

Col. Jon Vance, commander of 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade, the formation to which the dead soldiers belonged, agreed.

"The greatest and immediate impact on the soldiers is the sense of loss and grief, but they very quickly recover from that and steel themselves for the continuation of the mission," he said. "We're in the business of hard and we know that this is a complex and long–term engagement.

"We grieve, we lay soldiers to rest properly, we support the families and get on with the mission."

Vance said the families are well aware that there is a debate about Canada's mission in Afghanistan, but the most sensitive and mature approach right now is for Canada to offer support, not doubt.

"At this particular juncture, the focus must be on repatriating these valiant soldiers and ensuring that their families hear a clarion call of love and support from Canada."

That debate arose again immediately after the deaths, with Liberal Leader Stephane Dion and NDP Leader

Jack Layton both saying Canada needs to reconsider its military commitment to Afghanistan.

But Prime Minister Stephen Harper restated his determination yesterday to keep troops there until 2009 despite mounting casualties.

Harper, in Halifax to make a \$3.1-billion funding announcement for the navy, said his government doesn't treat military deaths lightly but won't alter its plan to maintain the current operation.

"Obviously as prime minister, casualties of any kind weigh heavily upon my mind, " he said. "But today is not the day to have a political debate on the future of the mission. Today is a day to express our condolences for these soldiers, to their families."

The six soldiers, along with an Afghan interpreter, died Wednesday in a roadside explosion as they were returning from a mission southwest of Kandahar.

Cpl. Jordan Anderson, Capt. Matthew Dawe of Kingston, Cpl. Cole Bartsch and Pte. Lane Watkins were all members of the 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry based in Edmonton.

Capt. Jefferson Francis was with the 1st Royal Canadian Horse Artillery based in Shiloh, Man.

Master Cpl. Colin Bason was a reservist with the Royal Westminster Regiment based in New Westminster, B.C.

Bason, the father of a baby daughter, was a history buff who made his family proud, his mother said from Abbotsford, B.C.

"Here he is fulfilling something – democracy – trying to get democracy and peace established in another land and fighting terrorists."

Ann Bason said her son devoted his life to the military.

"He knew the chances that he was taking going over there," she said. "But my son was a history buff. He liked to travel. He liked everything about army. He had tons of army books.

"He enjoyed that kind of thing. He was fulfilling something he wanted to do and we're proud of him."

His regiment held a gathering yesterday in New Westminster, B.C. Commanding officer Lt.-Col. Matthew Haussmann said Bason loved his job.

"He was a reserve solder, which means he didn't do this full time. Although in his case it was hard to tell. He loved soldering and made this pretty much his passion and his primary vocation."

Bason's friend and fellow reservist Colin Baglaw said his buddy liked to "goof off."

"He was a bit of a trickster. He always seem to find a gem of humour in the worst situations."

The casualties came 15 days after another roadside bomb killed three soldiers as they drove an unarmoured four-wheel-drive utility vehicle between checkpoints.

The family of Dawe, one of the highest-ranking Canadian officers to be killed in Afghanistan since the war began, remembered their son, brother and husband as a dedicated soldier who wouldn't let something as minor as a ruptured Achilles tendon get in his way.

Family members were not speaking to the media, but released a statement praising his love for the soldiers who worked under him.

Dawe was reportedly badly shaken when three other Canadian soldiers under his command were killed by a roadside bomb June 20.

Bartsch was remembered by his aunt as a much-loved young man whom friends could count on when they needed him.

"He was always the reliable one," said Karen Shilson in a tearful telephone interview from Calgary.

"He would think nothing of taking the shirt off his back and giving it to you if you needed it worse than him. He was a good kid. He was one you could trust anywhere, any time."

Bartsch, whose family is from Whitecourt in northern Alberta, enlisted in the military right out of high school and re-enlisted in the hope of further service to Canada, Shilson said.

"His belief was, even if it cost him his life, he was going to help his country. And it did."

Shilson recalled plenty of happy times on the Bartsch family land, playing horseshoes or just hanging out. Bartsch and his cousin, her son, would take off into the bush for days at a time, camping, fishing and zooming around on quads.

"The kids always used to go camping a lot. He loved it outside."

Shilson said he was outgoing and got along with everybody. "He never thought twice about going out of his way to help somebody else."

Watkins, 20, who grew up in Clearwater, Man., was characterized as sometimes being shy, although he was also remembered as someone everybody liked.

"I find it very hard to look at his picture on the news and think of him as gone, being so young," said Lynn Galbraith, who taught Watkins at Pilot Mound Collegiate high school.

"He was well-liked by all his classmates. He was a big strapping lad. He was a good-sized kid. He could be shy at times, but he was outgoing with his friends."

Galbraith said Watkins always thought of joining the military once he graduated.

Sixty-six Canadian soldiers and one diplomat have been killed in Afghanistan since the war began in 2002.

Two memorials are being set up in the Lower Mainland for Master Corporal Colin Bason. He's one of six soldiers killed Tuesday in Afghanistan.

Pictures and books of condolence are being set up at the Royal Westminster Regiment, Bason's regiment, and at the Aldergrove army base, near his family's home town of Abbotsford.

Haugssmann said the family is being looked after by the army. "It's sad, but the army is getting pretty good at dealing with this kind of stuff. Too much practice."

# Sentenced soldier still wants to serve

---

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

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**SECTION:** National/World

**PAGE:** B1

**COLUMN:** In brief

**WORD COUNT:** 98

---

The future of a Quebec-based soldier who wants to go to Afghanistan is up in the air after he was sentenced to 15 months in the community yesterday for sexually assaulting a young woman.

A lawyer for Pte. Pier-Olivier Boulet, 22, had been seeking an unconditional discharge, which would have left him without a criminal record.

The woman was 18 when the rape took place in her bedroom at a party in 2004. She filed a complaint more than a year later and Boulet, who was a childhood friend of the woman's sister, was eventually charged in February 2006 with sexual assault.

# Growing opposition to Afghan war gives Harper a weapon

---

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

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**SECTION:** Editorial page

**PAGE:** 5

**COLUMN:** Foreign policy

**BYLINE:** MICHAEL DEN TANDT

**WORD COUNT:** 776

---

"Students of history will know that all major conflicts are resolved ultimately through peaceoriented discussions," Jack Layton smugly intoned at a press conference Wednesday, with the bodies of six Canadians, who are heroes, not yet cold. Once again, the federal NDP leader called on the government to pull the troops out of Afghanistan – now. Every new tragedy, every Canadian loss in combat, gives Layton cause to renew his demand that Canada should abandon its allies and leave the people of Afghanistan to their bleak fate.

Then there's Stephane Dion. The Liberal leader apparently realizes that a precipitous pullout would be disastrous for NATO and for Canada, but neither can the Liberals resist turning tragedy into political fodder. On Wednesday, Dion held a press conference of his own, during which he said the Liberals will never support an extension of the Canadian military mission in Afghanistan beyond its current mandate, which ends in February of 2009. Since Prime Minister Stephen Harper has ruled out any extension without Parliamentary approval, that appears to be that.

Here, too, as in Layton's rhetoric, there's comfort for the ignorant fanatics who are killing Canadians. For if Canada is leaving in February of 2009, come hell or high water, the insurgents need only redouble their efforts. It's a moral victory for them, a public–relations bonanza, and ample reason for them to continue with the tactics that are serving them so well.

There is one silver lining to the growing Canadian political opposition to the war effort, though. It may not be one the opposition is aware of, but if Harper is as clever a strategist as he is believed to be, it's very likely he is keenly aware of it.

The structural problem with the NATO mission in Afghanistan has always been this: too large and fractious a country, too few troops, and especially too few deployed in the south. While Canada, the Brits, the Americans and the Dutch bear the brunt of the carnage in Kandahar and Helmand, other major NATO powers, such as Germany and Italy, stick to the relatively safe north and west.

Then there's the problem of the Afghan government. President Hamid Karzai leads an administration rife with corruption. Billions of international aid dollars have been spent in Afghanistan over the past five years. Last year, another US\$10.5–billion was committed. Still, Afghan farmers in the south are so desperately poor that growing numbers of them rely on poppy cultivation to survive.

Perhaps most egregious at ground level is the problem of the Afghan police. There is no security, no safety, for anyone living in southern Afghanistan. The Afghan National Police are poorly armed, poorly equipped, poorly trained. Without security for the average Afghan, everything else stalls: development, reconstruction, health care, education.

These are intractable problems. Solving them will require a significant application of power. Strong pressure must be applied on the Afghan government to root out corruption. Strong pressure must be applied on the European powers to shoulder their fair share of the burden in the south.

Canada's only leverage in that effort is its powerful foothold in Kandahar, for which 67 Canadians have now paid the ultimate price, and its ability to withdraw. For though the Germans and others have little appetite for combat casualties, they do require the survival of NATO. The Soviet Union is gone, but Russia remains a threat to them. Also, Africa and the Middle East, the geographic epicentre of Islamist radicalism, are on Europe's doorstep.

There is a credible argument that if NATO fails in Afghanistan because of some members' unwillingness to live up to their treaty obligations, the alliance itself will fall apart. Likewise, one can argue that a unilateral Canadian withdrawal from the south would cause the overall NATO mission to fail because it would precipitate other flights by other nations.

So, Harper's concession to the opposition two weeks ago – that Parliament must approve any extension of the mission – held a not-so-subtle message for Europe and for the Afghan government: Pay attention to what we say and give us what we need. Do not take us for granted or you may lose us and, in losing us, lose much more.

In this diplomatic battle, which will happen entirely behind closed doors, the rantings of Layton and the equivocations of Dion give Harper something he badly needs: leverage. It's small comfort, but it's something.

Michael Den Tandt is editor of the Sun Times in Owen Sound and a former political correspondent based in Ottawa.

# A sense of loss – and purpose

---

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

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**SECTION:** Editorial page

**PAGE:** 5

**COLUMN:** Our View

**WORD COUNT:** 636

---

Jack Pike couldn't have put it any more aptly. "It's a dreadful business," the curator of the Royal Military College museum said Wednesday night after hearing news that Matthew Dawe was among the six Canadian soldiers killed earlier that day in Afghanistan. "When you have a [personal] link, it puts such a different context on it."

Today, many parts of the city are feeling that different context. In addition to those at the college who knew Dawe as a cadet with a tremendous sense of humour, those in the volleyball community are grieving, as they remember Capt. Dawe from his days on the RMC varsity team. His former classmates at La Salle Secondary School have had the tragedy of Afghanistan brought too close to home. So, too, has anyone who served with Dawe in the Princess of Wales' Own Regiment.

To speak to anyone who knew him – family man, but a loyal career soldier from a devoted military family – leaves those who didn't know him with a wish that they had.

If moments such as this have any useful purpose, it is found in reflection. We admire the courage of the men and women who put themselves in harm's way for the sake of others. We respect that they've undertaken a task for which not all of us would have the stomach. At the same time we feel proud that, like them, we can call ourselves Canadian.

One thing we should not feel is the need to capitalize on this tragedy in a political sense. Some, most notably the NDP, have used each successive death in Afghanistan as an opportunity to decry our presence there, and to call for our withdrawal. Climbing on the bodies of dead soldiers to make a political point is beyond shameful.

It is just plain wrong.

Canada has a proud military history and perhaps it is because we are so uninformed about it that many of us cannot place our role in Afghanistan in anything but a superficial context.

Critics of the mission question our need to be there, as if a Taliban–led country was somehow better for the Afghan people than a rebuilt country could be. We had no stake in a conflict between Germany and Poland in 1939, either. We went as loyal members of the British Empire, but few would argue today that we shouldn't have become involved in the Second World War.

Critics decry the loss of life. We should all regret it deeply, but good things do not come without cost. We recently celebrated the 90th anniversary of the battle of Vimy Ridge. Today, we see it as a watershed moment in our history, our greatest victory and a defining moment. In doing so, do we forget that 3,598 Canadians died there? Do we forget that 900 Canadians had to die at Dieppe to learn lessons that made D–Day a success?



We're told that the Soviet Union was unable to tame Afghanistan and that the U.S. is in a quagmire in Iraq, as if to ask what hope of success we can have when such powerful nations fail. Better knowledge of our history would remind us that by the end of the First World War, the Canadian army was renowned as the premier fighting force on the Western Front. Because the British still treated us as colonials in the Second World War, Canada often got the dirty work, but in Sicily and in Holland, we prevailed. Canadians attained more of their D-Day objectives, faster, than anyone else. Why shouldn't we expect to do better where others have failed?

The tragic death of Capt. Matthew Dawe should not compel us to withdraw from Afghanistan. It should instead fill us with resolve to accomplish the things we, as a nation, set out to do.

# RMC grapples with news; Possibility of tragedy understood

---

<b>PUBLICATION:</b>	Kingston Whig–Standard (ON)
<b>DATE:</b>	2007.07.06
<b>SECTION:</b>	News
<b>PAGE:</b>	3
<b>BYLINE:</b>	Paul Schliesmann
<b>PHOTO:</b>	Ian MacAlpine/The Whig–Standard
<b>ILLUSTRATION:</b>	"Every [military] death hits us a certain way, but this one is different because we knew him," says Commander Darren Rich, Royal Military College's deputy director of cadets.
<b>WORD COUNT:</b>	751

---

It was a grim job that the deputy director of cadets knew he had to perform before the work day started yesterday morning at Royal Military College.

Commander Darren Rich walked up the Memorial Staircase of the Mackenzie Building, past the commemorative stained–glass windows, and counted the framed pictures of graduates killed in the line of duty – about 350 in all.

Now another name and photo will have to be added, that of a young man Rich knew well and liked: Capt. Matthew Dawe, 27, a Kingston native and one of six Canadian soldiers killed Wednesday in Afghanistan by a roadside bomb planted by insurgents.

"Not fun. I've been in this building for four years and I'd never done that," said Rich of his preparations for the barrage of media enquiries that ensued. "I guess these things do focus you a little more on that aspect of the job."

That aspect of the job – the fighting part – isn't part of the academic curriculum. Royal Military College educates Canada's future military leaders. It grants them university degrees.

This time of the year, few of the 800 cadets returning in the fall can be found on campus. Most have dispersed for the summer to train on simulated battlefields, in tanks and airplanes, and on ships.

Possible future cadets could be seen and heard yesterday – hundreds of young sea cadets performing marching drills and playing team–building games at their annual summer camp.

Above them, the stern reminder of what their futures could hold: flags flying at half–mast for six dead Canadians.

Inside the stolid limestone walls of RMC, staff were thoughtful.

"Matt only graduated from here in 2004 and a lot of his professors are still here. A lot of civilian staff and military staff as well. Every [military] death hits us a certain way, but this one is different because we knew him," said Rich.

It would have been difficult not to know of Matt Dawe around RMC. He was an academic honours recipient in civil engineering, stellar athlete and student leader.

"Always had a smile on his face. Always quick to share a laugh, tell a joke," recalled Rich. "Always very aware of how he fit into the command structure of the college. He was like the student union president – with a lot more responsibilities."

If a cadet representative was needed on the trip to West Point, that was Dawe's role. Dinners with dignitaries in Ottawa? Dawe again.

That kind of experience gathered at RMC, coupled with his battle assignment in Afghanistan, was pointing to a stellar career with the Canadian Forces.

"Obviously, he was well on his way," said Rich. "For his rank and time in the military, everyone wants to be in a command – a leadership – position, responsible for his troops."

This time, the responsibility ended in tragedy.

Dawe is the second RMC graduate to be killed in Afghanistan. Capt. Nicola Goddard died May 17, 2006, in a grenade attack by Taliban insurgents. She was a member of the 1st Regiment of the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery and the 54th Canadian soldier to lose her life in Afghanistan.

Matthew Dawe was platoon commander of the 3rd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry out of Edmonton. He and his comrades were travelling in an RG-31 armoured vehicle when they triggered the hidden explosive device, bringing Canada's death count in Afghanistan to 66.

Even though RMC doesn't train cadets for combat, Rich said that discussions about their future roles – and possible death in the line of duty – take place in the classrooms when studying such courses as politics and the humanities.

"We don't hide that here. We discuss that openly," he said. "I'm sure the cadets talk about it amongst themselves and when they go home to relatives and to their friends."

Rich said that with Canada's commitment to stay in Afghanistan until 2009, the possibility of cadets graduating and engaging in conflicts has become a new reality within the RMC culture. RMC officer graduates have not only served on the ground there, but on ships in the Persian Gulf and as air crew flying in and out of the war-torn country.

"Matt's not the first of the college graduates to be in Afghanistan – and he's not likely to be the last," Rich said.

At RMC, support services are being made available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for those who need to talk about the death of a favourite former student. Mostly, Rich said, the talk has been among peers.

"That's been going on quite a bit this morning because quite a few of us knew him. We reflect on the loss. On the family," he said.

Dawe leaves behind a wife, Tara, and two-year-old son, Lucas. Dawe's father, Peter, is executive director of the RMC Club of Canada, so the ties are close.

And the possibility of further tragedies is ever-present at the college.

"We may not accept it and we may not understand why it happens, but these are the choices we make," said Rich, picking his words slowly and carefully.

"We understand, individually, these things may happen and do happen. That's part of what we accept when we put the uniform on. Under the uniform, we all grieve and think about things in retrospect."

[pschliesmann@thewhig.com](mailto:pschliesmann@thewhig.com)

# A passion for military service; Matthew Dawe remembered as dedicated, generous

---

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

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**SECTION:** Front

**PAGE:** 1

**BYLINE:** Ann Lukits; Rob Tripp

**PHOTO:** Courtesy of Maj. Nicholas Vlachopoulos Courtesy of Royal Military College Michael Lea/The Whig–Standard Ian MacAlpine/The Whig–Standard Courtesy of La Salle Secondary School Courtesy of La Salle Secondary School Courtesy of Royal Military College Photo courtesy of Royal Military College Photo courtesy Dave Holsworth The Canadian Press

**ILLUSTRATION:** Matthew Dawe, with the Civil Engineering Department at Royal Military College in 2003, takes part in a third–year field exercise in Greece.; The Dawe brothers (left to right) Philip, Matthew, James and Peter Jr. embrace for a family photo.; NEAR LEFT: Flowers sit at the granite commemorative stone at the Royal Military College memorial arch that bears the name M.J. Dawe.; FAR LEFT: The McKenzie building tower at the Royal Military College flies the Canadian flag at half–mast in honour of Capt. Matthew Dawe and five other soldiers killed in Afghanistan on Wednesday.; As a Grade 11 student, Dawe hams it up at a La Salle Secondary School leadership camp held at Camp Iawah near Westport in 1996.; Dawe's smile hints at his impishness in this Grade 11 yearbook photo.; Matthew Dawe joined the 3rd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, based out of Edmonton.; The Dawe brothers (from left), James, Philip, Peter Jr. and Matthew, all served in the Canadian military. Matthew Dawe was killed by a roadside bomb on Wednesday while in Afghanistan.; A picture from the La Salle Secondary School yearbook shows Matthew Dawe hamming it up in Grade 11.; Reine and Peter Dawe Sr. are parents of four sons who joined the military.; A proud Capt. Matthew Dawe graduated from Royal Military College in 2004.; RMC cadets and volleyball teammates, in a photo likely taken in 2002 (from left): Guillaume Tremblay, Matt Dawe, Dave Holsworth and Dan Wowryk.; Matthew Dawe greets his son Lucas during a briefing at CFB Edmonton in February 2007.

**WORD COUNT:** 1301

---

Combat engineer David Holsworth always imagined sitting down sometime in the future with his childhood army–brat pal and fellow RMC grad, Matt Dawe, to talk about their military adventures.

"We'd meet again sometime and he would have had a prosperous career," Holsworth imagined.

Instead, Holsworth was stunned to get a phone call Wednesday telling him that his childhood friend had been killed by a roadside bomb southwest of Kandahar.

"I was at a loss for words," said Holsworth, who is himself preparing for a six–month tour in Afghanistan. "I had to sit down. I just couldn't believe it."

Dawe, 27, of the 3rd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, was on patrol with five other Canadian soldiers and an Afghan interpreter when their armoured vehicle was ripped apart by a devastating blast. All seven died.

Dawe, the son of a prominent Kingston military family, leaves behind a wife, Tara, and a two-year-old son, Lucas, whose birthday is July 4, the day Dawe was killed. Matthew Dawe was one of four brothers in the Canadian Forces.

The family declined to be interviewed yesterday, but released a statement.

"The pain is incredible and the feeling of loss overwhelming but we will get through this for Tara, Lucas and our family," they wrote.

They thanked family, friends and others who have offered kind words and support.

In their statement, they noted that Dawe had suffered a ruptured Achilles tendon in the months before he was sent to Afghanistan, but that he recovered quickly "because he didn't want his boys to go without him."

Like all who knew Dawe, Holsworth is grieving and lamenting the loss of an exceptional young man who seemed destined to greatness as a soldier and leader.

"Nobody was as passionate as him," said Holsworth, who grew up with Dawe as a neighbour, classmate and fellow cadet at Royal Military College.

At La Salle Secondary School in Kingston, Dawe impressed teachers with his intelligence, exuberance and innate leadership.

"One of the things that you noticed about him was that he carried himself with such confidence and pride in his abilities as a person," said English teacher Mark McKechnie, who taught him in Grade 13.

He had tremendous pride in himself, his family and his country, McKechnie said.

"There was no question in our mind that he was going to serve in the military and that he would serve with honour and distinction."

While in high school, Dawe joined the Princess of Wales Own Regiment, a reserve unit in Kingston.

"He struck me as just a wonderful young kid, really dedicated, hard working, full of spunk," said Mike Shultz, who was commanding officer at the time. "I can't say enough about Matt. He was just a super individual."

During several years in the reserve unit, Dawe also played for the unit's Garrison League hockey team.

Dawe charmed people with a radiant smile and sense of fun.

La Salle Secondary biology teacher Allison Doyle affectionately recalled his mischievousness.

"He used to call me Doyley," she said, mimicking his classroom comments. " 'OK Doyley, someone's got to speak up, this test doesn't make sense.' "

She said his smile and enthusiasm were contagious.

"He was absolutely hilarious, he was just one of those guys who you knew was a good friend, right off the bat," said Tiffany Kisway, who met Dawe at RMC and was in the same squadron.

"He could do imitations with the best of them in French and English because he was completely bilingual."

Kisway, now stationed at CFB Halifax, said Dawe had a natural charisma that attracted people. Although they weren't best friends, she gravitated towards him.

"I wanted to hear what he had to say, he was so intelligent," she said.

Dawe was born on April 1, 1980. His family settled in Kingston in 1991. Dawe's father is retired lieutenant-colonel Peter Dawe, now the executive director of the RMC Club, an organization involved in alumni affairs for the college.

The Dawes moved in beside another military family, the Holsworths, and the two young boys, Matt Dawe and David Holsworth, began attending what was then Ecole du parc Niagara together in Grade 6 (it is now Ecole Madeleine-de-Roybon).

Retired colonel James Holsworth, David's father, coached Matt on soccer and little league baseball teams.

Even as a youngster, Dawe showed athletic prowess.

"His exuberance and enthusiasm and go-get-'em attitude were always there," the senior Holsworth said.

He watched Dawe "grow and mature and become a young boy to a gangly teenager to a very enthusiastic cadet."

After elementary school, Dawe and his pal David Holsworth enrolled at Kingston Collegiate and Vocational Institute. By Grade 11, Dawe had transferred to La Salle Secondary. He told his friend that he thought it was a better high school.

Dawe excelled at La Salle, earning Ontario Scholar grades and making the school's honour roll. He won the school's top award in physics and a full scholarship to RMC.

"Almost immediately you realized how smart he was," said Liz Westgarth, a French teacher at the school. "I think he was a very well-read young man and knew a lot about the world and all kinds of topics.

"He loved debates and discussion."

Biology teacher Doyle said Dawe had a creative flair that many scientists lack.

One of Dawe's independent study assignments was to write a story.

"I had no other student hand in a 22-page story for biology and excel," she said. "It was a mini-novel somehow tied to biology.

"He was a creative and an attentive student."

Pat Garrod was head of student services at La Salle for several years before she moved to the board office. She organized the school's leadership camp with Allison Doyle, an annual event that involved about 100 students.

Matt Dawe, she said, was one of about eight senior students selected to be a student leader.

"He was just one of those energetic guys who just gave it his all," Garrod said. "He was loved by all the kids."

In his graduating yearbook message, Dawe, showing off his zany side, wrote that his goal in life was to "be a

doctor, an Olympic gold medal sprinter or maybe a stripper." His nicknames, he wrote, included "Mad Dawg Dawe."

Dawe still found time for athletics, while achieving top grades. He was a member of the La Salle varsity volleyball team.

At RMC he was a member of the varsity volleyball team for four of the five years he was a cadet. He repeated his first year.

Matt McLeod was in first year at RMC in 2003, the year that Dawe was in his fourth year.

At the time, Dawe was a respected figure on the campus, captain of the volleyball team, the Cadet Wing Senior and a leader.

McLeod said that if anyone on campus had the right to lord his superiority over first-year cadets, it was Dawe. But he didn't.

"He was really a super supportive guy to all the first-years," McLeod said. "He was a really, really great guy and a great leader." With Dawe's responsibilities and academic schedule, he was terribly busy but always seemed to have time to speak to first-years.

Dawe and David Holsworth joined the army at the same time, after graduating from high school.

The pair were among roughly a dozen Kingston teens who took a bus to Quebec for basic training.

Holsworth recalled Dawe meeting the love of his life on that trip, Tara McMunn, who also had joined the military.

"He was hitting on her pretty hard on the bus ride," Holsworth said. Dawe and McMunn began dating seriously during basic training in St. Jean, Que., and soon after they returned to Kingston to RMC, Dawe gave McMunn a ring.

Today, she is his widow, living in Edmonton, where he was stationed. Holsworth said McMunn transferred from RMC to Queen's University after only a few months at the military school.

"I was really proud of him, to know that he was with Tara and had a child and a house," Holsworth said. "It's a shame."

Tara Dawe is expected to arrive in Kingston today as the family gathers in preparation for what is expected to be a large military funeral.

The bodies of the six Canadian soldiers are to arrive in Trenton on Monday afternoon.

Holsworth said Dawe was a remarkably multi-faceted person.

He loved theatre and somehow found time to become involved in productions and he loved music.

"He was a pretty good dancer," Holsworth said. "He was always the life of the party."

Dawe distinguished himself, said his friend, through intensity, passion and competitiveness.

That drive might have sprung from his place as the youngest of four successful brothers.

A passion for military service; Matthew Dawe remembered as dedicated, generous



"He always had to outdo his brothers," he said. "I think that drove his competitive side [but] he loved his brothers."

In 2004, his graduation year, Dawe earned the H.R.H. Prince of Wales Cup, which is awarded to the graduating athlete who best exemplifies athletic, academic, military and bilingual excellence at RMC.

Holsworth is still in shock from the news of his friend's death, but it hasn't dampened his enthusiasm for the military mission he himself will join July 27. He will serve with 5 Combat Engineer Regiment, based out of Valcartier, Que.

"I'm not afraid to go, afraid isn't the right word," he said. "I'm anxious. I know it's going to be hard."

In the late 1990s, La Salle English teacher Mark McKechnie had an eerie "sense of foreboding" about Dawe.

"We knew Matt was a person looking for adventure," he said. "You knew he was somebody – I don't mean this in a careless way – who liked to take risks.

"He liked action. He liked to move around, even in class, and you knew that he was going to seek out those sorts of things and to do it with pride."

McKechnie said La Salle considers its students to be part of a large family. "We always mourn the children we lose," he said.

James Holsworth and his wife, Anne, are also in mourning. Every time the couple heard about another Canadian soldier dying in Afghanistan, "my wife and I would say 'I hope it's not Matthew or someone else [we know]," he said.

"We know three or four of the boys and girls over there. But when it's someone you do know and you're close, it really hits home."

The senior Holsworth said there are no words to describe the devotion of the Dawe family to the community and to the country.

"You never like to bury your sons and your daughters," he said. "It's tragic that it has to happen to such a family – that they ultimately pay the ultimate sacrifice."

# Operation H

---

**PUBLICATION:** The Chronicle–Herald

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**SECTION:** Editorial

**PAGE:** A8

**WORD COUNT:** 465

---

EYEBALLING the logistics, it might have been a prime ministerial visit to Kabul or Kandahar. Fly in on very short notice. Confine activities to the Canadian military base. Avoid contact with hostile locals and warlords. Support the troops and get out quickly. But Thursday's dangerous away mission, with shields up and cloaking device activated, wasn't to Afghanistan.

Stephen Harper's brief and bunkered touchdowns were to Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan, provinces that are now getting the full foreign–land treatment from the prime minister because their governments won't meekly let him off the hook for breaking his word to them on the offshore accord and equalization.

So even when he has federal money and good news to spread around, as he did in both provinces yesterday, Mr. Harper's petty isolationism turned his trip into a bad–will tour. The national and local media were buzzing just as much over The Mighty Snub as they were over The Mystery Announcement.

Saskatchewan Premier Lorne Calvert was surprised to hear "via The Globe and Mail" of Mr. Harper's visit there to highlight his budget commitment of \$1.5 billion towards biofuels, while Nova Scotia Premier Rodney MacDonald was kept in the dark about defence spending in Halifax. "If it's good news for my province, I would be very disappointed not to know what that news is," Mr. MacDonald said Wednesday.

Of course, Mr. Harper denied on Thursday any slight was intended. He said the premier could have shown up at the news conference if he wanted to, but that this was "obviously strictly a federal announcement." Talk about a warm invitation.

Regardless of Mr. Harper's rather strict interpretation of protocol – federal representatives are not typically invited to provincial announcements, he pointedly added – you'd think he'd owe the premier the courtesy of a head's up on news that Ottawa is investing \$3.1 billion in upgrading a dozen Halifax–class frigates. You'd think the premier might be called upon to comment, if nothing else, on the potential economic impact on his province – especially since the entire refit will be done in this country and by Canadian companies. Once this work is completed in 2017, our frigates will become "giant floating command posts" that can lead, and not just participate in, naval operations. Mr. Harper does deserve praise for restoring ambition to the military and for fashioning a more muscular Canadian military presence on the domestic and global scene. The Forces deserve equipment that reflects the calibre and capabilities of their personnel.

Now, if only Mr. Harper would stop being his own worst enemy at home, he might be better positioned to take on the enemies of Canada abroad.

# Al-Qaida seeks more Muslim support in Iraq; Group's second in command seeks to bolster terror network's wing

---

**PUBLICATION:** The Chronicle-Herald

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**SECTION:** World

**PAGE:** A7

**SOURCE:** The Associated Press

**BYLINE:** Lee Keath

**ILLUSTRATION:** A blindfolded Palestinian is seen following his arrest by Israeli troops during an army raid, at a staging area on Israel's border with the Gaza Strip, Thursday. (TSAFRIR ABAYOV / AP)

**WORD COUNT:** 787

---

BAGHDAD – Al-Qaida's deputy leader sought to bolster the terror network's main arm in Iraq in a new video released Thursday, calling on Muslims to rally behind it at a time when the group is on the defensive, faced with U.S. offensives and splits with other insurgent groups.

Ayman al-Zawahri defended the Islamic State of Iraq – the insurgent umbrella group headed by al-Qaida – against critics among Islamic militant groups, saying it was a vanguard for fighting off the U.S. military and eventually establishing a "caliphate" of Islamic rule across the region.

Al-Zawahri, the top deputy of Osama bin Laden, called on Muslims to follow a two-pronged strategy: work at home to topple "corrupt" Arab regimes and join al-Qaida's "jihad," or holy war, in Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia to fight and train "to prepare for the next jihad."

He urged Hamas not to compromise and bend under Arab and international pressure to end its rule in the Gaza Strip and make way for a unified Palestinian government that could pursue peace with Israel.

"As for the leadership of Hamas, I tell it: return to the truth, for you will only get something worse than what (late Palestinian leader Yasser) Arafat got" from the Israelis in negotiations, he said. The peace process, he said, is a U.S. attempt to "deceive the Islamic nation and say that America solved the issue of Palestine, so what need is there to fight it and wage jihad against it?"

In an earlier message after its seizure of Gaza, al-Zawahri urged Hamas to form an alliance with al-Qaida, a call the Palestinian militant group shunned.

The Egyptian militant did not mention last week's failed car bombing attempts in Britain, which British authorities are investigating for al-Qaida links. That suggested the video, posted Thursday on an Islamic militant website, was made before the events in London and Glasgow.

Al-Qaida's declaration of the Islamic State of Iraq last year was a dramatic move aimed at staking out its leadership of Iraq's insurgency. Allying itself with several smaller Iraqi Sunni insurgent groups, it presented the Islamic State as an alternative government within Iraq, claiming to hold territory.

The move quickly met resistance. Some Islamic extremist clerics in the Arab world said it was too soon to declare an Islamic state because the Islamic law qualifications were not yet met and argued that a true Islamic

Al-Qaida seeks more Muslim support in Iraq; Group's second in command seeks to bolster terror network's

state is not viable while there are still U.S. forces in Iraq.

Several large Iraqi Sunni insurgent groups publicly denounced al-Qaida, saying its fighters were killing theirs and pressuring them to join the Islamic State. One group, the 1920 Revolution Brigades, has begun overtly co-operating with U.S. forces and Sunni tribal leaders to attack al-Qaida.

At the same time, increased U.S. forces sent to Iraq this year are waging a number of offensives in suspected al-Qaida strongholds north and south of Baghdad and in western Anbar province, claiming to have captured and killed a number of significant figures in the group.

The offensives have caused an increase in American casualties, but insurgent and militia attacks appear to have fallen in the past week.

Still, a car bomb Thursday evening killed 17 people and wounded 28 when it blasted a photographers' shop in a Shiite district of Baghdad, where a bride and groom were inside getting their wedding photos taken as their relatives and friends waited outside, an official at the nearest police station said. The bride and groom were among the wounded, with minor injuries, said an official at the hospital where the victims were taken.

Elsewhere, a policeman and civilian were killed in shootings and bombings in Baghdad, and a roadside bomb hit a police patrol in the northern city of Mosul, killing a civilian and wounding three police.

Two American soldiers were killed and two were wounded by a roadside bomb Thursday in south Baghdad, the U.S. military said. A military statement specified that the bomb was an explosively formed penetrator, a type of weapon that the Americans say is provided to Iraqi extremists by the Iranians. Iran denies the allegation.

The U.S. military said a helicopter crash on Wednesday that killed an American soldier in western Iraq was caused when the craft hit electrical wires, adding that ground fire was not a cause. The Islamic State of Iraq said in a statement Wednesday the crash happened during a battle, and that "God blinded" the pilot, causing him to hit the wires.

Iraq's Shiite and Kurdish leaders on Thursday were trying to overcome a Sunni Arab boycott of the cabinet of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, which threatens to hold up a key new oil law. The United States is pressing hard for passage of the long-delayed oil law in hopes it will encourage Sunni support of the government.

# Soldiers remain focused; "We have to dig deeper than we've ever dug before and carry on with our task here"

---

**PUBLICATION:** The Chronicle–Herald

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**SECTION:** World

**PAGE:** A3

**SOURCE:** The Canadian Press

**BYLINE:** Stephanie Levitz

**ILLUSTRATION:** Nyala armoured vehicles are shown at sunrise at Kandahar AirField in Afghanistan on Thursday. Six Canadian soldiers and one Afghan were killed on Wednesday when the Nyala they were riding in was struck by a roadside bomb. (Stephanie Levitz / CP)

**WORD COUNT:** 689

---

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan – Bumping along on a gravel road Thursday morning, the RG–31 Nyala vehicle shook and shuddered.

Lt.–Col. Wayne Eyre was uncomfortable, but unfazed.

On Wednesday, six Canadians died when their vehicle, also a Nyala, was ripped apart by a roadside bomb.

Eyre said he still has complete faith in the RG–31 as his vehicle slammed into potholes and thunked over speed bumps en route back to Kandahar Airfield from Spin Boldak, on the Pakistan border.

The Nyala armoured patrol vehicle is considered by the military as its heaviest protection against the scourge of improvised explosive devices or IEDs – commonly known as roadside bombs.

"I still have confidence in the vehicle," he said as the driver squawked out commands over the intercom.

"It's getting us from point A to point B. There's no vehicle in the world that will be an answer for every threat out there."

His sentiment was shared by retired Maj.–Gen. Lewis MacKenzie back in Canada.

"You'll never have a military vehicle that's 100–per–cent safe," MacKenzie said in a telephone interview. "It's just never been invented."

"They all have their vulnerabilities. And in this particular case, with the IED probably being based on an artillery shell that causes penetration, the result was as we saw it yesterday."

Tired from their drive and shaken by the latest deaths, soldiers gathered quietly to the side of the sand–coloured vehicles in Kandahar early Thursday. Like the six men killed Wednesday, members of the force–protection unit navigating the rugged terrain in this RG–31s were due to return home in August.

"This is a wake–up call," said one soldier who didn't want his name used. "What we thought was the safest thing out there maybe isn't." The young soldier said it was hard for him to climb into the Nyala in the

Soldiers remain focused; "We have to dig deeper than we've ever dug before and carry on with our task here"

morning, hard to keep going when the end of his mission is only weeks away.

But Eyre said now is the time for soldiers to work harder than ever before.

"There is a hollow spot, make no doubt about that," he told The Canadian Press in an exclusive interview. "But what we need to do is be strong, and we have to dig deeper than we've ever dug before and carry on with our task here."

In his more than 20 years with the Canadian Forces, Eyre has seen death many times.

In Afghanistan, he heads up the Operational Mentor Liaison Team which helps train the Afghan Army. He's been to farewell ceremonies for their soldiers, and countless ramp ceremonies for his own. But soldiers of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry are special to him.

At least four of those killed Wednesday were from the 3rd Battalion of the Princess Patricia. He had come to know and respect them during his time as commanding officer of the Edmonton-based regiment.

Upon learning of the deaths, Eyre went straight to their side – even though he had left his role as their commanding officer behind in Canada. He did the same in the last week of June when three other men from the battalion were also killed by an IED.

He carries the memories of all the lost soldiers with him.

"You'll never forget them, they'll be with us forever," he said. "We have fairly formalized memorial services but that still doesn't replace personal memories."

He remembered Capt. Matt Dawe as a superb athlete and "a real people person, an all-around great guy."

Eyre served alongside two of Dawe's brothers.

He was "extremely dedicated, a devoted family man, very proud of his family, a young wife, a young son. A tremendous officer, loved by his troops," Eyre said.

He broke into a smile remembering Corp. Jordan Anderson – the smile turned into a slight grimace when the Nyala swerved around the washed-out road.

"He was one of the most articulate soldiers I've ever had the privilege to serve with," Eyre said. "Extremely intelligent. I'm going to miss him giving me good ideas on how to run the battalion." Pte. Lane Watkins was a quiet team player. "Extremely strong," Eyre said. "He could fire a machine-gun like a pistol."

Cpl. Cole Bartsch always had a smile. "He was always happy, never complaining . . . No task was too hard for him."

Eyre said he didn't know Master Cpl. Colin Bason, a reservist from New Westminster, B.C., as well as the others. But he had tremendous respect for him all the same.

A sixth soldier, identified Thursday as Capt. Jefferson Francis of 1 Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, based in Shilo, Man, fit in well with his company, Eyre said.

"Their dedication is something else, to sign up for something like this," he said.

The tension inside the Nyala eased slightly once it's back on paved road, the threat of explosives diminished.

Soldiers remain focused; "We have to dig deeper than we've ever dug before and carry on with our task here."

Eyre reflected on grieving with his men.

"There's a significant sense of frustration that the guys can't strike back," he said.

"But they understand the reasons why they can't, and in that their discipline is amazing."

Fighting a war against insurgents means the threat is ever-present, Eyre said.

"I talked to their commanders out there and said you can make every single right decision out there and people still get killed. It's the nature of conflict."

Sixty-six Canadian soldiers and one diplomat have now been killed in Afghanistan.

# Harper restates Canada's military obligation

---

**PUBLICATION:** The Chronicle–Herald

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**SECTION:** Canada

**PAGE:** A3

**SOURCE:** The Canadian Press

**BYLINE:** Alison Auld

**WORD COUNT:** 616

---

Prime Minister Stephen Harper restated his determination Thursday to keep Canadian troops in Afghanistan until 2009 despite mounting casualties at the hands of an enemy emboldened by a lethal shift in tactics.

Harper, in Halifax to make a \$3.1 billion funding announcement for the navy, said his government doesn't treat military deaths lightly, but they will not alter his plan to maintain the current operation even as opposition calls grow louder for a withdrawal from the war-torn nation.

"Obviously as prime minister casualties of any kind weigh heavily upon my mind, " he said on the flight deck of the frigate HMCS Halifax.

"But today is not the day to have a political debate on the future of the mission. Today is a day to express our condolences for these soldiers, to their families."

The pledge to stay on followed one of the deadliest days in Afghanistan for Canadian troops. Six soldiers and their Afghan interpreter were killed Wednesday when they hit a potent roadside bomb in Kandahar's Zhari district.

They were travelling in a RG–31, a heavily armoured patrol vehicle with a V-shaped hull that's designed to withstand mine blasts and is considered one of the military's strongest in protecting against the deadly scourge of roadside bombs.

But somehow the explosion managed to engulf the Nyala in flames, leaving the soldiers little chance of survival and raising fears that the insurgents have adopted the same kind of deadly tactics used in Iraq.

"There's a real danger that Afghanistan starts to look more and more like Iraq," Steven Staples of the Rideau Institute, an Ottawa-based think-tank, said in an interview.

"It's pretty clear that insurgents are learning from the experience in Iraq, where roadside bombs have proven to be incredibly lethal at striking back against the foreign militaries there. So Canadians are going to confront this a lot more often."

Already, the numbers seem to bear this out.

Sixty-six Canadian military personnel have been killed in Afghanistan since the start of the mission in 2002. Of those, 24 have died as a result of improvised explosive devices. One-third of the fatalities have taken place this year alone.

Three soldiers were killed on June 20 by a roadside bomb when they were travelling between checkpoints in an unarmoured all-terrain vehicle.



Six Canadian soldiers were killed on Easter Sunday, April 8, when another roadside bomb ripped through their LAV-3, a light armoured vehicle.

Harper said tactics will be reviewed in the wake of the most recent fatalities, while military personnel in Afghanistan conceded that it's not possible to protect against all attacks.

Brig.-Gen. Tim Grant, the top Canadian commander in Afghanistan, said an investigation is underway but that it's not clear why this particular bomb managed to defeat the Nyala's defences.

Harper said Ottawa has provided Canada's soldiers with a full range of equipment – including tanks – but he declined to discuss how the military should respond to the Taliban's use of larger, more powerful roadside bombs.

"In terms of the operational details of the mission and how the military limits casualties, these are military decisions," he said under grey skies on the city's waterfront.

But critics say the government has engaged in a futile arms race with the insurgency as they try to defend against an enemy that keeps building bigger bombs that can outflank their resources.

"We keep increasing the size of our armoured vehicles," said Anthony Salloum of the Rideau Institute. "The problem is no one knows where this is going to end. There are only so many vehicles out there."

The latest deaths renewed the political debate surrounding the mission, with the Liberals again urging Harper to inform NATO allies that Canada will not be renewing its combat commitment after 2009.

NDP Leader Jack Layton also reiterated his position that Canada should pull out now.

Citing a mounting military and civilian death toll, Layton said Harper should engineer an immediate scaledown of operations and take a lead role in developing a peace process with Taliban leaders.

Harper has said he won't extend the mission beyond 2009 if he doesn't have political consensus from the four political parties, an implausible goal in the face of stiff resistance from the opposition.

# Francis, 34, grew up in Halifax, leaves wife, 8-month-old baby; Francis, 34, grew up in Halifax, leaves wife, 8-month-old baby

---

**PUBLICATION:** The Chronicle-Herald

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**SECTION:** Front

**PAGE:** A1

**BYLINE:** Paul Everest

**ILLUSTRATION:** Capt. Jefferson Francis of 1 Royal Canadian Horse Artillery.(DND); Capt. Jefferson Francis of 1 Royal Canadian Horse Artillery (DND)

**WORD COUNT:** 244

---

A man who grew up in the Halifax area is one of six Canadian soldiers killed by a powerful roadside bomb Wednesday in Afghanistan.

Capt. Jefferson Francis of 1 Royal Canadian Horse Artillery died with five other Canadian soldiers and an Afghan interpreter when the RG-31 Nyala patrol vehicle they were travelling in struck a bomb on a gravel road about 20 kilometres southwest of Kandahar city.

Capt. Francis, 34, was raised in the Halifax area and has an eight-month-old child, a source in Ottawa told The Chronicle Herald. The source, who did not want to be identified, also said Capt. Francis wasn't supposed to be in the vehicle when it went on patrol but offered to help out when a sixth person was needed.

Capt. Francis's wife, who lives in Ottawa, was flying back to Halifax to meet with other family members, the source said.

A military source in Nova Scotia said Capt. Francis was an artillery co-ordinator, known as a "fire-effects officer."

He also wished to remain anonymous but said Capt. Francis was attached to a battle group in Afghanistan.

The artillery regiment is based in Shilo, Man.

Lori Truscott, a spokeswoman for the regiment, would not comment Thursday evening but said a statement would be put out at about noon today.

The military released the names of five of the dead soldiers Wednesday and Thursday.

They are Cpl. Jordan Anderson, Capt. Matthew Dawe, Cpl. Cole Bartsch and Pte. Lane Watkins, all members of 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, based in Edmonton, and Master Cpl. Colin Bason, a reservist with the Royal Westminster Regiment, based in New Westminster, B.C.

The Canadian military has said an investigation into the incident is underway.

()

Francis, 34, grew up in Halifax, leaves wife, 8-month-old baby; Francis, 34, grew up in Halifax, leaves wife,

# Officer remembers fallen Canadians during bumpy Nyala ride on Afghan road

---

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL

**PUBLICATION:** cpw

**WORD COUNT:** 783

---

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (CP) \_ Bumping along on a gravel road Thursday morning, the RG-31 Nyala vehicle shook and shuddered.

Lt.-Col. Wayne Eyre was uncomfortable, but unfazed.

On Wednesday, six Canadians died when their vehicle, also a Nyala, was ripped apart by a roadside bomb.

Eyre said he still has complete faith in the RG-31 as his vehicle slammed into potholes and thunked over speed bumps en route back to Kandahar Airfield from Spin Boldak, on the Pakistan border.

The Nyala armoured patrol vehicle is considered by the military as its heaviest protection against the scourge of improvised explosive devices or IEDs \_ commonly known as roadside bombs.

“I still have confidence in the vehicle,” he said as the driver squawked out commands over the intercom.

“It's getting us from point A to point B. There's no vehicle in the world that will be an answer for every threat out there.”

His sentiment was shared by retired Maj.-Gen. Lewis MacKenzie back in Canada.

“You'll never have a military vehicle that's 100-per-cent safe,” MacKenzie said in a telephone interview.

“It's just never been invented.”

“They all have their vulnerabilities. And in this particular case, with the IED probably being based on an artillery shell that causes penetration, the result was as we saw it yesterday.”

Tired from their drive and shaken by the latest deaths, soldiers gathered quietly to the side of the sand-coloured vehicles in Kandahar early Thursday. Like the six men killed Wednesday, members of the force-protection unit navigating the rugged terrain in this RG-31s were due to return home in August.

“This is a wake-up call,” said one soldier who didn't want his name used. “What we thought was the safest thing out there maybe isn't.”

Tucked into the window panelling of their vehicle were two woollen teddy bears, a gift from a female soldier for good luck.

It was the only soft touch inside the harsh, cramped Nyala, with its plastic seats and awkward seatbelts taking away some of the charm of seeing the Afghan countryside go by through its tinted windows.

The seatbelts are designed to keep soldiers from slamming their heads into the metal ceiling of the vehicles, if and when a blast strikes and pressure waves fill the narrow interior.

The young soldier said it was hard for him to climb into the Nyala in the morning, hard to keep going when the end of his mission is only weeks away.

But Eyre said now is the time for soldiers to work harder than ever before.

“There is a hollow spot, make no doubt about that,” he told The Canadian Press in an exclusive interview. “But what we need to do is be strong, and we have to dig deeper than we’ve ever dug before and carry on with our task here.”

In his more than 20 years with the Canadian Forces, Eyre has seen death many times.

In Afghanistan, he heads up the Operational Mentor Liaison Team which helps train the Afghan Army. He’s been to farewell ceremonies for their soldiers, and countless ramp ceremonies for his own.

But soldiers of the Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry are special to him.

At least four of those killed Wednesday were from the 3rd Battalion of the Princess Patricia. He had come to know and respect them during his time as commanding officer of the Edmonton-based regiment.

Upon learning of the deaths, Eyre went straight to their side – even though he had left his role as their commanding officer behind in Canada. He did the same in the last week of June when three other men from the battalion were also killed by an IED.

He carries the memories of all the lost soldiers with him.

“You’ll never forget them, they’ll be with us forever,” he said. “We have fairly formalized memorial services but that still doesn’t replace personal memories.”

The gentle way Eyre called up the memories made the crunching noise of the Nyala moving over gravel fade into the background, the ever-present danger of an IED buried in the loose stones of the unpaved road forgotten for a moment.

He remembered Capt. Matt Dawe as a superb athlete and “a real people person, an all-around great guy.”

Eyre served alongside two of Dawe’s brothers.

He was “extremely dedicated, a devoted family man, very proud of his family, a young wife, a young son. A tremendous officer, loved by his troops,” Eyre said.

He broke into a smile remembering Corp. Jordan Anderson – the smile turned into a slight grimace when the Nyala swerved around the washed-out road.

“He was one of the most articulate soldiers I’ve ever had the privilege to serve with,” Eyre said. “Extremely intelligent. I’m going to miss him giving me good ideas on how to run the battalion.”

Pte. Lane Watkins was a quiet team player. “Extremely strong,” Eyre said. “He could fire a machine-gun like a pistol.”

Cpl. Cole Bartsch always had a smile. “He was always happy, never complaining ... No task was too hard for him.”

Eyre said he didn’t know Master Cpl. Colin Bason, a reservist from New Westminster, B.C., as well as the

others. But he had tremendous respect for him all the same.

A sixth soldier who died fit in well with his company, Eyre said.

He was identified later Thursday as Capt. Jefferson Francis of 1 Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, based in Shilo, Man.

“Their dedication is something else, to sign up for something like this,” Eyre said.

The tension inside the Nyala eased slightly once it's back on paved road, the threat of explosives diminished.

Eyre reflected on grieving with his men.

“There's a significant sense of frustration that the guys can't strike back,” he said.

“But they understand the reasons why they can't, and in that their discipline is amazing.”

Fighting a war against insurgents means the threat is ever-present, Eyre said.

“I talked to their commanders out there and said you can make every single right decision out there and people still get killed. It's the nature of conflict.”

Sixty-six Canadian soldiers and one diplomat have now been killed in Afghanistan.

# Soldier sentenced in sex–assault case still wants to serve in Afghanistan

---

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**KEYWORDS:** JUSTICE

**PUBLICATION:** cpw

**WORD COUNT:** 488

---

QUEBEC (CP) \_ The future of a Quebec–based soldier who wants to go to Afghanistan is up in the air after he was sentenced to 15 months in the community on Thursday for sexually assaulting a young woman.

A lawyer for Pte. Pier–Olivier Boulet, 22, had been seeking an unconditional discharge, which would have left him without a criminal record.

The woman was 18 when the rape took place in her bedroom at a party in 2004. She filed a complaint more than a year later and Boulet, who was a childhood friend of the woman's sister, was eventually charged in February 2006 with sexual assault.

Boulet argued at his trial that he thought the woman had agreed to the sex.

The sentence handed down by Quebec court Judge Carol St–Cyr means Boulet's goal of serving in Afghanistan can be fulfilled only if the Department of National Defence gives him the green light to go.

Lt.–Cmdr. Pierre Babinsky, a spokesman for Canadian Forces' legal services in Ottawa, said the military cannot comment on specific cases involving members.

“The sentence was just handed in today,” he said. “Technically it's still before the courts until any appeal or anything like that is done.”

He did say general policy is to hold an administrative review if any situation arises that puts into question a soldier's ability to continue military service.

“From that, it's decided whether there should be any administrative actions taken with regards to that member's career,” he said, noting that can range from counselling to release from service, depending on the case.

Defence lawyer Richard–Philippe Guay said the legal proceedings dashed Boulet's hopes of being in the contingent of CFB Valcartier soldiers who are heading to Afghanistan this summer.

But Boulet, who is appealing the guilty verdict, is still confident of heading to the war–torn country next February, Guay said in an interview.

Guay, who argued that Boulet is a good soldier who would help Canada in Afghanistan, told the trial his client could lose his job if he had a criminal record.

He said Boulet was devastated by the sentence and worried about his future in the military.

“I hope he's going to stay there (in the Forces),” Guay said in an interview. “He seems to be a good soldier.”

“We thought we had a great chance to get the unconditional discharge. Unfortunately, the judge said 15 months in the community, which is not that bad.

“We would have preferred the other one but at least he's not behind bars, so he still has a chance of keeping his job in the army.”

Boulet, who was a civilian at the time of the assault, will also be on probation for 18 months after the sentence expires.

Crown prosecutor Sarah–Julie Chicoine, who had sought a jail term of two years less a day, expressed satisfaction with the sentence even though Boulet won't be incarcerated.

“The victim said she was happy with the ruling because she thought that if the person had got a conditional or unconditional discharge, it wouldn't have been a good thing,” Chicoine said. “Jail time would have been appropriate but it's not unreasonable that this person can be sentenced to jail time in his house.

“(But) I still think this is not the kind of person we want to represent the country overseas. That's for sure.”

For the first five months of the sentence, Boulet is allowed to leave his residence only for work.

For the next five months, he will face a curfew of between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m.

He will be allowed outside at all times during the last five months.

# Cpl. Cole Bartsch remembered as outgoing, outdoorsy and reliable

---

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE

**PUBLICATION:** cpw

**WORD COUNT:** 349

---

EDMONTON (CP) \_ He was the reliable one, the one his pals counted on to get them home safely after a night out, the one who'd share whatever he had if he thought you needed it more.

Another Canadian family was grieving the loss of a much-loved young man Thursday after news that Cpl. Cole Bartsch was among the six Canadians and one Afghan interpreter killed by a powerful roadside bomb.

“He was always the reliable one,” said his aunt Karen Shilson in a tearful interview from Calgary.

“He would think nothing of taking the shirt of his back and giving it to you if you needed it worse than him. He was a good kid. He was one you could trust anywhere, any time.”

Bartsch enlisted in the military right out of high school and re-enlisted in the hope of further service to Canada, Shilson said.

“His belief was, even if it cost him his life, he was going to help his country. And it did.”

Shilson recalled plenty of happy times on the Bartsch family land near Whitecourt, Alta., playing horseshoes or just hanging out together. Bartsch and her son would take off into the bush for days at a time, camping, fishing and zooming around on quads.

“The kids always used to go camping a lot. He loved it outside.”

Shilson also remembered Bartsch telling her about a military training exercise marked by heavy downpours. Although the soldiers slept out in tents in ankle-sucking mud, her nephew thought it a great lark.

“He didn't care,” she says.

When he wasn't outdoors, Shilson said Bartsch was just happy to be around other people.

“He was outgoing, he never thought twice about going out of his way to help somebody else,” she said. “He got along with everybody.”

“His friends would go out partying or something and he would drop whatever he was doing to go get them and take them so they wouldn't drink and drive.”

The Bartsch family is both large and close, said Shilson.

When one of his brothers had a heart transplant a few years ago, Cole got leave to come home to see him through. And he loved hanging out with his father, tinkering with his logging truck.

“He was always monkeying around with his dad's truck,” Shilson said.



The family is coping as best they can.

“They're doing as good as can be expected. It's their oldest boy.”

At least 15 members of Bartsch's Calgary relatives are expected to drive up to Edmonton as his body returns to Canada, making the trip together in a school bus. Shilson will be among them.

“He was just an awesome kid.”

Sixty-six Canadian soldiers have now died in Afghanistan since 2002.

# Defence Department releases name of sixth soldier killed in Afghan bombing

---

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**KEYWORDS:** INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE POLITICS

**PUBLICATION:** cpw

**WORD COUNT:** 101

---

OTTAWA (CP) \_ The military has released the name of a the sixth Canadian soldier killed in Wednesday's roadside bombing in Afghanistan.

Capt. Jefferson Francis was with the 1st Royal Canadian Horse Artillery based in Shiloh, Man.

Four of the casualties were with the 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, based in Edmonton: Capt. Matthew Dawe, Cpl. Cole Bartsch, Cpl. Jordan Anderson and Pte. Lane Watkins.

Master Cpl. Colin Bason, a reservist with the Royal Westminster Regiment based in New Westminster, B.C., also died in the incident.

The six soldiers and an Afghan interpreter were travelling in an armoured vehicle west of Kandahar City when a powerful roadside bomb detonated.

Sixty-six Canadian soldiers have now died in Afghanistan since 2002.

# Retired general says Afghan mission's future depends on NATO's commitment

---

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**KEYWORDS:** INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE POLITICS

**PUBLICATION:** cpw

**WORD COUNT:** 438

---

TORONTO (CP) \_ In the wake of six more Canadian deaths in Afghanistan, a retired army general said the military mission in that country can only be successful if NATO doubles the number of troops on the ground.

“We need more boots on the ground,” said retired Canadian Maj.-Gen. Lewis MacKenzie, who has commanded troops in some of the world's most dangerous places.

“I know the commanders (in Afghanistan) can't ask for the numbers they would like because it's politically sensitive to do that, but they need another 15,000 troops, a division in the south, to help the Dutch, the Canadians, the Brits and the Americans do their jobs.”

Canada has about 2,500 troops in Afghanistan, most of them based in the southern province of Kandahar.

MacKenzie insisted the mission has achieved significant successes, citing the return of over three million refugees to their homes, the opening of 300 new schools and the fact that girls are now free to go to school, something unimaginable under the Taliban.

“Kabul was almost abandoned when I first went there, and when I was there last year it was a bustling city,” MacKenzie said.

However, he is highly critical of NATO's handling of the war in the impoverished country.

MacKenzie said that there are more than a million troops available throughout NATO, but only about 35,000 in Afghanistan. He said that the ratio of soldiers to the population in an insurgency is the lowest in the history of warfare.

The retired major-general said he is frustrated that NATO has failed to make good on its promise for more troops for the Afghan mission.

“For some reason we have a tiny, tiny force and an alliance that was supposed to preach one for all and all for one \_ well, it sure in hell hasn't turned out that way,” MacKenzie said.

He says it's clear some NATO members are not doing enough and should step up to the plate. If NATO as an alliance fails to generate the troops necessary, MacKenzie said, “then I would agree that the time has come to part (leave Afghanistan).”

Canada has one of the highest death tolls of any NATO member in Afghanistan, with 66 soldiers killed since 2002.

The latest victims were six soldiers killed Wednesday when their RG-31 armoured patrol vehicle hit a roadside bomb about 20 kilometres south-west of Kandahar City.

MacKenzie said the loss of Canadian lives in Afghanistan is something that had to be expected and there have already been warnings by both the Conservative and the former Liberal governments.

“The centre of gravity of this operation are the hearts and minds of the Canadian public. It's just like Vietnam and the American public,” said MacKenzie, warning that calls for withdrawal would give the wrong signals to the insurgents.

The Afghan society is a warrior society, said MacKenzie.

“They understand insurgency and they understand where they should attack, and attacking the soldiers is an indirect way of attacking the morale of the Canadian public.”

# Officer killed in Afghanistan was in charge when 3 died last month

---

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL

**PUBLICATION:** cpw

**WORD COUNT:** 400

---

KINGSTON, Ont. (CP) \_ One of the soldiers killed Wednesday when an armoured vehicle was hit by a roadside bomb had been badly shaken last month by the deaths of three other Canadian soldiers under his command.

Three members of Capt. Matthew Dawe's infantry unit \_ Pte. Joel Wiebe, Sgt. Christos Karigiannis and Cpl. Stephen Bouzane \_ were killed by a roadside bomb June 20 when they were travelling between checkpoints in an unarmoured all-terrain vehicle.

In the wake of that tragedy, Dawe had turned to his father, a career soldier, for moral support and advice.

Father and son spent more time on the phone than usual after the bombing, the Kingston Whig-Standard newspaper reported.

Peter Dawe said his son was feeling anger more than anything else. The place where he lost three men was a place where many thought a victory had taken place, where the lives of locals had taken a significant turn for the best.

But more than losing men, the troops have lost some hope, Dawe said.

"We're supposed to be helping but I don't know how you can do that when they're sneaking in at night and planting bombs," he said.

"They're in around us. It doesn't take many traitors' eyes to figure it out. If that's paranoia, so be it."

On Wednesday, Col. Spike Hazleton, base commander of CFB Kingston, broke the sad news of his son's death to retired lieutenant-colonel Dawe.

"It was done in a very sensitive, dignified way," said Bill Oliver, a former Royal Military College staff officer who knows the family well.

"(Peter) is a very strong individual," said the family's neighbour, Walter Fenlon.

"They were brought up through the army system. They know more than anybody what the real dangers are."

Six soldiers and an Afghan interpreter were killed Wednesday.

Dawe and two of the other soldiers were based in Edmonton with the 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.

He was the youngest of four Dawe brothers, all of whom served in the military. He is survived by his wife, Tara, and two-year-old son, Lucas.

Oliver said Dawe ``was considered a leader among leaders...a top of the heap guy."

RMC principal John Scott Cowan recalled him as a young cadet with a ``tremendous natural sense of humour."

Capt. Dan Madryga of CFB Kingston members of the Dawe family were arriving from outside the region and would meet up Thursday.

``Kingston will be the centre for the family gathering," said Madryga.

The night he left Edmonton for Afghanistan, the then-lieutenant held his son close and spoke of the coming challenge overseas.

He didn't share worries of war or mortality but spoke of his family.

``It's not so bad when you're busy, but the minute you have time to think (my) first thoughts drift right away to (Lucas) and my wife," he said Feb. 19.

Dawe's wife, who was unavailable for comment Wednesday, was described by her husband as a strong and extremely supportive woman.

``(My going to Afghanistan) wouldn't work if she didn't believe in it too," Dawe said at the time.

Tara Dawe said she drew her strength from her young husband's fearlessness.

``He doesn't seem to have any fear and I think that's rubbing off on me," she said as Dawe departed.

``Right now I feel numb. It doesn't feel real yet. I just want him to go and come home."

# Al-Qaida No. 2 seeks to bolster terror network's wing in Iraq in new video

---

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**KEYWORDS:** INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE

**PUBLICATION:** cpw

**WORD COUNT:** 862

---

BAGHDAD (AP) \_ Al-Qaida's deputy leader sought to bolster the terror network's main arm in Iraq in a new video released Thursday, calling on Muslims to rally behind it at a time when the group is on the defensive, faced with U.S. offensives and splits with other insurgent groups.

Ayman al-Zawahri defended the Islamic State of Iraq \_ the insurgent umbrella group headed by al-Qaida \_ against critics among Islamic militant groups, saying it was a vanguard for fighting off the U.S. military and eventually establishing a ``caliphate" of Islamic rule across the region.

Al-Zawahri, the top deputy of Osama bin Laden, called on Muslims to follow a two-pronged strategy: work at home to topple ``corrupt" Arab regimes and join al-Qaida's ``jihad," or holy war, in Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia to fight and train ``to prepare for the next jihad."

The Egyptian militant did not mention last week's failed car bombing attempts in Britain, which British authorities are investigating for al-Qaida links. That suggested the video, posted Thursday on an Islamic militant website, was made before the events in London and Glasgow.

Al-Qaida's declaration of the Islamic State of Iraq last year was a dramatic move aimed at staking out its leadership of Iraq's insurgency. Allying itself with several smaller Iraqi Sunni insurgent groups, it presented the Islamic State as an alternative government within Iraq, claiming to hold territory.

The move quickly met resistance. Some Islamic extremist clerics in the Arab world said it was too soon to declare an Islamic state because the Islamic law qualifications were not yet met and argued that a true Islamic state is not viable while there are still U.S. forces in Iraq.

Several large Iraqi Sunni insurgent groups publicly denounced al-Qaida, saying its fighters were killing theirs and pressuring them to join the Islamic State. One group, the 1920 Revolution Brigades, has begun overtly co-operating with U.S. forces and Sunni tribal leaders to attack al-Qaida.

At the same time, increased U.S. forces sent to Iraq this year are waging a number of offensives in suspected al-Qaida strongholds north and south of Baghdad and in western Anbar province, claiming to have captured and killed a number of significant figures in the group.

The offensives have caused an increase in American casualties, but insurgent and militia attacks appear to have fallen in the past week. On Thursday, Baghdad was relatively quiet, with police reports of a policeman and a civilian killed in a shooting and bombing. A roadside bomb hit a police patrol in the northern city of Mosul, killing a civilian and wounding three police.

Iraq's Shiite and Kurdish leaders on Thursday were trying to overcome a Sunni Arab boycott of the cabinet of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, which threatens to hold up a key new oil law. The United States is pressing hard for passage of the long-delayed oil law in hopes it will encourage Sunni support of the government.

Al-Zawahri spent much of the unusually long video \_ at an hour and 35 minutes \_ defending the Islamic State, criticizing those who refuse to recognize it ``because it lacks the necessary qualifications" even while he acknowledged it had made unspecified mistakes.

``The Islamic State of Iraq is set up in Iraq, the mujahedeen (holy warriors) celebrate it in the streets of Iraq, the people demonstrate in support of it," al-Zawahri said, ``pledges of allegiance to it are declared in the mosques of Baghdad."

He said Muslims around the world should ``support this blessed fledgling mujahid garrison state with funds, manpower, opinion, information and expertise," saying its founding brought the Islamic world closer to ``establishment of the caliphate, with God's permission."

He urged critics to work with the Islamic State ``even if we see in it shortcomings," and said Islamic State leaders should ``open their hearts" to consultations. ``The mujahedeen are not innocent of deficiency, error and slips," he said. ``The mujahedeen must solve their problems among themselves."

Al-Zawahri appeared in the video \_ first reported by IntelCenter and SITE, two U.S.-based groups that monitor militant messages \_ wearing a white robe and turban and, as he often does, took a professorial tone, making points by citing Islamic history and by showing clips of experts speaking in western and Arabic media.

He denounced Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia at length. He warned Iraq's Sunni minority against seeing them as allies, saying they pretend to support the Sunni cause while allying themselves with the United States.

If Saudi Arabia controls Iraq or Sunni regions of Iraq, ``the Iraqis would then suffer the same repression and humiliation which the people suffer under Saudi rule under the pretext of combating terrorism \_ i.e., combatting jihad and preserving American security," al-Zawahri said.

The al-Qaida deputy also laid out an al-Qaida strategy, saying in the near-term militant should target U.S. and Israeli interests ``everywhere" in retaliation for ``attacks on the Islamic nation" in Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia.

The long-term strategy calls for ``diligent work to change these corrupt and corrupting (Arab) regimes." He said Muslims should ``rush to the fields of jihad" in Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia ``to defeat the enemies of the Islamic nation" and for ``training to prepare for the next jihad."



# Canadian soldier volunteered for Afghan patrol that took his life: newspaper

---

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL

**PUBLICATION:** cpw

**WORD COUNT:** 89

---

HALIFAX (CP) \_ Capt. Jefferson Francis volunteered for the patrol in Afghanistan that ultimately took his life.

Francis, 34, was in an armoured vehicle when a roadside bomb detonated Wednesday near Kandahar, killing six Canadian soldiers and an Afghan interpreter.

Quoting an unnamed source, the Halifax Chronicle Herald says Francis wasn't originally supposed to be in patrol vehicle but volunteered to go out when a sixth soldier was needed.

Francis was with 1 Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, based in Shiloh, Man., but was from Halifax.

He was married and had an eight-month-old child.

A military source in Nova Scotia says Francis was an artillery co-ordinator, known as a "fire-effects officer."

(Halifax Chronicle Herald)

# Military mourns soldier deaths, steels itself for `future challenges'

---

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

**PUBLICATION:** cpw

**WORD COUNT:** 930

---

EDMONTON (CP) \_ Still grieving for its last group of Afghanistan casualties, the army will steel itself for future challenges even as it mourns new losses, a Canadian military leader said Thursday.

Brig.-Gen. Mark Skidmore says the six who died \_ four of them based at Edmonton Garrison \_ were dedicated to their jobs and committed to the task Canada had set before them.

``We're proud to have known these soldiers. We are privileged to have served alongside them and we would be honoured to replace them in their noble cause in the accomplishment of our shared mission," Skidmore, the commander of Land Force Western Area, said Thursday.

``The army was their life, the army is our life and Canada is No. 1. And with those anchor points in our thoughts, we'll tend to our fallen and steel ourselves for the future challenges."

Col. Jon Vance, commander of 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade, the formation to which the dead soldiers belonged, agreed.

``The greatest and immediate impact on the soldiers is the sense of loss and grief, but they very quickly recover from that and steel themselves for the continuation of the mission," he said. ``We're in the business of hard and we know that this is a complex and long-term engagement.

``We grieve, we lay soldiers to rest properly, we support the families and get on with the mission."

Vance said the families are well aware that there is a debate about Canada's mission in Afghanistan, but the most sensitive and mature approach right now is for Canada to offer support, not doubt.

``At this particular juncture, the focus must be on repatriating these valiant soldiers and ensuring that their families hear a clarion call of love and support from Canada."

That debate arose again immediately after the deaths, with Liberal Leader Stephane Dion and NDP Leader Jack Layton both saying Canada needs to reconsider its military commitment to Afghanistan.

But Prime Minister Stephen Harper restated his determination Thursday to keep troops there until 2009 despite mounting casualties.

Harper, in Halifax to make a \$3.1-billion funding announcement for the navy, said his government doesn't treat military deaths lightly but won't alter its plan to maintain the current operation.

``Obviously as prime minister casualties of any kind weigh heavily upon my mind, " he said. ``But today is not the day to have a political debate on the future of the mission. Today is a day to express our condolences for these soldiers, to their families."

The six soldiers, along with an Afghan interpreter, died Wednesday in a roadside explosion as they were returning from a mission southwest of Kandahar.

Cpl. Jordan Anderson, Capt. Matthew Dawe, Cpl. Cole Bartsch and Pte. Lane Watkins were all members of the 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry based in Edmonton.

Capt. Jefferson Francis was with the 1st Royal Canadian Horse Artillery based in Shiloh, Man.

Master Cpl. Colin Bason was a reservist with the Royal Westminster Regiment based in New Westminster, B.C.

Bason, the father of a baby daughter, was a history buff who made his family proud, his mother said from Abbotsford, B.C.

“Here he is fulfilling something \_ democracy \_ trying to get democracy and peace established in another land and fighting terrorists.”

Ann Bason said her son devoted his life to the military.

“He knew the chances that he was taking going over there,” she said. “But my son was a history buff. He liked to travel. He liked everything about army. He had tons of army books.

“He enjoyed that kind of thing. He was fulfilling something he wanted to do and we're proud of him.”

The casualties came 15 days after another roadside bomb killed three soldiers as they drove an unarmoured four-wheel-drive utility vehicle between checkpoints.

The family of Dawe, one of the highest-ranking Canadian officers to be killed in Afghanistan since the war began, remembered their son, brother and husband as a dedicated soldier who wouldn't let something as minor as a ruptured Achilles tendon get in his way.

Family members were not speaking to the media, but released a statement praising his love for the soldiers who worked under him.

“Matt was a superb soldier. He was very fit and prided himself on leading from the front,” the statement read. “He loved his soldiers very much and we know that this feeling was reciprocal.”

The statement said Dawe, 27, ruptured his Achilles tendon in the months leading to his deployment to Afghanistan, but he recovered faster than expected because he “didn't want his boys to go without him.”

Dawe came from a prominent military family in Kingston, Ont. His father is a retired lieutenant-colonel, and all three older brothers are enlisted with the Canadian Forces. Two of them served in Afghanistan in 2002.

Dawe was reportedly badly shaken when three other Canadian soldiers under his command were killed by a roadside bomb June 20.

Bartsch was remembered by his aunt as a much-loved young man whom friends could count on when they needed him.

“He was always the reliable one,” said Karen Shilson in a tearful telephone interview from Calgary.

“He would think nothing of taking the shirt off his back and giving it to you if you needed it worse than him.

He was a good kid. He was one you could trust anywhere, any time."

Bartsch, whose family is from Whitecourt in northern Alberta, enlisted in the military right out of high school and re-enlisted in the hope of further service to Canada, Shilson said.

"His belief was, even if it cost him his life, he was going to help his country. And it did."

Shilson recalled plenty of happy times on the Bartsch family land, playing horseshoes or just hanging out. Bartsch and his cousin, her son, would take off into the bush for days at a time, camping, fishing and zooming around on quads.

"The kids always used to go camping a lot. He loved it outside."

Shilson said he was outgoing and got along with everybody. "He never thought twice about going out of his way to help somebody else."

Watkins, 20, who grew up in Clearwater, Man., was characterized as sometimes being shy, although he was also remembered as someone everybody liked.

"I find it very hard to look at his picture on the news and think of him as gone, being so young," said Lynn Galbraith, who taught Watkins at Pilot Mound Collegiate high school.

"He was well-liked by all his classmates. He was a big strapping lad. He was a good-sized kid. He could be shy at times, but he was outgoing with his friends."

Galbraith said Watkins always thought of joining the military once he graduated.

Sixty-six Canadian soldiers and one diplomat have been killed in Afghanistan since the war began in 2002.

# Canadian death toll in Afghanistan: 66 soldiers, one diplomat

---

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**KEYWORDS:** INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE POLITICS

**PUBLICATION:** cpw

**WORD COUNT:** 498

---

Since 2002, 66 Canadian soldiers and one diplomat have been killed in Afghanistan. Here is a list of the deaths:

2007

July 4 \_ Cpl. Cole Bartsch, Capt. Matthew Johnathan Dawe and Pte. Lane Watkins, all of 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry based in Edmonton; Master Cpl. Colin Bason, a reservist from The Royal Westminster Regiment based in New Westminster, B.C., and Capt. Jefferson Francis of the 1st Royal Canadian Horse Artillery based in Shiloh, Man., killed by a roadside bomb west of Kandahar city.

June 20 \_ Sgt. Christos Karigiannis, Cpl. Stephen Frederick Bouzane and Pte. Joel Vincent Wiebe, all of 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry killed by a roadside bomb west of Kandahar.

June 11 \_ Trooper Darryl Caswell, 25, of the Royal Canadian Dragoons, by a roadside bomb north of Kandahar.

May 30 \_ Master Cpl. Darrell Jason Priede, killed when a U.S. helicopter was reportedly shot down by the Taliban in Helmand province.

May 25 \_ Cpl. Matthew McCully, 25, killed by an improvised explosive device in Zhari District.

April 18 \_ Master Cpl. Anthony Klumpenhower, who served with elite special forces, died after falling from a communications tower while on duty conducting surveillance in Kandahar City.

April 11 \_ Master Cpl. Allan Stewart and Trooper Patrick James Pentland killed when their Coyote vehicle struck an improvised explosive device.

April 8 \_ Sgt. Donald Lucas, Cpl. Aaron E. Williams, Pte. Kevin V. Kennedy, Pte. David R. Greenslade, Cpl. Christopher P. Stannix and Cpl. Brent Poland killed when their vehicle hit a roadside bomb.

March 6 \_ Cpl. Kevin Megeney, 25, killed in accidental shooting at NATO base in Kandahar.

2006

Nov. 27 \_ Chief Warrant Officer Bobby Girouard and Cpl. Albert Storm killed by suicide car bomber.

Oct. 14 \_ Sgt. Darcy Tedford and Pte. Blake Williamson killed in ambush.

Oct. 7 \_ Trooper Mark Andrew Wilson killed by roadside bomb.

Oct. 3 \_ Sgt. Craig Gillam and Cpl. Robert Mitchell killed in series of mortar, rocket attacks.

Sept. 29 \_ Pte. Josh Klukie killed by explosion in Panjwahi while on foot patrol.

Sept. 18 \_ Pte. David Byers, Cpl. Shane Keating, Cpl. Keith Morley and Cpl. Glen Arnold killed in suicide bicycle bomb attack while on foot patrol in Panjwahi.

Sept. 4 \_ Pte. Mark Graham killed when two NATO planes accidentally strafed Canadian troops in Panjwahi district.

Sept. 3 \_ Sgt. Shane Stachnik, Warrant Officer Frank Robert Mellish, Pte. William Cushley and Warrant Officer Richard Francis Nolan killed in fighting in Panjwahi district.

Aug. 22 \_ Cpl. David Braun killed in suicide attack.

Aug. 11 \_ Cpl. Andrew Eykelenboom killed in suicide attack.

Aug. 9 \_ Master Cpl. Jeffrey Walsh killed by apparent accidental discharge of rifle.

Aug. 5 \_ Master Cpl. Raymond Arndt killed when his G-Wagon patrol vehicle collided with truck.

Aug. 3 \_ Cpl. Christopher Reid killed by roadside bomb. Sgt. Vaughan Ingram, Cpl. Bryce Keller and Pte. Kevin Dallaire killed in rocket-propelled grenade attack.

July 22 \_ Cpl. Francisco Gomez and Cpl. Jason Warren killed when car packed with explosives rammed their armoured vehicle.

July 9 \_ Cpl. Anthony Boneca killed in firefight.

May 17 \_ Capt. Nichola Goddard killed in Taliban ambush. She was first Canadian woman to be killed in action while serving in combat role.

April 22 \_ Cpl. Matthew Dinning, Bombardier Myles Mansell, Lt. William Turner and Cpl. Randy Payne killed when their G-Wagon destroyed by roadside bomb.

March 29 \_ Pte. Robert Costall killed in firefight with Taliban.

March 2 \_ Cpl. Paul Davis and Master Cpl. Timothy Wilson killed when their armoured vehicle ran off road.

Jan. 15 \_ Glyn Berry, British-born Canadian diplomat, killed in suicide bombing.

2005

Nov. 24 \_ Pte. Braun Woodfield killed when his armoured vehicle rolled over.

2004

Jan. 27 \_ Cpl. Jamie Murphy killed in suicide bombing while on patrol.

2003

Oct. 2 \_ Sgt. Robert Short and Cpl. Robbie Beerenfenger killed in roadside bombing.

2002

April 17 \_ Sgt. Marc Leger, Cpl. Ainsworth Dyer, Pte. Richard Green and Pte. Nathan Smith killed when U.S. F-16 fighter mistakenly bombed Canadians.

# Afghan bomber kills 10 policemen; NATO soldier kill in eastern Afghanistan

---

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**KEYWORDS:** INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE POLITICS

**PUBLICATION:** cpw

**WORD COUNT:** 363

---

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (AP) \_ A suicide bomber blew himself up at a checkpoint in southern Afghanistan on Thursday, killing 10 police officers, officials said.

In eastern Afghanistan, a roadside bomb hit a NATO convoy Thursday, leaving one soldier dead and wounding two, the alliance said.

The wounded soldiers were taken to a medical facility for treatment and were in stable condition, NATO said in an e-mailed statement. It didn't release the nationalities of the soldiers. Most of the foreign troops in the east are American.

The suicide attacker detonated his explosives in a room where the policemen were eating lunch at a checkpoint near Spin Boldak, a town on the Pakistani border, said Bismillah Khan, a local police official.

Two of the checkpoint rooms were destroyed, Khan said.

In addition to the 10 deaths, several other policemen were wounded, officials said.

Two of the checkpoint rooms were destroyed, Khan said.

Grisly suicide attacks have become a prominent tactic of Taliban insurgents, who have dramatically stepped up their campaign of violence against the western-backed government of President Hamid Karzai.

In an echo of the conflict in Iraq, outgunned militants are also deploying roadside bombs to deadly effect against more numerous foreign and Afghan forces.

On Wednesday, a roadside bomb tore through a NATO vehicle in Kandahar's Zhari district, killing six Canadian soldiers and their Afghan interpreter.

The blast raised the number of foreign soldiers killed in the country this year to at least 102, officials said. Sixty-six Canadian soldiers and one diplomat have lost their lives in Afghanistan since 2002.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper said the six had died trying to ``defend and protect Afghans and provide them the opportunity to rebuild their lives."

The attack was the deadliest against foreign troops in Afghanistan since May 13, when seven troops were killed \_ five Americans, a Canadian and a Briton \_ in a crash of their Chinook helicopter in Helmand province. Officials said at the time that it appeared a rocket-propelled grenade might have brought down the aircraft.

Thirty-three suspected insurgents and seven Afghan police were reported dead in fighting and attacks in Zhari district earlier this week. The area was the scene of one of NATO's largest-ever operations last fall, and remains highly volatile.



So far this year, more than 2,900 people \_ mostly militants \_ have been killed in insurgency-related violence in Afghanistan, according to an Associated Press tally of numbers provided by Western and Afghan officials.

# Harper reflects on Afghanistan deaths, restates Canada's military commitment

---

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

**PUBLICATION:** cpw

**WORD COUNT:** 715

---

HALIFAX (CP) \_ Prime Minister Stephen Harper restated his determination Thursday to keep Canadian troops in Afghanistan until 2009 despite mounting casualties at the hands of an enemy emboldened by a lethal shift in tactics.

Harper, in Halifax to make a \$3.1 billion funding announcement for the navy, said his government doesn't treat military deaths lightly, but they will not alter his plan to maintain the current operation even as opposition calls grow louder for a withdrawal from the war-torn nation.

"Obviously as prime minister casualties of any kind weigh heavily upon my mind, " he said on the flight deck of the frigate HMCS Halifax.

"But today is not the day to have a political debate on the future of the mission. Today is a day to express our condolences for these soldiers, to their families."

The pledge to stay on followed one of the deadliest days in Afghanistan for Canadian troops. Six soldiers and their Afghan interpreter were killed Wednesday when they hit a potent roadside bomb in Kandahar's Zhari district.

They were travelling in a RG-31, a heavily armoured patrol vehicle with a V-shaped hull that's designed to withstand mine blasts and is considered one of the military's strongest in protecting against the deadly scourge of roadside bombs.

But somehow the explosion managed to engulf the Nyala in flames, leaving the soldiers little chance of survival and raising fears that the insurgents have adopted the same kind of deadly tactics used in Iraq.

"There's a real danger that Afghanistan starts to look more and more like Iraq," Steven Staples of the Rideau Institute, an Ottawa-based think-tank, said in an interview.

"It's pretty clear that insurgents are learning from the experience in Iraq, where roadside bombs have proven to be incredibly lethal at striking back against the foreign militaries there. So Canadians are going to confront this a lot more often."

Already, the numbers seem to bear this out.

Sixty-six Canadian military personnel have been killed in Afghanistan since the start of the mission in 2002. Of those, 24 have died as a result of improvised explosive devices. One-third of the fatalities have taken place this year alone.

Three soldiers were killed on June 20 by a roadside bomb when they were travelling between checkpoints in an unarmoured all-terrain vehicle.

Six Canadian soldiers were killed on Easter Sunday, April 8, when another roadside bomb ripped through their LAV-3, a light armoured vehicle.

Harper said tactics will be reviewed in the wake of the most recent fatalities, while military personnel in Afghanistan conceded that it's not possible to protect against all attacks.

Brig.-Gen. Tim Grant, the top Canadian commander in Afghanistan, said an investigation is underway but that it's not clear why this particular bomb managed to defeat the Nyala's defences.

Harper said Ottawa has provided Canada's soldiers with a full range of equipment \_ including tanks \_ but he declined to discuss how the military should respond to the Taliban's use of larger, more powerful roadside bombs.

``In terms of the operational details of the mission and how the military limits casualties, these are military decisions," he said under grey skies on the city's waterfront.

``We have supplied our Canadian troops in Afghanistan with a full range of equipment all the way from small vehicles up to tanks."

But critics say the government has engaged in a futile arms race with the insurgency as they try to defend against an enemy that keeps building bigger bombs that can outflank their resources.

``We keep increasing the size of our armoured vehicles," said Anthony Salloum of the Rideau Institute. ``The problem is no one knows where this is going to end. There are only so many vehicles out there."

The latest deaths renewed the political debate surrounding the mission, with the Liberals again urging Harper to inform NATO allies that Canada will not be renewing its combat commitment after 2009.

NDP Leader Jack Layton also reiterated his position that Canada should pull out now.

Citing a mounting military and civilian death toll, Layton said Harper should engineer an immediate scaledown of operations and take a lead role in developing a peace process with Taliban leaders.

Harper has said he won't extend the mission beyond 2009 if he doesn't have political consensus from the four political parties, an implausible goal in the face of stiff resistance from the opposition.

Five of the soldiers killed Wednesday were: Cpl. Jordan Anderson, 25, of Iqaluit, Nunavut; Cpl. Cole Bartsch, 23, of Whitecourt, Alta.; Capt. Matthew Johnathan Dawe and Pte. Lane Watkins, 20, from Clearwater, Man.; and Master Cpl. Colin Bason, a reservist from The Royal Westminster Regiment based in New Westminster, B.C.

Anderson, Bartsch, Dawe and Watkins were members of the 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry based in Edmonton

The name of the sixth soldier killed Wednesday had not yet been released.

# Manitoba soldier killed in Afghanistan was a new uncle; community in mourning

---

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL

**PUBLICATION:** cpw

**WORD COUNT:** 399

---

WINNIPEG (CP) \_ He will never get to meet the little girl who will carry on his name.

Pte. Lane Watkins was remembered Thursday as a proud uncle to three-month-old Chloe Colleen Lane Cairns, born several months after he was deployed to Afghanistan last December.

Watkins, 20, was in an armoured vehicle when a powerful roadside bomb detonated Wednesday, killing six soldiers and one Afghan interpreter.

Watkins had been scheduled to come home in a few weeks and was looking forward to meeting Chloe, the daughter of his older brother, Andrew Watkins.

“(Lane) was very proud of her and he couldn't stop talking about how much he wanted to see her and hold her and all that stuff,” Chloe's mother, Candice Cairns, wrote in an e-mail to The Canadian Press.

Cairns said she and her partner Andrew Watkins included Lane in the baby's name because they were so proud of his work overseas.

“I know he will be looking over her for the rest of her life .... He is her angel now,” Cairns wrote on a webpage created in Lane Watkins' honour.

The soldier grew up in Clearwater, Man., and attended high school in nearby Pilot Mound. Lynn Galbraith, one of his former teachers, said the sometimes-shy young man had always shown an interest in a career with the military.

“He was well-liked by all his classmates. He was a big strapping lad. He was a good-sized kid. He could be shy at times, but he was outgoing with his friends,” Galbraith said.

“I find it very hard to look at his picture on the news and think of him as gone, being so young.”

Wade Watson, the principal at Pilot Mound Collegiate, said he would respect the family's wish for privacy.

“I think I'm going to honour that, other than to tell you that he was a very good kid and he was doing what he wanted to do.”

Though she graduated from high school a few years before him, Amy Henderson of Pilot Mound wrote on a webpage in the 20-year-old soldier's honour that all the communities around his hometown are filled with sadness and disbelief.

“Lane was a very brave and courageous young man who put his country before his own needs and wants and served all of us with honour,” she said.

“My thoughts and prayers are with the Watkins family and all of Lane's friends, and also my condolences to families and friends of other Canadian soldiers who lost their lives on July 4th.”

More than 200 people were listed as members of the site, created Wednesday just hours after the news of the deaths.

Tributes poured in from close friends and family as well as people who didn't know the young man.

“He died doing a job that a lot of people could never do. His time on this planet made a difference to people that we will never meet,” one tribute read.

A man who answered the phone at the family's home in southwestern Manitoba said they weren't ready to do interviews.

“We're just dealing with what we need to,” he said.

# Afghan–Cda–Roundup

---

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**KEYWORDS:** INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE POLITICS

**PUBLICATION:** bnw

**WORD COUNT:** 416

---

One of the Canadian military's strongest vehicles was no match for a powerful roadside bomb that killed six Canadian soldiers and an Afghan interpreter.

Yesterday's blast overwhelmed the sturdy armour of the R–G–31 Nyala, which is designed to withstand mine blasts.

Brigadier–General Tim Grant, the top Canadian commander in Afghanistan, says it's not clear why this particular bomb managed to defeat the Nyala's defences. One report suggested it was a triple mine, or three devices stacked on top of each other.

Grant says an investigation is underway.

Meantime, the identities of four of the dead were released late yesterday afternoon — Corporal Cole Bartsch, Captain Matthew Dawe, Private Lane Watkins and Master Corporal Colin Bason.

The next of kin of the other two killed haven't yet agreed to the release of their names. (CP)

(Afghan–Cda–IED)

Military analysts say NATO forces are locked in a deadly game of one–upmanship with insurgents that will lead to higher casualties.

Steven Staples, of the Ottawa–based think–tank Rideau Institute, says it's an arms race between insurgents and soldiers.

Staples says they develop more sophisticated bombs while the Canadian military tries to put more armour out there, but the insurgents always seem to be able to overcome what the military can deploy.

Out of 66 Canadian military deaths in Afghanistan since the mission began in 2002, at least 26 have now been a result of roadside explosions. (CP)

(Afghan–Cda–Opposition)

It's looking more likely that Canada's combat mission in Afghanistan will end in 19 months.

Prime Minister Harper has pledged not to extend Canada's combat role in the war–torn country without a consensus in Parliament.

But two federal party leaders aren't budging in their positions against extending the mission.

Liberal leader Stephane Dion says Harper will never get the support he needs to keep the mission going.

He says Harper should have told NATO weeks ago that Canadian soldiers would withdraw from the mission

by February 2009.

N-D-P Leader Jack Layton says Canada doesn't need to give notice — it should just pull out now. (BN)

(Afghan-Cda-Mother)

The grieving mother of one of the six Canadian soldiers who died yesterday says Colin Bason had only six weeks left on the mission.

Ann Bason of Abbotsford, B-C, tells C-T-V News her son Colin was among the first reservists to sign up when the call went out for volunteers for the Afghan mission.

Bason says her son died doing something he believed in.

The master corporal was with the Royal Westminster Regiment based in New Westminster, B-C. (CTV-s, CP)

(Afghan-Cda-Dawes)

One of the soldiers killed yesterday in Afghanistan was in charge of three other Canadian soldiers who were killed last month.

Captain Matthew Dawe was killed along with five other Canadian soldiers and an Afghan interpreter when their armoured vehicle was hit by a roadside bomb.

Three members of Dawe's infantry unit — Private Joel Wiebe, Sergeant Christos Karigiannis and Corporal Stephen Bouzane — were killed by a roadside bomb June 20th.

In the wake of that tragedy, Dawe had turned to his father, a career soldier, for moral support and advice.

Yesterday, Colonel Spike Hazleton of C-F-B Kingston, broke the sad news of his son's death to retired lieutenant-colonel Peter Dawe. (Whig-Standard)

(Afghan-Cda-Roundup by Neena Chowdhury, Terry Pedwell and Shawn Waddell)

# INDEX:International, Defence, Politics

---

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**KEYWORDS:** INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE POLITICS

**PUBLICATION:** bnw

**WORD COUNT:** 102

---

OTTAWA – The military has released the name of a fifth Canadian soldier killed in Wednesday's roadside bombing in Afghanistan.

Corporal Jordan Anderson was a member of the 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, based in Edmonton.

Three of the other soldiers killed – Captain Matthew Dawe, Corporal Cole Bartsch and Private Lane Watkins – were members of the same battalion.

Master Corporal Colin Bason, a reservist with the Royal Westminster Regiment based in New Westminster, B.C., also died in the incident.

At the request of the family, the name of the remaining soldier killed is being withheld.

The six soldiers and an Afghan interpreter were travelling in an armoured vehicle west of Kandahar City when a powerful roadside bomb detonated.

(BN)



# Afghan–Violence–Update (details, additional injuries)

---

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**KEYWORDS:** INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE

**PUBLICATION:** bnw

**WORD COUNT:** 61

---

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — A suicide bomber blew himself up at a checkpoint in southern Afghanistan today, killing five policemen and injuring 11.

The attacker detonated his explosives in a room where the policemen were eating their lunch.

It occurred at a checkpoint near Spin Boldak, a town on the Pakistani border.

Grisly suicide attacks have become a prominent tactic of Taliban militants, who have dramatically stepped up their campaign of violence.

RxH

# Update:ADDS details on frigate announcement.

---

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE FINANCE POLITICS

**PUBLICATION:** bnw

**WORD COUNT:** 95

---

HALIFAX – Prime Minister Stephen Harper says Canada's 12 Halifax-class frigates will undergo a major refit starting in 2010.

Flanked by Defence Minister Gordon O'Connor and Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay, Harper was in Halifax today to announce details of the \$3.1 billion program.

Harper says it will improve Canada's ability to protect the country's waters and boost employment.

Premier Rodney MacDonald wasn't invited to the event, as the two leaders are still feuding over changes to the federal equalization program.

As well, Harper's good news announcement will be somewhat muted by the fact that the Canadian Forces is mourning the loss of six comrades in Afghanistan.

(BN)

# CORRECTION–Afghan–Cda–Mourning

---

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

**PUBLICATION:** bnw

**WORD COUNT:** 166

---

Stations: Please substitute the following for the item that moved at 15:54 ET.

(Subs para 2 to confirm that four casualties based at CFB Edmonton)

EDMONTON — A military leader says the army grieves for the six Canadian soldiers who died in Afghanistan this week, but will also steel itself for future sacrifices.

Brigadier–General Mark Skidmore says the six who died — four of them based at Edmonton Garrison — were dedicated to their jobs and committed to the task Canada had set before them.

He says their colleagues are proud to have known them, were privileged to have served beside them and are willing to stand in their stead if called to do so.

Colonel Jon Vance says the most important thing right now is to stand behind the families who have lost their loved ones.

Vance says the families are well aware that there is a debate about Canada's mission in Afghanistan, but the most sensitive and mature approach right now is to send out a 'clarion call' of love and support.

The six soldiers, along with an Afghan interpreter, died Wednesday in a roadside explosion as they were returning from a mission southwest of Kandahar.

(BN)

# Capt. Matthew Dawe remembered as a family man who loved his work

---

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE

**PUBLICATION:** bnw

**WORD COUNT:** 134

---

TORONTO – The family of one of the highest-ranking Canadian officers to be killed in Afghanistan remembered him Thursday as a dedicated soldier who wouldn't let something as minor as a ruptured Achilles tendon get in his way.

The family of Capt. Matthew Dawe was not speaking to the media, but released a statement Thursday praising Dawe's love for the soldiers who worked under him.

The statement says Dawe ruptured his Achilles tendon in the months leading to his deployment to Afghanistan, but he recovered faster than expected because he 'didn't want his boys to go without him.'

Dawe leaves behind his wife, Tara, and a two-year-old son named Lucas.

The statement says Dawe was very close to his parents, brothers and his large extended family.

Dawe was killed Wednesday along with five other Canadian soldiers and an Afghan interpreter when an armoured vehicle was hit by a roadside bomb.

(BN)

# Cpl. Cole Bartsch remembered as outgoing, outdoorsy and reliable

---

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**KEYWORDS:** DEFENCE

**PUBLICATION:** bnw

**WORD COUNT:** 137

---

EDMONTON – The family of a corporal killed Wednesday in an explosion in Afghanistan is remembering the fallen soldier as a generous young man who loved the outdoors and stood by his friends.

Cpl. Cole Bartsch was one of six soldiers and an Afghan interpreter who were travelling in an armoured vehicle west of Kandahar City when a powerful roadside bomb detonated.

His aunt, Karen Shilson, recalls Bartsch was a man his friends and family always relied on.

Speaking from Calgary, Shilson said that if anybody needed to be picked up after a late-night party, her nephew would always drop whatever he was doing to get the person home safely.

Shilson also says Bartsch loved to zoom around the bush on quads at his family's home in rural Alberta; he also liked to camp and fish and spent as much time out-of-doors as he could.

Sixty-six Canadian soldiers and one diplomat have died in Afghanistan since 2002.

(BN)

# Edmonton base pays heavy price; Nearly half of Canada's casualties in Afghanistan originated here; community mourns its latest loss

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060133

**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Star

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Met

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** A12

**ILLUSTRATION:** John Ulan cp Brig.-Gen. Mark Skidmore said the uneven toll reflectstroop rotations. ;

**BYLINE:** Petti Fong

**SOURCE:** Toronto Star

**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation

**WORD COUNT:** 572

---

Sitting on the front porch of her house inside the Edmonton Garrison, the proud woman looked straight up into the sun, but it did nothing to dry her tears.

"I left Europe after the war so my sons would never know war," she said, as her grandson played outside. "This is not peacekeeping any more. This is a war and I never thought Canada will be in a war."

The woman, who declined to give her name, has a son and daughter-in-law in the Canadian forces. She knows grief, recognizing it in other houses on her block and in the apprehensions of those around her.

The Edmonton Garrison has seen its share of loss. Soldiers come from around the country to make their temporary and sometimes permanent home here. Of the 66 Canadian soldiers who have died in Afghanistan since 2002, 31 were based in Edmonton.

On Wednesday, six soldiers, who were due to return home in six weeks, were killed when the vehicle they were in, an RG-31 Nyala troop carrier, hit an improvised explosive device about 20 kilometres southwest of Kandahar City.

Four of the six – Capt. Matthew Jonathan Dawe, 27; Cpl. Jordan Anderson, 25; Cpl. Cole Bartsch, 23; and Pte. Lane Watkins, 20 – were members of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry 3rd Battalion Charlie Company from Edmonton. Master Cpl. Colin Bason, 28, was a reservist from The Royal Westminster Regiment and Capt. Jefferson Francis, 37, was with the 1st Royal Canadian Horse Artillery based in Shiloh, Man.

"Edmonton has been hit and hit hard. Roughly half of the deaths are from this base. We've been deployed a lot, we're very active," said Capt. Lou Marselje, public affairs officer for the Edmonton Garrison. "We've had casualties and there will be more."

Just two weeks ago, Sgt. Christos Karigiannis, 31; Cpl. Stephen Bouzane, 26; and Pte. Joel Wiebe, 22 – all members of the same battalion based in Edmonton – were also killed by a roadside bomb.

On the base, Manuela Armstrong, whose former husband was a member of the Patricias, said she takes comfort in knowing how cohesive that battalion is and the support it provides for the soldiers who remain in

Edmonton base pays heavy price; Nearly half of Canada's casualties in Afghanistan originated here, commu

Afghanistan.

"The Patricias are very proud and they think of themselves as brothers," she said. "Six is unimaginable, no one gets used to people dying. One is too much."

Silence has descended over the base with the latest casualties, said Armstrong, with everyone wondering how many more there will be.

Brig.-Gen. Mark Skidmore, commander of the western land force, said Edmonton's high number of casualties is a reflection of cyclical rotations. Most of the soldiers who have been deployed were based in western and central Canada.

"It's not (that) the Taliban are targeting people from Edmonton," said Skidmore.

At Joint Task Force West Headquarters in Edmonton, Col. Jon Vance, commander of 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group, said there will be time later to debate the mission, but the focus now has to be on bringing the six soldiers home to their grieving families. Now, he said, is the "proper time to reflect on the individual sacrifices of the families."

Trooper Michael Hayakaze, who may be leaving for Afghanistan next month, said it's frustrating to hear debates about whether Canada should pull out of its mission before it ends in 2009.

"When we hear of these tragedies, it's always depressing and always makes me go quiet and think about why we're really there," he said. "What happens to all those men and women who've died if we just leave?"

"We need time now to grieve," said Master Cpl. Bason's mother, Anne, yesterday from the family's home in Abbotsford. "He had the privilege of serving his country and for us, we need time now."

# Families mourn their heroes; 'It's going to be tough when she asks why she doesn't have a daddy,' says soldier's wife

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060132

**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Star

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Met

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** A10

**ILLUSTRATION:** Chuck Stoody cp Lt.-Col. Matthew Haussmann, commanding officer of The Royal Westminster Regiment, pauses while speaking to media in New Westminster yesterday about the death of Master Cpl. Colin Bason, a reservist with the regiment. ;

**SOURCE:** Canadian Press

**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation

**WORD COUNT:** 621

---

The military yesterday released the last two names of the six Canadian soldiers killed Wednesday by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan.

Capt. Jefferson Francis, 37, was with the 1st Royal Canadian Horse Artillery based in Shiloh, Man. The military says he was originally from New Brunswick.

Cpl. Jordan Anderson, 25, whose hometown was Iqaluit, was based in Edmonton.

Like three other soldiers who died Wednesday, Anderson was with the 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry based in Edmonton. The others are Capt. Matthew Dawe, Cpl. Cole Bartsch and Pte. Lane Watkins.

The sixth to die was Master Cpl. Colin Bason, a reservist with the Royal Westminster Regiment based in New Westminster, B.C.

The six soldiers and an Afghan interpreter were travelling in an armoured vehicle southwest of Kandahar City when a powerful roadside bomb detonated.

Sixty-six Canadian soldiers and diplomat Glyn Berry have now died in Afghanistan since 2002.

The army, still grieving for its last group of Afghanistan casualties, will steel itself for future challenges even as it mourns new losses, a Canadian military leader said yesterday. "The army was their life, the army is our life and Canada is No. 1," said Brig.-Gen. Mark Skidmore, commander of western land forces.

Francis volunteered for the patrol in Afghanistan that ultimately took his life. Quoting an unnamed source, the Halifax Chronicle Herald says he wasn't originally supposed to be in the patrol vehicle but volunteered to go out when a sixth soldier was needed. Francis was with 1 Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, based in Shiloh, Man., but was from Halifax. He was married and had an eight-month-old child.

A military source in Nova Scotia says he was an artillery co-ordinator, known as a "fire-effects officer."

Families mourn their heroes; 'It's going to be tough when she asks why she doesn't have a daddy,' says soldier's wife



The family of Dawe, who is one of the highest-ranking Canadian officers to be killed in Afghanistan since the war began, remembered their son, brother and husband as a dedicated soldier.

Family members were not speaking to the media, but released a statement yesterday. "Matt was a superb soldier. He was very fit and prided himself on leading from the front," it read. "He loved his soldiers very much and we know that this feeling was reciprocal."

The statement said Dawe, 27, ruptured his Achilles tendon in the months before his deployment to Afghanistan, but recovered faster than expected because he "didn't want his boys to go without him."

Dawe came from a prominent military family in Kingston, Ont. His father is a retired lieutenant-colonel, and all three older brothers are in the Forces. Two of them served in Afghanistan in 2002.

Master Cpl. Colin Bason was a reservist with the Royal Westminster Regiment based in New Westminster, B.C. The father of a baby daughter, he was a "history buff" who made his family proud, his mother said from Abbotsford, B.C.

"Here he is fulfilling something – democracy – trying to get democracy and peace established in another land and fighting terrorists," said Ann Bason. "He knew the chances that he was taking ... he was fulfilling something he wanted to do and we're proud of him."

At a gathering held by his regiment yesterday in New Westminster, B.C., commanding officer Lt.-Col. Matthew Haussmann said Bason loved his job.

"He was a reserve soldier, which means he didn't do this full time. Although in his case it was hard to tell. He loved soldiering and made this pretty much his passion and his primary vocation."

Haussmann said the family is being looked after by the army. "It's sad, but the army is getting pretty good at dealing with this kind of stuff. Too much practice."

Katrina Blain of Langley, B.C., is fighting to deal with the tragic loss of Bason, who was her partner and the father of their 5-month-old baby daughter, Vienna.

"It's going to be tough when she grows up and asks why she doesn't have a daddy," she told the Star's Richard Brennan.

"But we're just going to tell her how brave her daddy was and that he died doing what he loved and that he loved her very much and he is looking down on her," said Blain, who spoke briefly with the 28-year-old reservist just days ago.

"We told him that we love him, and send hugs and kisses, and that we missed him and we would see him soon."

# Too soon to leave, PM says; Pressure growing on Harper to review Canada's mission in Afghanistan

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060128  
**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Star  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Met  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A12  
**ILLUSTRATION:** ANDREW VAUGHAN cp Prime Minister Stephen Harper is piped on board HMCS Halifax yesterday as he arrives in Halifax to make a defence spending announcement. ;  
**BYLINE:** Allan Woods  
**SOURCE:** Toronto Star  
**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation  
**WORD COUNT:** 476

---

Prime Minister Stephen Harper tried to sidestep growing pressure yesterday to begin debating the future of the Canadian mission in Afghanistan following the deaths of six soldiers in a roadside explosion.

Dodging opposition calls to signal to NATO that Canada's end is drawing near, the Harper acknowledged that the mounting deaths "weigh heavily" on him, but he said it is too soon to contemplate a complete pullout once the current commitment ends in February 2009.

Harper said he has been "clear" that he will seek a consensus in the minority Parliament before extending Canada's presence in the war-weary country.

But today is not the day for political debates, he said, ignoring Liberal Leader Stephane Dion's vow that a consensus to extend the mission will never materialize. "We have the House of Commons for that. Today is a day to express our condolences for these soldiers."

Master Cpl. Colin Bason, Capt. Matthew Dawe, Cpl. Cole Bartsch, Pte. Lane Watkins, Cpl. Jordan Anderson and Capt. Jefferson Francis were killed when their supposedly bomb-resistant armoured vehicle struck a roadside bomb buried along a frequently used gravel road in Kandahar province's Panjwaii district. An Afghan interpreter was also killed in the explosion, which spared up to a dozen other vehicles in the convoy.

The Canadian dead now number 66, plus diplomat Glyn Berry. That exceeds the 63 British soldiers killed in the country despite the U.K. having almost 1,000 more troops on the ground than Canada. And the British mission started in 2001, a year before Canada's.

"As Prime Minister, casualties of any kind weigh heavily on my mind. Casualties at this level weigh very heavily on my mind," Harper said aboard HMCS Halifax.

"I speak to families that lose loved ones. I'm aware of the pain that causes. I'm aware also of the pride they feel for their loved ones who have served this country and have been prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice."

Harper was in Halifax to announce money to upgrade the navy's Halifax-class frigates. He was accompanied by Defence Minister Gordon O'Connor and Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay.

At the Halifax harbour, just a few hundred metres from Harper's carefully staged announcement, a dozen protesters gathered to express their displeasure that Canadian soldiers are fighting and dying in Afghanistan.

The latest Canadian deaths have opened up a new debate on the ability of Canada's most resilient vehicles to withstand what several military experts have termed a shift in insurgent tactics to the use of more powerful explosive devices.

The Canadians were travelling in an RG-31 Nyala, considered blast-resistant because its V-shaped hull gives it the ability to withstand up to two simultaneous anti-tank mines. Though an investigation is underway into the particulars of Wednesday's explosion, retired colonel Alain Pellerin, the executive director of the Conference of Defence Associations, said Wednesday that the blast appears to have been caused by a "triple mine" – three land mines stacked on top of one another for increased effect.

# 10 policemen, 1 NATO soldier killed in separate attacks

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060127  
**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Star  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Met  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A10  
**SOURCE:** Associated Press  
**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation  
**WORD COUNT:** 164

---

A suicide bomber blew up a room full of policemen eating lunch at a southern Afghan checkpoint yesterday, killing 10 officers.

Elsewhere, a roadside bomb in the east killed a NATO soldier, authorities said.

The suicide attack occurred near Spin Boldak, a town in the southern province of Kandahar near the Pakistan border. The blast that killed the 10 policemen also wounded 11 officers, said Sayeed Agha Saqib, the provincial police chief. Spin Boldak's district police chief was among the wounded.

Suicide attacks have become a prime tactic of Taliban militants, who have dramatically stepped up their violent campaign against the government of Afghan President Hamid Karzai and its western backers.

Militants deployed a roadside bomb against NATO-led forces in eastern Afghanistan yesterday, leaving one soldier dead and wounding two others, the alliance said.

The wounded soldiers were taken to a medical facility for treatment and were in stable condition, NATO said in an emailed statement. It did not release the soldiers' nationalities. Most foreign troops in the east are American.

The blast raised the number of foreign soldiers killed this year to at least 103.

# NDP leader is worth watching

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060125  
**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Star  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Met  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A12  
**BYLINE:** Chantal Hebert  
**SOURCE:** Toronto Star  
**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation  
**WORD COUNT:** 573

---

According to Decima's Bruce Anderson, more voters say that their opinion of NDP Leader Jack Layton is improving than fading, a distinction he shares only with Green Leader Elizabeth May these days.

That is particularly true in Quebec where Layton now ranks second to the Bloc Quebecois' Gilles Duceppe.

This summer, Layton will attempt to parlay that personal appreciation into votes for the NDP by turning three soon-to-be-called Quebec by-elections into a mini-referendum on the Afghan mission. Over the course of a news conference (scheduled before the latest casualties in Afghanistan came to light), Layton made his intentions crystal clear Wednesday. And he reiterated his call for bringing the troops home before Canada's current commitment to NATO ends in February 2009.

The NDP seized on the Afghan issue last summer in part to stake distinct ground from the surging Green party. To this day, its position also sets it apart from the bulk of Quebec's establishment.

Although the Bloc Quebecois voted against the extension of the mission last year, it has not been pushing for its early termination. As one Bloc MP put it in a conversation this week, the party agrees that the government has a parliamentary mandate to pursue the deployment until 2009.

Beyond that, Duceppe is pretty much on the same page as Liberal Leader Stephane Dion. Both oppose another extension of the deployment in Kandahar province but could support an alternative role for Canada in Afghanistan.

Duceppe has so far begged to differ with the vocal section of Quebec public opinion that sees Afghanistan as just an extension of the American-led Iraq war. In a major speech last January, he stressed that, like Canada, a sovereign Quebec would have signed on to the international coalition in Afghanistan.

For his part, Premier Jean Charest just attended the send-off ceremonies for the Valcartier-based contingent that will be off to Afghanistan next month. When a group of battle-bound soldiers visited the National Assembly, Health Minister Philippe Couillard, whose son is an officer-in-training, berated the handful of PQ members who declined to applaud. He is not the only supporter of the mission within the Quebec government.

Culture Minister Christine St-Pierre, who served as a reporter on Parliament Hill until she ran in the provincial election, wrote a letter to the editor of La Presse in support of the deployment last fall. (She was briefly suspended from her Radio-Canada duties for this breach of journalistic neutrality.)

This may be a case where Quebec's sovereignist and federalist tenors are out of synch with mainstream voters.

Or it could be that the 70 per cent of Quebecers who tell pollsters they oppose the mission are answering a black-and-white question that leaves no room for nuances. The by-elections will provide part of the answer.

Against the sobering backdrop of probable Quebec casualties, Layton will be making the case that the lives of young soldiers are being squandered on a misguided mission. And while it is a prospect that makes every other party privately squirm, there is no question that the Afghan issue has not been well served by the rhetorical shortcuts that have been offered by both sides in the debate to date.

But there is at least one other reason why the distinctive NDP contribution to this debate should be welcome and it has to do with peace on the Canadian home front. But more on that in another column.

Chantal Hebert's national affairs column appears Monday, Wednesday and Friday

# Reality too often a casualty of war in films; Standards set to fool viewers

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060111

**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Star

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Ont

**SECTION:** Entertainment

**PAGE:** E01

**ILLUSTRATION:** Bruce Willis in Live Free or Die Hard. Bruce Willis in Live Free or Die Hard. ;

**BYLINE:** Peter Howell

**SOURCE:** Toronto Star

**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation

**WORD COUNT:** 545

---

News this week of the deaths of six more Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan is a tragic reminder of the reality of war.

When people engage in armed conflict, they risk injury or death. They bleed red blood.

The above may seem obvious, unless you're in the business of making movies. Then it becomes the art of denying the obvious about war and blood.

Two of the biggest movies of the summer, Transformers and Live Free or Die Hard, have incredible scenes of mayhem. In both cases, the military gets involved and the violence spills onto crowded city streets, where buildings are destroyed, freeways are ripped up and bullets and bombs fly.

There is destruction as far as the eye can see.

What the eye can't see is any real evidence of the human carnage.

There are no bodies strewn about. There are no missing limbs.

No one is even bleeding, apart from maybe a few scratches on Shia LaBeouf in Transformers and a whole lot of scratches on Bruce Willis in Live Free or Die Hard.

Yes, you do see instances of people running for cover, or being tossed by a robot or thrown by the force of an explosion. But very few of the wounds (and presumed deaths in many cases) reflect the severity of the injuries received.

This is necessary for the films to obtain the highly profitable PG-13 rating doled out by the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), the organization that effectively acts as global censor. Different countries have their own censors, such as the Ontario Film Review Board, but most movies arrive cut to MPAA standards.

And those standards, set with the best of intentions, serve to let us fool ourselves and our children about what it is we're watching on the big screen.

We watch many "intense sequences of violence" in PG-13 films, to use MPAA terminology. What we don't often see are intense sequences of the results of that violence. If moviemakers were to show that, they'd be saddled with an "R" or "NC-17" rating that would limit attendance and risk a possible advertising ban.

Clever filmmakers can dodge the more punitive ratings by changing the colour of blood from bright red to something less emotional. They often switch to black-and-white for scenes of major bloodletting, as Quentin Tarantino did for his two Kill Bill movies. Monochrome blood is way less upsetting than red blood.

The hybrid movie Sin City got really creative by introducing yellow and white blood, along with occasional red.

You might argue that this is a good thing. Why show bodies and blood if you don't have to, especially to impressionable children?

You might also point out that earlier this year I criticized the huge body count and high bloodletting of 300, the only recent major feature I can recall where wartime casualties were shown in anything close to real circumstances.

Excellent points both, except I'm starting to wonder if masking harsh reality is always a good thing. Prior to 9/11 and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, there was a lot of talk in America about the "New War," one in which aircraft and guided missiles would rain death from above, with no loss of life to the good guys. Only the bad guys would die, and they'd be invisible on western TV screens.

The Canadian fatalities this week in Afghanistan, along with the deaths of U. S. and Allied soldiers in Iraq, showed once again how foolish this thinking was.

Down at the multiplex, though, the New War argument still reigns. Nobody really dies and the blood rarely flows red, if it flows at all.

Why are we still kidding ourselves?

Instead of banning blood from our screens, perhaps we should go the other way and insist upon seeing it in military scenes.

If we realized the true cost of war, perhaps we'd be less eager to start one.

phowell @ thestar.ca



# Too high a price to pay

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060091

**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Star

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Ont

**SECTION:** Letter

**PAGE:** AA07

**ILLUSTRATION:** FINBARR O'REILLY Reuters Canadian Cpl. Rikk Lewis, right, embraces another soldier on Wednesday after arriving at Ma'sum Ghar base in southeast Afghanistan. Earlier, six Canadian soldiers and an interpreter were killed in a roadside bomb attack. ;

**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation

**WORD COUNT:** 510

---

PM faces more pressure over mission

July 5

Our hearts ache yet again for the families and friends of six more Canadians killed in Afghanistan. Canada's new direction under Prime Minister Stephen Harper is putting the lives of Canadians in peril.

There is no question Canadians support our women and men. What Canadians do question is the government's change in our foreign policy. We used to be respected for our role as conciliator and peacekeeper, but that respect has been lost as a result of Canada's new government following a more aggressive style of foreign policy.

Is it a coincidence that our soldiers were killed on the 4th of July?

Paul Connolly, Victoria, B.C.

Surely it makes sense that the more we interfere with the Middle East, the more we encourage interference in our own country, as the British have found out. How can we try to tell others how to live, be a part of a war that kills civilians and not expect anger in return?

The more involved in Afghanistan, the more under threat we will be, and the government will revel in the further application of "security" measures that take away even more of our freedom.

Our government should be telling NATO that we leave Afghanistan in February 2009, if not earlier.

Therese MacDonald, Chatham, Ont.

Twenty-first-century technology versus a band of determined freedom fighters, and Canadians are left with six more dead young soldiers in Afghanistan. The mission has definitively changed for Canada, whether or not those in power agree. The rhetoric must stop about how important this mission is to the Canadian people and allow the realities of war to sink in.

Bring our troops home, before we allow this travesty to join the Vietnam conflict in the annals of irresponsible and needless death.

Daniel Kowbell, Toronto

It is with a tear in my eye that I write this letter. Six more young lives have been lost. I don't care if the Afghan government wants our troops there or not.

Did we not learn anything from the Soviet Union's presence in Afghanistan in the 1980s? Even with all of the strength of the Soviets, they realized it was futile and pulled out.

Joe Miles, Brampton

Canada's mission costly but worthy

Editorial, July 5

Your editorial took a fair and balanced position to a critical and sensitive issue facing our nation. While all Canadians are saddened at the loss of any life – particularly those serving in the Canadian Forces who serve to establish and protect the values that make this country great – all Canadians also support those same men and women who risk so much to ensure that we continue to live in freedom and with security.

Those who demand that Canada withdraw from Afghanistan show only their weakness and lack of commitment to what they profess to stand for: freedom and human rights. We are fortunate to live in a country in which our Charter protects these principles.

NDP Leader Jack Layton should realize that we have an obligation to ensure that others less fortunate may also come to experience and share in those same rights and freedoms. Layton should also understand that the path to establishing and defending these rights and freedoms is not without its challenges – thus further illustrating the reverence with which they should be defended and protected.

Blair Johnston, Mississauga

# Afghanistan

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060072  
**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Star  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Ont  
**SECTION:** World And Comment  
**PAGE:** AA02  
**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation  
**WORD COUNT:** 64

---

But second-hand smoke

might not be Job 1 here

Afghanistan may be the world's largest producer of heroin, but the government has taken the first step toward a ban on smoking in public places.

The council of ministers has ordered a campaign through the media and mosques to inform the public that smoking in educational institutions, hospitals and government offices has been outlawed.

The ban will be widened to cover hotels and restaurants.

The reports did not say how the government would monitor the ban or what penalties there might be for violators.

# All the polish, none of the blood

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060008

**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Star

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Ont

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** A11

**ILLUSTRATION:** FINBARR O'REILLY Reuters Canadian soldier from India company seen Tuesday during firefight in Afghanistan. There's no reason to believe other NATO member–nations will step up if Canada abandons the war in 2009, says Rosie DiManno. FINBARR O'REILLY Reuters Canadian soldier from India company seen Tuesday during firefight in Afghanistan. There's no reason to believe other NATO member– nations will step up if Canada abandons the war in 2009, says Rosie DiManno. ;

**BYLINE:** Rosie DiManno

**SOURCE:** Toronto Star

**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation

**WORD COUNT:** 622

---

Afghans were right all along. The West can't be trusted.

They had the wrong impression, exposed essentially to soldiers, who are a different breed and mean what they say, putting their lives on the line for ideals as espoused by their fair-weather political bosses.

Of course, soldiers don't often speak of ideals, the geopolitical framework of the Afghanistan mission, and when they do, to journalists, it sounds stilted or corny, as if rehearsed or reading off a teleprompter. They know the sound bytes that are required of them and getting to the pith of the thing requires a level of trust that must be earned. But even beneath the patina of propaganda, and despite the quietly expressed doubts that some troops might harbour about the assignment – not self-doubt; rather, suspicion of politicians and shifting public opinion – there is sturdiness and confidence in their sense of purpose.

Their governments, too many of which have paid mere lip service to the rehabilitation of Afghanistan as a functioning state, are made of weaker stuff.

Only Canada, Britain and the United States – selectively, Holland, and a small Romanian contingent – have genuinely put their shoulders to the wheel. The failure of most NATO countries to fulfil their Bonn Conference promises has severely jeopardized, perhaps outright doomed, the bold undertaking. By this impotence, the very concept of NATO has been invalidated.

There's no reason to believe other member–nations will step up if Canada abandons Afghanistan in 2009, or retreats to the relative safety of Kabul as an urban cantonment. The likes of France, Italy and Germany won't fill the combustible gap in Kandahar, Helmand and Uruzgan. Easier for them to stay beyond reach in Kunduz or Herat, where insurgent attacks are rarities and showcase reconstruction humming along nicely: All the brass polishing with none of the blood.

And this facade of deployment is what many Canadians want for their troops.

The British will likely stay and the Americans aren't leaving. But southern Afghanistan will probably collapse, further imperilling the central government in Kabul while simultaneously affording Al Qaeda a huge

operating sanctuary in Central Asia: Afghanistan as terrorist state redux.

The neo-Taliban are not the Mongol hordes, sweeping across the plains of Afghanistan. They are a localized and heavily infiltrated – by Arab and Pakistani fighters – phenomenon, stubborn and fanatical, effective in tactics disproportionate to their numbers, but far, far from an undefeatable opponent. They can plant roadside explosives and crank out suicide bombers from here till Armageddon without ever gaining either political or strategic control of Afghanistan. But they do have patience and the West doesn't.

It behooves defeatists – in their weird upside-down triumphalism – to conflate Afghanistan and Iraq. Calamities such as Wednesday's dreadful attack against a Canadian convoy, killing six troops and an Afghan interpreter, suck the ballast out of a nation and buoy the political ambitions of opposition parties.

But Afghanistan isn't Iraq, most especially in this one core factor: There is no religious schism driving the madness and exploited to fuel the barbarity. In Iraq, religion is politics is power. Al Qaeda involvement aside, minority Sunnis (40 per cent) seek to reassert their paramount political eminence and the majority Shiite (60 per cent) have little willingness to share, not after the oppression they long suffered.

Afghanistan is 88 per cent Sunni. Most Shiites are in the distant west, along the border with Iran. The Pashtun tribes in southern Afghanistan may be more fundamentalist, and intractably resentful of Kabul, thus widely supportive of the Taliban, but this is still a religiously homogenous country.

It is not preordained to implode unless the international community – and Canada – forsakes Afghanistan again.

Rosie DiManno usually appears Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday.

# Retired Canadian colonel described Taliban tactics

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060007  
**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Star  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Met  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A02  
**COPYRIGHT:** © 2007 Torstar Corporation  
**WORD COUNT:** 34

---

Alain Pellerin is a retired Canadian colonel. He was misidentified in a July 5 article about a roadside bomb that killed six Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan.

The Star regrets the error.

# Tributes for soldier; Anderson attended Notre Dame before joining the military

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060086

**PUBLICATION:** The Leader-Post (Regina)

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** A1 / FRONT

**ILLUSTRATION:** Colour Photo: Cpl Jordan Anderson, 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, was killed on Wednesday, along with five other Canadian Forces members and one Afghan interpreter, when the vehicle they were travelling in struck an improvised explosive device, 20 kilometres south of Kandahar City. ;

**BYLINE:** Rob Vanstone

**SOURCE:** Leader-Post

**WORD COUNT:** 431

---

The attributes Jordan Anderson displayed while playing high school football for the Notre Dame Hounds are being saluted following his death in Afghanistan.

Anderson, 25, was one of six Canadian soldiers who were killed Wednesday when their armoured vehicle was destroyed by an improvised explosive device about 20 kilometres south of Kandahar City.

Anderson attended Wilcox-based Athol Murray College of Notre Dame and played on the offensive and defensive lines for the Regina Intercollegiate Football League's Hounds in 1996, 1997 and 1998.

"He was one of the team guys," veteran Notre Dame football coach Rob Palmarin said Thursday, when he discovered the tragic news about Cpl. Anderson. "He was willing to make sacrifices for the team when he played and he was willing to make sacrifices for his country."

Palmarin kept in touch with Anderson — a member of the Edmonton-based 3rd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry — following his graduation from Notre Dame in 1999. Anderson is from the Northwest Territories.

"He e-mailed me two years ago from Afghanistan on one of his earlier missions," Palmarin recalled. "He said, 'I know we pray at assembly in the morning (at Notre Dame) when we all gather. Please pray for me and all the boys.'"

"He had a favourite prayer, which began, 'Saint Michael, the Archangel, defend us in battle.' He e-mailed me the words. He kept it simple.

"We're all in shock. We'll try to figure out a way to honour him during the (2007 football) season."

Palmarin has fond recollections of Anderson and his contributions to the Hounds and the school.

"It's like losing one of your own kids, even though it's eight or nine years removed," he said. "He was a tough, two-way lineman. He never made the all-star team, but he was kind of the next guy on the list. He was a battler. I'll always remember that. In one-on-ones, he'd always look to go after the toughest guy."

Anderson also played rugby for the Hounds for four years.

In his graduating year, he wrote the following in Notre Dame's yearbook: "Thanks, Mom and Dad, for all you've done for me even when times were low. I'll always try and make you proud of me."

The Hounds' 1998–99 yearbook also listed his ambitions: "To find work that I love, to never look back, and never have any regrets."

Five of the six deceased soldiers' names have been released. Capt. Matthew Johnathan Dawe, Cpl. Cole Bartsch and Pte. Lane Watkins were in Anderson's battalion. Master Cpl. Colin Bason, a reservist from The Royal Westminster Regiment, also died. The soldiers were to have concluded their deployment in Afghanistan at the end of the month.

"You recall the days of the Second World War where Pere Murray would rally the boys at Notre Dame to join the Canadian Armed Forces and fight the Nazis," Palmarin said. "I think we lost 67 Hounds in the Second World War.

"It hits home. It brings the war closer."



# Armed Forces celebrate with air show

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060066  
**PUBLICATION:** The Leader-Post (Regina)  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A7  
**BYLINE:** Matthew Barton  
**SOURCE:** The Leader-Post  
**WORD COUNT:** 331

---

The members of 15 Wing Moose Jaw will be among those flying high on Saturday to celebrate the first annual Armed Forces Day.

The goal is to showcase the skill of Armed Forces pilots in a series of aerial demonstrations including search and rescue and helicopter rappelling.

"The format we are using this year is the first time it's been done. The theme is to connect with Canadians," 2nd Lieut. Sebastien Monger said Thursday.

Armed Forces Day is different from the traditional Moose Jaw Air Show because it features military forces and aircraft. Civilian pilots and private planes will not be on display.

The Moose Jaw event is free and open to everyone from the public. Officials expect the event to have good attendance because the weather forecast calls for sunny skies.

The public are encouraged to come out and meet the men and women of the Armed Forces. The event is one part spectacle and one part public relations campaign.

"It's a chance to talk to soldiers who have gone overseas and a chance to talk to people who will be going overseas," said Monger.

Maj. Jon Clow has been with the Canadian Forces for 21 years and flying for 17 years.

He's flown in dozens of air shows across North America. The planes he's flown include the T33 and Tutor jet. Now, Clow teaches instructors how to instruct new pilots in the ways of flight.

When flying at air shows he has a lot to worry about, including his distance from the crowd and following the rules of the road that pilots have to respect.

"Safety is paramount, it's always in your head," said Clow.

The aircraft in the flight demonstration include the Griffon, the CF-18, and the Hawk. The Snowbirds are also to perform.

Aircraft on static display that will not be flying include the Twin Otter, King Air, Jet Ranger and Sea King.

Army hardware on display will include a 105-millimetre howitzer, machine gun bunkers and a command

post. The navy will have the Hurricane and Dive Support Vehicle on site.

Clow has been busy training instructors and said he hasn't been to Afghanistan.

"I'd love to. Flying operationally is what every pilot wants to do," said Clow.

Until then, he's focused on Armed Forces Day and training instructors.

The event will run from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The air show will begin in the afternoon. Visitors are not allowed to bring coolers or glass containers and pets are not allowed. Bags are allowed but may be subject to a search. Smoking and alcohol are also prohibited.

Food and drinks will be available. Monger said people should remember to bring bug spray and sun screen.

"Everyone is welcome and it will be fun," said Monger.

# Army stoic in face of losses

---

**SOURCETAG** 0707060493

**PUBLICATION:** The Winnipeg Sun

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** 7

**BYLINE:** CP

**DATELINE:** HALIFAX and EDMONTON

**WORD COUNT:** 390

---

Capt. Jefferson Francis volunteered for the patrol in Afghanistan that ultimately took his life.

Francis, 34, was in an armoured vehicle when a roadside bomb detonated Wednesday near Kandahar, killing six Canadian soldiers and an Afghan interpreter.

Francis was with 1 Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, based in Shilo, Man., but was from Halifax.

He was married and had an eight-month-old child.

Quoting an unnamed source, the Halifax Chronicle Herald says Francis wasn't originally supposed to be in patrol vehicle but volunteered to go out when a sixth soldier was needed.

A military source in Nova Scotia says Francis was an artillery co-ordinator, known as a "fire-effects officer."

A media briefing is scheduled for this morning at CFB Shilo.

Grieving for its last group of Afghanistan casualties, the army will steel itself for future challenges even as it mourns new losses, a Canadian military leader said yesterday.

Brig.-Gen. Mark Skidmore says the six who died — four of them based at Edmonton Garrison — were dedicated to their jobs and committed to the task Canada had set before them.

"We're proud to have known these soldiers. We are privileged to have served alongside them and we would be honoured to replace them in their noble cause in the accomplishment of our shared mission," Skidmore, the commander of Land Force Western Area, said yesterday.

'STEEL OURSELVES'

"The army was their life, the army is our life and Canada is No. 1. And with those anchor points in our thoughts, we'll tend to our fallen and steel ourselves for the future challenges."

Col. Jon Vance, commander of 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade, the formation to which the dead soldiers belonged, agreed.

"The greatest and immediate impact on the soldiers is the sense of loss and grief, but they very quickly recover from that and steel themselves for the continuation of the mission," he said.

"We're in the business of hard and we know that this is a complex and long-term engagement. "We grieve, we lay soldiers to rest properly, we support the families and get on with the mission."

The six soldiers, along with an Afghan interpreter, died Wednesday in a roadside explosion as they were returning from a mission southwest of Kandahar.

In addition to Francis, Cpl. Jordan Anderson, Capt. Matthew Dawe, Cpl. Cole Bartsch and Pte. Lane Watkins were all members of the 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry based in Edmonton.

Master Cpl. Colin Bason was a reservist with the Royal Westminster Regiment based in New Westminster, B.C.

Watkins, 20, who grew up in Clearwater, Man., was characterized as sometimes being shy, although he was also remembered as someone everybody liked.

"I find it very hard to look at his picture on the news and think of him as gone, being so young," said Lynn Galbraith, who taught Watkins at Pilot Mound Collegiate.

"He was well-liked by all his classmates. He was a big strapping lad. He was a good-sized kid. He could be shy at times, but he was outgoing with his friends."

Galbraith said Watkins always thought of joining the military once he graduated.

The casualties came 15 days after another roadside bomb killed three soldiers as they rode an unarmoured utility vehicle. KEYWORDS=NATIONAL

# No consensus, no mission Liberals to PM: Troops should count on return in February 2009

---

**SOURCETAG** 0707050795

**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Sun

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** 5

**ILLUSTRATION:** 1. photo of STEPHANE DION Tell NATO 2. photo of JACK LAYTON Bring 'em home  
3. photo by Finbarr O'Reilly, Reuters A Canadian soldier heads out atop a tank from Ma'sum Ghar base after six countrymen were killed in Afghanistan yesterday.

**BYLINE:** CP

**DATELINE:** OTTAWA

**WORD COUNT:** 341

---

It's looking more like Prime Minister Stephen Harper's pledge not to extend Canada's combat role in Afghanistan without the consensus of all four federal parties means the combat mission will end in 19 months.

Two party leaders were unyielding in their positions yesterday as news filtered back from Kandahar that six more Canadian soldiers and an Afghan interpreter had been killed by a roadside bomb.

With Canada's death toll in Afghanistan reaching 66 soldiers and a diplomat since 2002, Liberal Leader Stephane Dion told a news conference that Harper should have informed NATO allies weeks ago that Canada would not be renewing its combat commitment in the Central Asian country.

"The prime minister has said that he needs to have a consensus in order to extend the mission beyond February of 2009," Dion said. "This consensus will never exist."

"You know what is the views of the other parties and what is the view of the official Opposition. So the prime minister should say that right away."

Dion's news conference came a few hours after NDP Leader Jack Layton said Canada doesn't need to give notice, it should just pull out now.

Citing a mounting military and civilian death toll, Layton said Harper should engineer an immediate scaledown of operations and take a lead role in developing a peace process with Taliban leaders.

That suggestion has been ridiculed in the past by Harper.

The prime minister has said he will not risk undercutting the mission by contemplating an extension of Canada's combat role in Afghanistan beyond 2009 unless there is a consensus to do so.

Aides to Harper said the prime minister does not expect unanimity on the issue. The NDP has been consistent in its opposition to the current role Canadian troops are playing in Afghanistan.

But the prime minister might have been hoping for support from the Liberals.

Dion's reiterated opposition to extending the mission gives Harper a way to draw down Canada's military role in Afghanistan while insisting he had little choice in doing so.

NATO's presence in Afghanistan is only boosting Afghan support for the Taliban, Layton said.

The war is escalating and Ottawa is misguided in its commitment to provide combat troops to the NATO alliance in Afghanistan for at least two more years, he said.

"It's the wrong mission; it's not working; it's not going to accomplish the goals," Layton said.

He wants Dion and Bloc Quebecois Leader Gilles Duceppe to reconsider their positions on Canada's role in Afghanistan and join the NDP in calling for an immediate withdrawal.

Dion dismissed that possibility — and he refused to discuss the domestic political implications on a day that six more Canadians died. KEYWORDS=WORLD

# Death toll

---

**SOURCETAG** 0707050793

**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Sun

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** 4

**WORD COUNT:** 354

---

Since 2002, 66 Canadian soldiers and a diplomat have been killed in Afghanistan. Here's a list of the deaths:

## 2007

- July 4 — Six soldiers killed by a roadside bomb in Panjwahi district west of Kandahar city.
- June 20 — Sgt. Christos Karigiannis, Cpl. Stephen Frederick Bouzane and Pte. Joel Vincent Wiebe, all of 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry killed by a roadside bomb west of Kandahar.
- June 11 — Trooper Darryl Caswell, 25, of the Royal Canadian Dragoons, by a roadside bomb north of Kandahar.
- May 30 — Master Cpl. Darrell Jason Priede, killed when a U.S. helicopter was reportedly shot down in Helmand province.
- May 25 — Cpl. Matthew McCully, 25, killed by an improvised explosive device in Zhari District.
- April 18 — Master Cpl. Anthony Klumpenhower, who served with elite special forces, died after falling from a communications tower in Kandahar City.
- April 11 — Master Cpl. Allan Stewart and Trooper Patrick James Pentland killed when their Coyote vehicle struck an IED.
- April 8 — Sgt. Donald Lucas, Cpl. Aaron Williams, Pte. Kevin Kennedy, Pte. David Greenslade, Cpl. Christopher Stannix and Cpl. Brent Poland killed when their vehicle hit a roadside bomb.
- March 6 — Cpl. Kevin Megeney, 25, killed in accidental shooting at NATO base in Kandahar.

## 2006

- Nov. 27 — Chief Warrant Officer Bobby Girouard and Cpl. Albert Storm killed by suicide car bomber.
- Oct. 14 — Sgt. Darcy Tedford and Pte. Blake Williamson killed in ambush.
- Oct. 7 — Trooper Mark Andrew Wilson killed by roadside bomb.
- Oct. 3 — Sgt. Craig Gillam and Cpl. Robert Mitchell killed in series of mortar, rocket attacks.
- Sept. 29 — Pte. Josh Klukie killed in explosion in Panjwahi.

- Sept. 18 — Pte. David Byers, Cpl. Shane Keating, Cpl. Keith Morley and Cpl. Glen Arnold killed in suicide bicycle bomb attack in Panjwahi.
- Sept. 4 — Pte. Mark Graham killed when two NATO planes accidentally strafed Canadian troops in Panjwahi district.
- Sept. 3 — Sgt. Shane Stachnik, Warrant Officer Frank Mellish, Pte. William Cushley and Warrant Officer Richard Nolan killed in fighting in Panjwahi district.
- Aug. 22 — Cpl. David Braun killed in suicide attack.
- Aug. 11 — Cpl. Andrew Eykelenboom killed in suicide attack.
- Aug. 9 — Master Cpl. Jeffrey Walsh killed by apparent accidental discharge of rifle.
- Aug. 5 — Master Cpl. Raymond Arndt killed when his G-Wagon patrol vehicle collided with truck.
- Aug. 3 — Cpl. Christopher Reid killed by roadside bomb. Sgt. Vaughan Ingram, Cpl. Bryce Keller and Pte. Kevin Dallaire killed in rocket-propelled grenade attack.
- July 22 — Cpl. Francisco Gomez and Cpl. Jason Warren killed when car packed with explosives rammed their armoured vehicle.
- July 9 — Cpl. Anthony Boneca killed in firefight.
- May 17 — Capt. Nichola Goddard killed in Taliban ambush.
- April 22 — Cpl. Matthew Dinning, Bombardier Myles Mansell, Lieut. William Turner and Cpl. Randy Payne killed when their G-Wagon destroyed by roadside bomb.
- March 29 — Pte. Robert Costall killed in firefight with Taliban.
- March 2 — Cpl. Paul Davis and Master Cpl. Timothy Wilson killed when their armoured vehicle ran off road.
- Jan. 15 — Glyn Berry, British-born Canadian diplomat, killed in suicide bombing.

## 2005

- Nov. 24 — Pte. Braun Woodfield killed when his armoured vehicle rolled over.

## 2004

- Jan. 27 — Cpl. Jamie Murphy killed in suicide bombing while on patrol.

## 2003

- Oct. 2 — Sgt. Robert Short and Cpl. Robbie Beerenfenger killed in roadside bombing.

## 2002

- April 17 — Sgt. Marc Leger, Cpl. Ainsworth Dyer, Pte. Richard Green and Pte. Nathan Smith killed when



U.S. F-16 fighter mistakenly bombed Canadians. KEYWORDS=CANADIAN ABROAD; FATAL; CANADA; MILITARY; STATISTIC

# Armour no match for bomb 'They have managed to kill 6 great young Canadians today and that is an absolute tragedy'

---

**SOURCETAG:** 0707050790

**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Sun

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** 3

**ILLUSTRATION:** 1. 2 photos by Finbarr O'Reilly, Reuters Corp. Rikk Lewis embraces a fellow soldier on his safe arrival at Ma'sum Ghar base after six Canadians were killed yesterday. They were riding in a RG-31 Nyala like its companion armoured vehicle which made it back safely.  
2. file photo by Darryl Dyck, Sun Media Capt. Matthew Dawe, one of the six killed, reaches out for his son Lucas, 1, in a photo taken in February at CFB Edmonton.

**BYLINE:** STEPHANIE LEVITZ, THE CANADIAN PRESS

**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR

**WORD COUNT:** 609

---

A powerful roadside bomb killed six Canadian soldiers and an Afghan interpreter yesterday, overwhelming the sturdy armour of a vehicle designed to withstand mine blasts as it was moving along a gravel road in southern Afghanistan.

The RG-31 Nyala patrol vehicle is considered one of the military's strongest in protecting against the deadly scourge of roadside bombs, but it failed to save the lives of the seven people inside its armoured body.

The identities of four of the dead were released late yesterday afternoon: Cpl. Cole Bartsch, of Whitecourt, Alta.; Capt. Matthew Johnathan Dawe and Pte. Lane Watkins, from Clearwater, Man., all of 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry based in Edmonton; and Master Cpl. Colin Bason, a reservist from the Royal Westminster Regiment based in New Westminster, B.C.

Families of the other two had not agreed to the release of their names last night.

Dawe, 27, was identified by the Kingston Whig-Standard as the commanding officer of the 3rd Battalion's C company.

Dawe, midway through a tour of Afghanistan, was in charge of Pte. Joel Wiebe, Sgt. Christos Karigiannis and Cpl. Stephen Bouzane when their unarmoured Gator vehicle was hit by a roadside bomb June 20, the Whig-Standard said. All three were killed.

Ann Bason of Abbotsford, B.C., told CTV News her son was probably one of the first reservists to join when the call went out for volunteers for the Afghan mission.

'HE WAS VERY PROUD'

"He was very proud that he got picked," she said.

"The sad thing is he only had six weeks left to go before he was on his way home. But how many people get to do the things they really love and he loved the infantry."

Prime Minister Stephen Harper issued a statement last night saying: "On behalf of all Canadians, my most sincere condolences go out to the family, friends and colleagues ... they are all in our thoughts and prayers."

Altogether, 66 Canadian soldiers have lost their lives in Afghanistan since 2002, along with one diplomat.

The six soldiers were returning to a forward operating base after a joint mission with Afghan security forces around 11 a.m. local time when their vehicle struck the improvised explosive device, said Brig.-Gen. Tim Grant, the top Canadian in Afghanistan.

The vehicle was on a well-travelled route, used by army and locals alike, in an area of Kandahar province considered among the safer zones.

The troops had been on a cordon-and-search operation, following intelligence that Taliban were in the area. They had been passing through the village of Salavat, 20 km southwest of Kandahar city, when the bomb went off.

It's not the first time a Canadian soldier has been killed while riding in a Nyala.

In October, Trooper Mark Andrew Wilson died from injuries sustained when his Nyala was hit by an improvised explosive device — or IED — in the same district.

#### SIGN OF DESPERATION

Though the military has said the rising use of roadside bombs is a sign of a desperate insurgency, their deadly blasts have claimed more lives during the current rotation of Canadian troops than any other weapons — 19 of the 22 soldiers killed so far.

"Clearly they have managed to kill six great young Canadians today which is an absolute tragedy, but the other parts of this is that they are killing lots of Afghans," Grant said.

"These are not the tactics of anything other than terrorists."

Grant pointed out that many IEDs are discovered and neutralized by the military before causing any harm.

"We're not perfect and we do miss some, as we have seen today, but the battle against the Taliban and the battle against their choice of weapons, IED, is successful," Grant insisted.

"And more often than not we do find them and we do disarm them."

Grant maintained that Panjwaii is still much safer than the nearby district of Zhari, despite yesterday's attack and one at the end of June that killed three Canadians.

Canadians have been conducting a series of operations in Zhari for months, trying to flush out the stubborn Taliban insurgency there. But Panjwaii is often heralded as a military-reconstruction success story after heavy fighting last fall.

#### 'GREAT RELATIONSHIPS'

"Panjwaii is an area we are comfortable in travelling in, we have great relationships with local elders and the

Armour no match for bomb 'They have managed to kill 6 great young Canadians today and that is 20 absol

district leadership and the people on the ground," he said.

"So this is an area that while the Taliban operate in it, they do not operate freely."

The current rotation of Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan is due to return home at the end of this month.

Yesterday's blast was the deadliest for Canadians since Easter Sunday, April 8, when another roadside bomb killed six Canadian soldiers inside a LAV-3, another light armoured vehicle. KEYWORDS=WORLD

Armour no match for bomb 'They have managed to kill 6 great young Canadians today and that is 27% absolute

# Frontpage Numb with pain 6 more of our boys killed in Afghanistan KEYWORDS=WORLD

---

**SOURCETAG** 0707050787

**PUBLICATION:** The Toronto Sun

**DATE:** 2007.07.05

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** 1

**ILLUSTRATION:** 4 photos 1. photo of CORPORAL COLE BARTSCH 2. photo of MASTER CORPORAL COLIN BASON 3. photo of CAPTAIN MATTHEW JOHNATHAN DAWE 4. photo of PRIVATE LANE WATKINS

**WORD COUNT:** 0

---

# Military family mourns fallen Captain 'prided himself on serving from the front'

---

**SOURCETAG** 0707060308

**PUBLICATION:** The Ottawa Sun

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** 6

**ILLUSTRATION:** 6 photos 1. photo of MATTHEW DAWE One of the six soldiers killed on Wednesday, holds his son Lucas before leaving for Afghanistan in February. 2. photo of COLE BARTSCH 3. photo of COLIN BASON 4. photo of LANE WATKINS 5. photo of JEFFERSON FRANCIS 6. photo of JORDAN ANDERSON.

**BYLINE:** CP

**DATELINE:** KINGSTON

**WORD COUNT:** 333

---

The family of one of the highest-ranking Canadian officers to be killed in Afghanistan since the war began remembered their son, brother and husband yesterday as a dedicated soldier who wouldn't let something as minor as a ruptured Achilles tendon get in his way.

The family of Capt. Matthew Dawe, 27, was not speaking to the media, but released a statement praising Dawe's love for the soldiers who worked under him.

"Matt was a superb soldier. He was very fit and prided himself on leading from the front," the statement reads.

"He loved his soldiers very much and we know that this feeling was reciprocal."

The statement says Dawe ruptured his Achilles tendon in the months leading to his deployment, but he recovered faster than expected because he "didn't want his boys to go without him."

## ROADSIDE BOMB

Dawe was killed Wednesday along with five other Canadian soldiers and an Afghan interpreter when an armoured vehicle was hit by a roadside bomb.

Dawe leaves behind his wife, Tara, and a two-year-old son named Lucas.

The statement says Dawe was very close to his parents, brothers and his large extended family.

Dawe comes from a prominent military family in Kingston. His father is a retired lieutenant-colonel, and all three of his older brothers are enlisted with the Canadian Forces. Two served in Afghanistan in 2002. His family acknowledges this in their statement, but asks people to pay tribute to all the soldiers who were killed.

"It is important to remember that Matt was one of six soldiers who lost their lives," it reads. "Our hearts go out to the other families who may not have understood the dangers of this mission to the extent that we did."

Four of the soldiers killed on Wednesday — Dawe along with Cpl. Jordan Anderson, Cpl. Cole Bartsch and Pte. Lane Watkins — were based in Edmonton with the 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.

Capt. Jefferson Francis was with the 1st Royal Canadian Horse Artillery based in Shiloh, Man., and Master Cpl. Colin Bason was a reservist with the Royal Westminster Regiment based in New Westminster, B.C.

In Edmonton, Brig.-Gen. Mark Skidmore yesterday said the soldiers who died Wednesday were dedicated to their job and committed to the task Canada had set before them.

"The army was their life, the army is our life and Canada is No. 1. And with those anchor points in our thoughts, we'll tend to our fallen and steel ourselves for the future challenges," he said.

KEYWORDS=NATIONAL

# Harper vows to soldier on

---

**SOURCETAG** 0707060307

**PUBLICATION:** The Ottawa Sun

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** 6

**BYLINE:** CP

**DATELINE:** HALIFAX

**WORD COUNT:** 215

---

Prime Minister Stephen Harper restated his determination yesterday to keep Canadian troops in Afghanistan until 2009 despite mounting casualties at the hands of an enemy emboldened by a lethal shift in tactics.

Harper, in Halifax to make a \$3.1-billion funding announcement for the navy, said his government doesn't treat military deaths lightly, but they will not alter his plan to maintain the current operation even as opposition calls grow louder for a withdrawal from the war-torn nation.

"Obviously as prime minister, casualties of any kind weigh heavily upon my mind," he said on the flight deck of HMCS Halifax.

"But today is not the day to have a political debate on the future of the mission. Today is a day to express our condolences for these soldiers, to their families."

## WITHSTAND BLASTS

The pledge to stay on followed one of the deadliest days in Afghanistan for Canadian troops. Six soldiers and their Afghan interpreter were killed Wednesday when they hit a potent roadside bomb in Kandahar's Zhari district. They were travelling in a RG-31, a heavily armoured patrol vehicle with a V-shaped hull that's designed to withstand mine blasts.

Harper said the federal government has provided soldiers with a full range of equipment, but declined to discuss how the military should respond to the Taliban's use of more powerful roadside bombs.

"We have supplied our Canadian troops in Afghanistan with a full range of equipment all the way from small vehicles up to tanks." **KEYWORDS=NATIONAL**



# Al-Qaida urges Muslims to rally

---

**SOURCETAG** 0707060381

**PUBLICATION:** The London Free Press

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** A5

**BYLINE:** AP

**DELINE:** BAGHDAD

**WORD COUNT:** 275

---

Al-Qaida's deputy leader sought to bolster the terror network's main arm in Iraq in a new video released yesterday, calling on Muslims to rally behind it at a time when the group is on the defensive, faced with U.S. offensives and splits with other insurgent groups.

Ayman al-Zawahri defended the Islamic State of Iraq — the insurgent umbrella group headed by al-Qaida — against critics among Islamic militant groups, saying it was a vanguard for fighting off the U.S. military and eventually establishing a "caliphate" of Islamic rule across the region.

Al-Zawahri, the top deputy of Osama bin Laden, called on Muslims to follow a two-pronged strategy: work at home to topple "corrupt" Arab regimes and join al-Qaida's "jihad," or holy war, in Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia to fight and train "to prepare for the next jihad."

He urged Hamas not to compromise under Arab and international pressure to end its rule in the Gaza Strip and make way for a unified Palestinian government that could pursue peace with Israel.

"As for the leadership of Hamas, I tell it: return to the truth, for you will only get something worse than what (late Palestinian leader Yasser) Arafat got" from the Israelis in negotiations.

The peace process, he said, is a U.S. attempt to "deceive the Islamic nation and say that America solved the issue of Palestine, so what need is there to fight it and wage jihad against it?"

In an earlier message after its seizure of Gaza, al-Zawahri urged Hamas to form an alliance with al-Qaida, a call the Palestinian militant group shunned.

The Egyptian militant did not mention last week's failed car bombing bids in Britain, which British authorities are investigating for al-Qaida links. That suggested the video, posted on an Islamic militant website, was made before the events in London and Glasgow. KEYWORDS=WORLD

# MacKenzie calls for 15,000 more troops

---

**SOURCETAG** 0707060373  
**PUBLICATION:** The London Free Press  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A3  
**ILLUSTRATION:** photo of LEWIS MACKENZIE  
**BYLINE:** MERITA ILO, CP  
**DATELINE:** TORONTO  
**WORD COUNT:** 375

---

In the wake of six more Canadian deaths in Afghanistan, a retired army general said the military mission in that country can only be successful if NATO doubles the number of troops on the ground.

"We need more boots on the ground," said retired Canadian major-general Lewis MacKenzie, who has commanded troops in some of the world's most dangerous places.

"I know the commanders (in Afghanistan) can't ask for the numbers they would like because it's politically sensitive to do that, but they need another 15,000 troops, a division in the south, to help the Dutch, the Canadians, the Brits and the Americans do their jobs."

Canada has about 2,500 troops in Afghanistan, most of them based in the southern province of Kandahar.

MacKenzie insisted the mission has achieved significant successes, citing the return of more than three million refugees to their homes, the opening of 300 new schools and the fact that girls are now free to go to school, something unimaginable under the Taliban.

"Kabul was almost abandoned when I first went there and when I was there last year, it was a bustling city," MacKenzie said.

But he is highly critical of NATO's handling of the war in the impoverished country.

MacKenzie said there are more than a million troops available throughout NATO, but only about 35,000 in Afghanistan.

He said the ratio of soldiers to the population in an insurgency is the lowest in the history of warfare.

The retired major-general said he is frustrated that NATO has failed to make good on its promise for more troops for the Afghan mission.

"For some reason we have a tiny, tiny force and an alliance that was supposed to preach one for all and all for one — well, it sure in hell hasn't turned out that way," MacKenzie said.

He says it's clear some NATO members are not doing enough and should step up to the plate. If NATO as an alliance fails to generate the troops necessary, MacKenzie said, "then I would agree that the time has come to part (leave Afghanistan)."

Canada has one of the highest death tolls of any NATO member in Afghanistan, with 66 soldiers killed since 2002.

The latest victims were six soldiers killed Wednesday by a roadside bomb.

MacKenzie said the loss of Canadian lives in Afghanistan is something that had to be expected and there have already been warnings by both the Conservative and the former Liberal governments.

"The centre of gravity of this operation are the hearts and minds of the Canadian public. It's just like Vietnam and the American public," said MacKenzie, warning that calls for withdrawal would give the wrong signals to the insurgents.

The Afghan society is a warrior society, he said .

"They understand insurgency and they understand where they should attack and attacking the soldiers is an indirect way of attacking the morale of the Canadian public." KEYWORDS=NATIONAL

# Harper stands by Afghan mission

---

**SOURCETAG** 0707060372

**PUBLICATION:** The London Free Press

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** A3

**ILLUSTRATION:** photo of STEPHEN HARPER Prime minister says deaths of soldiers "weigh heavily" on his mind.

**BYLINE:** ALISON AULD, CP

**DATELINE:** HALIFAX

**WORD COUNT:** 250

---

Prime Minister Stephen Harper yesterday restated his determination to keep Canadian troops in Afghanistan until 2009 despite mounting casualties at the hands of an enemy emboldened by a lethal shift in tactics.

Harper, in Halifax to make a \$3.1-billion funding announcement for the navy, said his government doesn't treat military deaths lightly, but they will not alter his plan to maintain the current operation even as opposition calls grow louder for a withdrawal from the war-torn nation.

"Obviously as prime minister, casualties of any kind weigh heavily upon my mind," he said on the flight deck of the frigate HMCS Halifax.

"But today is not the day to have a political debate on the future of the mission. Today is a day to express our condolences for these soldiers, to their families."

The pledge to stay on followed one of the deadliest days in Afghanistan for Canadian troops. Six soldiers and their Afghan interpreter were killed Wednesday when they hit a potent roadside bomb in Kandahar's Zhari district.

They were travelling in a RG-31, a heavily armoured patrol vehicle with a V-shaped hull that's designed to withstand mine blasts and is considered one of the military's strongest in protecting against the deadly scourge of roadside bombs.

But somehow the explosion managed to engulf the Nyala in flames, leaving the soldiers little chance of survival and raising fears that the insurgents have adopted the same kind of deadly tactics used in Iraq.

"There's a real danger that Afghanistan starts to look more and more like Iraq," said Steven Staples of the Rideau Institute, an Ottawa-based think-tank.

"It's pretty clear that insurgents are learning from the experience in Iraq, where roadside bombs have proven to be incredibly lethal at striking back against the foreign militaries there.

"So Canadians are going to confront this a lot more often."

# Soldiers' bravery earns praise Military officials extol their dedication, while families begin to speak of their dependability.

---

**SOURCETAG** 0707060371

**PUBLICATION:** The London Free Press

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** A3

**ILLUSTRATION:** 7 photos 1. photo by Reuters SYMBOL: The Canadian flag flies at half-mast beneath the Afghan flag at the NATO coalition force military base at Kandahar Air Field, Afghanistan, yesterday. Six Canadian soldiers and an Afghan interpreter were killed in Afghanistan on Wednesday when their armoured vehicle hit a roadside bomb. 2. photo of MATTHEW DAWE 3. photo of LANE WATKINS 4. photo of COLIN BASON 5. photo of COLE BARTSCH 6. photo of JEFFERSON FRANCIS 7. photo of JORDAN ANDERSON

**BYLINE:** BOB WEBER, CP

**DATELINE:** EDMONTON

**WORD COUNT:** 569

---

A Canadian military leader says the army grieves for the soldiers who were killed in Afghanistan this week, but will also steel itself for future challenges.

Brig.-Gen. Mark Skidmore says the six who died were dedicated to their jobs and committed to the task Canada had set before them.

"We're proud to have known these soldiers. We are privileged to have served alongside them and we would be honoured to replace them in their noble cause in the accomplishment of our shared mission," Skidmore, commander of Land Force Western Area, said yesterday.

"The army was their life, the army is our life and Canada is No. 1. And with those anchor points in our thoughts, we'll tend to our fallen and steel ourselves for the future challenges."

Skidmore called on Canadians to honour the memory of the young soldiers who "have given so much and asked for so little."

Col. Jon Vance, commander of the 1st Canadian Mechanized Brigade, echoed those thoughts, saying the most important thing right now is for all Canadians to stand behind the families who have lost their loved ones.

Vance said the families are well aware that there is a debate about Canada's mission in Afghanistan, but the most sensitive and mature approach right now is to send out a "clarion call" of love and support.

The six soldiers and an Afghan interpreter died Wednesday in a roadside explosion as they were returning from a mission southwest of Kandahar.

Cpl. Jordan Anderson, Capt. Matthew Dawe, Cpl. Cole Bartsch and Pte. Lane Watkins were all members of the 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry based in Edmonton.

Soldiers' bravery earns praise Military officials extol their dedication, while families begin to speak of their de

Master Cpl. Colin Bason was a reservist with the Royal Westminster Regiment based in New Westminster, B.C., and Capt. Jefferson Francis was with 1 Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, based in Shilo, Man.

The family of Dawe, one of the highest-ranking Canadian officers to be killed in Afghanistan, remembered their son, brother and husband as a dedicated soldier who wouldn't let something as minor as a ruptured Achilles tendon get in his way.

Family members were not speaking to the media, but released a statement praising his love for the soldiers who worked under him.

"Matt was a superb soldier. He was very fit and prided himself on leading from the front," the statement read. "He loved his soldiers very much and we know that this feeling was reciprocal."

The statement said Dawe, 27, ruptured his Achilles tendon in the months leading up to his deployment to Afghanistan, but he recovered faster than expected because he "didn't want his boys to go without him."

Dawe comes from a prominent military family in Kingston. His father is a retired lieutenant-colonel and all three of his older brothers are enlisted with the Canadian Forces. Two of them served in Afghanistan in 2002.

Dawe was reportedly badly shaken when three other Canadian soldiers under his command were killed by a roadside bomb June 20.

Bartsch was remembered by his aunt as a much-loved young man whom friends could count on when they needed him.

"He was always the reliable one," a tearful Karen Shilson said from Calgary. "He would think nothing of taking the shirt off his back and giving it to you if you needed it worse than him. He was a good kid. He was one you could trust anywhere, any time."

Bartsch, whose family is from Whitecourt, Alta., enlisted in the military right out of high school and re-enlisted in the hope of further service to Canada, Shilson said.

"His belief was, even if it cost him his life, he was going to help his country. And it did."

Shilson said Bartsch was outgoing and got along with everybody.

"He never thought twice about going out of his way to help somebody else."

Watkins, 20, who grew up in Clearwater, Man., was characterized as sometimes being shy, although he was also remembered as someone everybody liked.

"I find it very hard to look at his picture on the news and think of him as gone, being so young," said Lynn Galbraith, who taught Watkins at Pilot Mound Collegiate high school.

"He was well-liked by all his classmates. He was a big strapping lad. He was a good-sized kid. He could be shy at times, but he was outgoing with his friends."

Galbraith said Watkins, too, always thought of joining the military once he graduated.

Sixty-six Canadian soldiers and one diplomat have been killed in Afghanistan since the war began in 2002.  
KEYWORDS=NATIONAL

Soldiers' bravery earns praise Military officials extol their dedication, while families begin to speak about their de

# Experienced soldier confident in Nyala vehicle

---

**SOURCETAG** 0707060370

**PUBLICATION:** The London Free Press

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** A3

**BYLINE:** STEPHANIE LEVITZ, CP

**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR, AFGHANISTAN

**WORD COUNT:** 280

---

Bumping along on a gravel road yesterday morning, the RG-31 Nyala vehicle shook and shuddered.

Lt.-Col. Wayne Eyre was uncomfortable, but unfazed.

The day before, six Canadians died when their Nyala was ripped apart by a roadside bomb.

Eyre said he still has complete faith in the RG-31 as his vehicle slammed into potholes and thunked over speed bumps en route back to Kandahar Airfield from Spin Boldak on the Pakistan border.

The Nyala armoured patrol vehicle is considered by the military as its heaviest protection against the scourge of improvised explosive devices or IEDs — commonly known as roadside bombs.

"I still have confidence in the vehicle," he said as the driver squawked out commands over the intercom.

"It's getting us from point A to point B. There's no vehicle in the world that will be an answer for every threat out there."

Tired from their drive and shaken by the latest deaths, soldiers gathered quietly to the side of the sand-coloured vehicles in Kandahar early yesterday.

Like the six men killed Wednesday, members of the force protection unit navigating the rugged terrain in this RG-31s are due to return home in August.

"This is a wake-up call," said one soldier who didn't want his name used. "What we thought was the safest thing out there maybe isn't."

Tucked into the window panelling of their vehicle were two woollen teddy bears, a gift from a female soldier for good luck.

It was the only soft touch inside the harsh, cramped Nyala, with its plastic seats and awkward seatbelts.

The seatbelts are designed to keep soldiers from slamming their heads into the metal ceiling of the vehicles, if a blast strikes and pressure waves fill the narrow interior.

The young soldier said it was hard for him to climb into the Nyala in the morning, hard to keep going when the end of his mission is only weeks away.

But Eyre said now is the time for soldiers to work harder than ever before.

"There is a hollow spot, make no doubt about that," he said. "But what we need to do is be strong and we have to dig deeper than we've ever dug before and carry on with our task here."

In his more than 20 years with the Canadian Forces, Eyre has seen death many times and been to farewell ceremonies for Afghan soldiers, whom his team trains, and countless ramp ceremonies for Canadian soldiers who have died. KEYWORDS=NATIONAL



# No ballots for overseas troops October municipal elections

---

**SOURCETAG** 0707060799

**PUBLICATION:** The Edmonton Sun

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** 12

**ILLUSTRATION:** photo by Tim Smith Director of Elections Steve Thompson displays the new mail-in ballots available to Edmontonians who are out of the city on municipal election day, October 15, beside a mailbox near City Hall after a press conference yesterday.

**BYLINE:** FRANK LANDRY, CITY HALL BUREAU

**WORD COUNT:** 251

---

Edmonton-based soldiers stationed overseas will be out of luck if they want to vote in the October municipal election.

And that's causing concern among military officials, who argue soldiers shouldn't lose out just because they're on a tour of duty.

For the first time, Edmontonians will be able to cast mail-in ballots in a civic election.

Steve Thompson, the city's director of elections, said military personnel in Afghanistan will be ineligible.

"It simply would not be possible," Thompson said yesterday. "There is not enough time."

He said the ballots will be produced and mailed out after nomination day, which is Sept. 15.

That's when all candidates are confirmed.

Thompson said the timeline is too tight to get the ballots overseas and returned to Edmonton by voting day – Oct. 15.

Capt. Lou Marselje, public affairs officer at Edmonton Garrison, said that's not what he wanted to hear.

"That's exactly what we're worried about," he told Sun Media.

Marselje said there's a chance up to 200 Edmonton-based soldiers could be overseas on election day, and he still hopes some sort of plan can be worked out.

He said in federal elections, soldiers overseas are still able to vote in advance polls.

"Our soldiers have a right to vote, and we insist on all three levels of government. Our soldiers should have the opportunity to vote, even if they decided to decline to do so."

Changes in provincial legislation permitted municipalities to accept mail-in ballots starting in 2004, but this is the first time Edmonton has taken advantage of the changes.

Calgary used mail-in ballots in 2004, when there were allegations of voter fraud.

Voters will now have to include a photocopy of their ID – such as a driver's licence – when they return their ballot package. To ensure a secret ballot, voters will be given separate envelopes for their ballot and ID.

As well, voters who will be out-of-town will only be able to request mail-in ballots for themselves, not other family members.

Civic affairs expert Jim Lightbody said despite the precautions, there's no guarantee against voter fraud.

"Any system can be corrupted if people are intent to do so," said the University of Alberta professor.

The new program is expected to cost \$30,000.

Thompson said voters can already request a mail-in ballot by calling 496-8008 or going to [www.edmonton.ca/election](http://www.edmonton.ca/election). KEYWORDS=EDMONTON

# 'The saddest of days' Commanders speak of loss of comrades and need to show support for families

---

**SOURCETAG** 0707060778

**PUBLICATION:** The Edmonton Sun

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** 3

**ILLUSTRATION:** photo by Brett Gundlock, Special to Sun Media Brig-Gen. Mark Skidmore addresses the media at the Griesbach army base yesterday. He called on all Canadians to show their support for the families of the soldiers who were killed Wednesday in Afghanistan .

**BYLINE:** RENATO GANDIA, SUN MEDIA

**WORD COUNT:** 427

---

Canada's Armed Forces need to feel love and support from Canadians during one of its saddest times, says the commander of 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group.

In the wake of the recent loss of six Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan, including four who were based in Edmonton, Col. Jon Vance talked about his personal connection to one of the slain soldiers and the impact the deaths have had on the military.

"These are the saddest of days and saddest of events for our brigade," Vance told reporters yesterday at a press conference in front of the Land Force Western Area headquarters. "We must ensure that their families hear a clarion call of love and support from Canada."

Vance said that's "the most sensitive and mature approach" to the tragedy.

Vance has a personal connection to a military family hit by the tragedy.

"I can tell you that I was closest with Capt. Matthew Dawe and his family. I grieve right now with his family. It's painful."

"I know his dad, Peter Sr. We worked with each other for a long time. I worked with his brother, Lt. Col. Peter Dawe Jr."

He called the Dawes a "model Canadian family, who have given so much of their time and talent to Canada through the Canadian Forces.

"I personally am as hurt as anyone that we've lost Matthew. He's a great soldier."

Dawe was killed by a roadside bomb along with Master Cpl. Colin Bason, Cpl. Cole Bartsch, Cpl. Jordan Anderson, Pte. Lane Watkins and Capt. Jefferson Francis.

Anderson, Dawe, Bartsch and Watkins were all members of the Edmonton-based 3rd Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.

"I call upon all Canadians to support these grieving families and to honour the memories of these brave young Canadians, who are not asking so much but so little," said Brig.-Gen. Mark Skidmore, commander of Land Force Western Area.

"Afford them the respect and dignity while they're enduring their sacrifice and advancing the ideals (of this country)," he implored.

Vance said debates on Canada's presence in Afghanistan should be set aside and that the immediate priority must be the grieving families.

"No matter what your opinion is, these soldiers are working on behalf of all Canadians. They are pursuing a mission they believe in and, in fact, to the reasonably well-informed, has demonstrated some progress."

Skidmore said he could say little about the fact that the soldiers were killed in an armoured vehicle on a road that was thought to be safe.

A powerful roadside bomb killed the Canadian soldiers and an Afghan interpreter on Wednesday, overwhelming the armour of a vehicle designed to withstand mine blasts, as it moved along a gravel road in south Afghanistan.

The RG-31 Nyala patrol vehicle is considered one of the military's strongest in protecting against the deadly scourge of roadside bombs, but it failed to save the lives of the seven people inside its armoured body.

"We're up against a wily and clever enemy who are used to observing. They see patterns and react to patterns. That's something we always have to be ready to accept. The enemy will adapt their tactics as we adapt ours," Skidmore said.

The Edmonton-based soldiers would have finished their deployment in Afghanistan at the end of this month.

"There are no words to adequately explain the mix of grief and pride that we in uniform deal with in remembering our comrades.

"For now, we focus on the sacrifice of our comrades and the anguish of our loved ones.

"We will remember them, we will remember them." KEYWORDS=CANADA

# Failed armour defended All vehicles called vulnerable

---

**SOURCETAG** 0707060661

**PUBLICATION:** The Calgary Sun

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** 40

**ILLUSTRATION:** photo by Finbarr O'Reilly, Reuters Canadian soldiers seek cover during a lull in a firefight against Taliban insurgents. Six Canadian soldiers were killed by a roadside bomb while travelling in a Nyala armoured vehicle Wednesday in southern Afghanistan.

**BYLINE:** CP

**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR

**WORD COUNT:** 204

---

Bumping along on a gravel road yesterday morning, the RG-31 Nyala vehicle shook and shuddered.

Lt.-Col. Wayne Eyre was uncomfortable, but unfazed.

On Wednesday, six Canadians died when their vehicle, also a Nyala, was ripped apart by a roadside bomb.

Eyre said he still has complete faith in the RG-31 as his vehicle slammed into potholes and thunked over speed bumps en route to Kandahar Airfield from Spin Boldak, on the Pakistan border.

The Nyala armoured patrol vehicle is considered by the military as its heaviest protection against the scourge of improvised explosive devices or IEDs — commonly known as roadside bombs.

"I still have confidence in the vehicle," he said as the driver squawked out commands over the intercom.

"It's getting us from point A to point B. There's no vehicle in the world that will be an answer for every threat out there."

His sentiment was shared by retired Maj.-Gen. Lewis MacKenzie back in Canada.

"You'll never have a military vehicle that's 100-per-cent safe," MacKenzie said.

"It's just never been invented.

"They all have their vulnerabilities. And in this particular case, with the IED probably being based on an artillery shell that causes penetration, the result was as we saw it yesterday."

Tired from their drive and shaken by the latest deaths, soldiers gathered quietly to the side of the sand-coloured vehicles in Kandahar early yesterday. Like the six men killed Wednesday, members of the force-protection unit navigating the rugged terrain in this RG-31 were due to return home in August.

"This is a wake-up call," said one soldier who didn't want his name used. "What we thought was the safest thing out there maybe isn't." KEYWORDS=WORLD

# MASTER CPL. COLIN BASON

---

**SOURCETAG** 0707060660  
**PUBLICATION:** The Calgary Sun  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** 40  
**ILLUSTRATION:** photo  
**BYLINE:** CP  
**DATELINE:** NEW WESTMINSTER, B.C.  
**WORD COUNT:** 94

---

Master Cpl. Colin Bason is being remembered as a good soldier and a bit of a trickster.

Bason was one of six soldiers and an Afghan interpreter who died when a roadside bomb detonated as they were travelling in an armoured vehicle.

Lt.-Col. Matthew Haussmann told a news conference in New Westminster Bason, a reservist, had planned on becoming a full-time soldier and was a good leader.

He said Bason was well-regarded and well-known for his joking around with his peers. Haussmann notified Bason's family that he wouldn't be coming home.

The last time the Royal Westminster Regiment lost a soldier was June 1945.

Seven reservists from the regiment were with Bason in Afghanistan and another 28 more from the same regiment are in training to go. KEYWORDS=NATIONAL

# CAPT. MATTHEW DAWE

---

**SOURCETAG** 0707060659  
**PUBLICATION:** The Calgary Sun  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** 40  
**ILLUSTRATION:** photo  
**BYLINE:** CP  
**DATELINE:** KINGSTON, Ont.  
**WORD COUNT:** 113

---

The family of one of the highest-ranking Canadian officers to be killed in Afghanistan since the war began remembered their son, brother and husband as a dedicated soldier who wouldn't let something as minor as a ruptured Achilles tendon get in his way.

The family of Capt. Matthew Dawe, 27, released a statement yesterday praising Dawe's love for the soldiers who worked under him.

"Matt was a superb soldier. He was very fit and prided himself on leading from the front," the statement reads. "He loved his soldiers very much."

The statement says Dawe ruptured his Achilles tendon in the months leading to his deployment to Afghanistan, but he recovered faster than expected because he "didn't want his boys to go without him."

KEYWORDS=NATIONAL

# CAPT. JEFFERSON FRANCIS

---

**SOURCETAG** 0707060657  
**PUBLICATION:** The Calgary Sun  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** 40  
**ILLUSTRATION:** photo  
**BYLINE:** CP  
**DATELINE:** HALIFAX  
**WORD COUNT:** 95

---

Capt. Jefferson Francis volunteered for the patrol in Afghanistan that ultimately took his life.

Quoting an unnamed source, the Halifax Chronicle Herald says Francis wasn't originally supposed to be in patrol vehicle but volunteered to go out when a sixth soldier was needed.

Francis was with 1 Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, based in Shiloh, Man., but was from Halifax.

He was married and had an eight-month-old child.

A military source in Nova Scotia says Francis was an artillery co-ordinator, known as a "fire-effects officer."

Brig.-Gen. Mark Skidmore said yesterday spoke of the respect soldiers have of their fallen comrades.

"We are privileged to have served alongside them and we would be honoured to replace them in their noble cause in the accomplishment of our shared mission." KEYWORDS=NATIONAL



# PTE. LANE WATKINS

---

**SOURCETAG** 0707060656  
**PUBLICATION:** The Calgary Sun  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** 40  
**ILLUSTRATION:** photo  
**BYLINE:** CP  
**DATELINE:** WINNIPEG  
**WORD COUNT:** 108

---

He will never get to meet the little girl who will carry on his name.

Pte. Lane Watkins was remembered yesterday as a proud uncle to three-month-old Chloe Colleen Lane Cairns, born several months after he was deployed to Afghanistan last December.

Watkins had been scheduled to come home in a few weeks and was looking forward to meeting Chloe, the daughter of his older brother.

"(Lane) was very proud of her and he couldn't stop talking about how much he wanted to see her and hold her and all that stuff," Chloe's mother, Candice Cairns, wrote in an e-mail.

Cairns said she and her partner Andrew Watkins included Lane in the baby's name because they were so proud of his work overseas.

"I know he will be looking over her... He is her angel now," she wrote on a web page created in Lane's honour. KEYWORDS=NATIONAL

# Navy to get \$3.1B facelift Prime minister promises 15-year-old Canadian frigates will get retrofit

---

**SOURCETAG** 0707060634

**PUBLICATION:** The Calgary Sun

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** 26

**BYLINE:** CP

**DATELINE:** HALIFAX

**WORD COUNT:** 201

---

Canada's 12 Halifax-class frigates will undergo a \$3.1 billion, mid-life refit starting in 2010, Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced yesterday.

Flanked by Defence Minister Gordon O'Connor and Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay, Harper said the announcement was part of his government's commitment to strengthen the Canadian Forces.

"New, updated equipment will make these ships stronger, safer and better able to do all that we ask them to do," said Harper as he stood on the deck of the frigate HMCS Halifax.

"They are the backbone of our Canadian navy, so by upgrading them we are making the entire navy stronger."

Harper said the primary upgrade for the 15-year-old ships will be to their command and control centres, expanding their operational capabilities.

"The result is that now, more than ever, our Halifax-class frigates will be giant, floating command posts, standing up for Canada at home and abroad."

The prime minister said all the work will be done by Canadian companies and two shipyards in Halifax and Victoria have been invited to submit proposals.

Premier Rodney MacDonald wasn't invited to the event. The two leaders are still feuding over changes to the federal equalization program.

Harper said premiers are always informed when he heads to their provinces, but in this case, he was in Nova Scotia to make a "federal announcement."

"We don't typically have other levels of government at a federal-only announcement," he said.

Harper's remarks were somewhat muted by the fact that the Canadian Forces are in mourning over the loss of six soldiers in Afghanistan who died Wednesday when their vehicle hit a roadside bomb.

KEYWORDS=NATIONAL

# Military 'needs our love' Commander says Canadians must support soldiers in 'saddest of days'

---

**SOURCETAG** 0707060587

**PUBLICATION:** The Calgary Sun

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** 3

**ILLUSTRATION:** 3 photos 1. photo by Finbarr O'Reilly, Reuters Canadian Pte. Mark Amos takes cover behind a mud wall during a firefight against Taliban insurgents earlier this week. Six Canadian soldiers were killed in southern Afghanistan Wednesday when their armoured vehicle hit a roadside bomb. 2. photo of JEFFERSON FRANCIS 3. photo of JORDAN ANDERSON

**BYLINE:** RENATO GANDIA, SUN MEDIA

**WORD COUNT:** 329

---

Canada's Armed Forces need to feel love and support from Canadians during one of its saddest times, says the commander of 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group.

After the loss of six Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan, Col. Jon Vance talked about his personal connection to one of the slain soldiers and the impact the deaths have had on the military.

"These are the saddest of days and saddest of events for our brigade," Vance told reporters yesterday. "We must ensure that their families hear a clarion call of love and support from Canada."

Vance said that's "the most sensitive and mature approach" to the tragedy.

Vance has a personal connection to a military family hit by the tragedy.

"I can tell you that I was closest with Capt. Matthew Dawe and his family. I grieve right now with his family. It's painful.

"I know his dad, Peter Sr. We worked with each other for a long time. I worked with his brother Lt.-Col. Peter Dawe Jr."

He called the Dawes a "model Canadian family, who have given so much of their time and talent to Canada through the Canadian Forces."

Dawe was killed along with Master Cpl. Colin Bason, Cpl. Cole Bartsch, Cpl. Jordan Anderson, Pte. Lane Watkins and Capt. Jefferson Francis. Anderson, Dawe, Bartsch and Watkins were all members of the Edmonton-based 3rd Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry after their vehicle hit a roadside bomb.

Bartsch, from Whitecourt, was remembered by his aunt in Calgary as a much-loved young man whom friends could always count on.

"He was always the reliable one," said a tearful Karen Shilson. "He would think nothing of taking the shirt off his back and giving it to you if you needed it worse than him. He was a good kid. He was one you could trust anywhere, any time.

"He never thought twice about going out of his way to help somebody else."

Bartsch enlisted in the military right out of high school and re-enlisted in the hope of further service to Canada, Shilson said.

"His belief was, even it was going to cost him his life, he was going to help his country. And it did."

Brig.-Gen. Mark Skidmore, commander of Land Force Western Area, called on all Canadians to support the grieving families and to honour the memories of the fallen soldiers.

"Afford them the respect and dignity while they're enduring their sacrifice and advancing the ideals (of this country)," he implored.

"No matter what your opinion is, these soldiers are working on behalf of all Canadians. They are pursuing a mission they believe in and, in fact, to the reasonably well-informed, has demonstrated some progress."

The Edmonton-based soldiers would have finished their deployment in Afghanistan at the end of this month.  
KEYWORDS=WORLD

# Harper won't back down on mission

---

**SOURCETAG** 0707060586  
**PUBLICATION:** The Calgary Sun  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** 3  
**ILLUSTRATION:** photo of STEPHEN HARPER Committed  
**BYLINE:** CP  
**DATELINE:** HALIFAX  
**WORD COUNT:** 187

---

Prime Minister Stephen Harper says the recent carnage in Afghanistan weighs heavily on his mind, but it won't sway his commitment to have the Canadian military carry out its mission there until February 2009.

The prime minister, in Halifax to make a \$3.1-billion funding announcement for the navy, said his government has been very clear about the duration of the mission, and he stressed that now was not the time to engage in political debate.

"We have the House of Commons for that," he said as he stood on the deck of the frigate HMCS Halifax.

Instead, Harper said it would be more appropriate to express condolences to the families and comrades of the fallen soldiers, and to emphasize Canada's support for the mission.

"On the issue of the duration of the mission, I think we've been absolutely clear on that," he said.

"At the same time ... casualties at this level, weigh very heavily upon my mind.

"I speak to families that lose loved ones, I'm aware of the pain that it causes, I'm aware also of the pride they feel for their loved ones who have served this country, and have been prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice."

Harper says Ottawa has provided soldiers with a full range of equipment — including tanks — but he declined to discuss how the military should respond to the use of larger, more lethal bombs.

KEYWORDS=NATIONAL

# Canada has veered off course in Afghanistan

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060025  
**PUBLICATION:** Vancouver Sun  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Editorial  
**PAGE:** A10  
**BYLINE:** Eugene Parks  
**SOURCE:** Vancouver Sun  
**WORD COUNT:** 240

---

Re: New Abbotsford father among six soldiers killed in Afghanistan, July 5

Canada's original purpose for being in Afghanistan was under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1386 to destroy Osama bin Laden and his international terrorist network al-Qaida, as well as to secure Afghanistan's capital and the surrounding area for a new interim government.

Last year, French intelligence leaked the information that bin Laden might be dead; al-Qaida is no longer operating from Afghanistan — if it is operating at all. Kabul and the surrounding area have been secured for years with a permanent government. Accordingly, the UN mandate ends officially under UN Security Council Resolution 1707 this Oct. 13, unless it's extended.

Today, Canada is far from our original purpose for being in Afghan-istan. Canada is fighting local insurgents in the outer regions with a promise to continue until 2009. However, there is no longer a clear connection between killing local insurgents and our original mandate of fighting international terrorism.

In contrast to the greater numbers of our allies who have been concentrating on both the renewal and reconstruction of Afghanistan, Prime Minister Stephen Harper has increased the spending of billions of combat-directed dollars at a cost of Canadian lives. He's also committed Canada to combat into 2009, nearly two years beyond the UN mandate.

When Canada finally withdraws from Afghanistan, history will record that Harper's lack of savvy in foreign affairs was tragic.

Eugene Parks

Victoria

# Canadians urged to rally around families; Despite debate over Afghan mission, 'soldiers working on behalf of all Canadians'

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060017

**PUBLICATION:** Vancouver Sun

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** A8

**ILLUSTRATION:** Colour Photo: Capt. Jefferson Francis of 1 Royal Canadian Horse Artillery died in road explosion. ; Colour Photo: Cpl. Jordan Anderson of 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry died. ;

**KEYWORDS:** WAR

**DATELINE:** EDMONTON

**SOURCE:** CanWest News Service

**WORD COUNT:** 476

---

EDMONTON — Senior military officers called on Canadians to rally around the families of all the soldiers who have died in a mission they truly believed in as the sixth soldier to die in a roadside explosion in Afghanistan earlier this week was identified Thursday as Capt. Jefferson Francis.

"The families are well aware that there is debate on this mission," Col. Jon Vance, commander of 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group, told a news conference at the Edmonton base of four of the fallen soldiers.

"Nonetheless, at this particular point in time, the most sensitive and, I think mature, approach would be to show them a clarion call of love and support, [an acknowledgement] that these soldiers died in a mission that they believed in.

"No matter what your opinion is, these soldiers are working on behalf of all Canadians," Vance said. "They are pursuing a mission they believe in and, in fact, to the reasonably well-informed, has demonstrated some progress."

Francis, of 1 Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, based in Shilo, Man., was killed Wednesday, along with five other Canadian Forces members and their Afghan interpreter, when their armoured vehicle struck an improvised explosive device along a road approximately 20 km southwest of Kandahar City.

Overnight, the military also identified Cpl. Jordan Anderson of Edmonton's 3rd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, as one of the dead.

"We're proud to have known these soldiers," said Brig.-Gen. Mark Skidmore, commander of Land Force Western Area, his voice breaking repeatedly during his remarks. "We're privileged to have served alongside them and we would be honoured to replace them in this noble cause and in the accomplishment of our shared mission."

Skidmore said the dead soldiers' families and their "brothers and sisters in uniform" will have to grieve as best they can.

"We'll tend to our fallen and steel ourselves for future challenges," he said. "For now, though, we'll focus on the sacrifice of our comrades and the anguish of their loved ones."

The latest deaths, which bring to 66 the number of Canadian soldiers who have died since the Afghan mission began in 2002, cast a pall over a government announcement in Halifax of a \$3.1-billion upgrade for Canada's 12 Halifax-class frigates.

"Today is the day to express our condolences for these soldiers and to their families and their comrades," said Prime Minister Stephen Harper, standing on the deck of HMCS Halifax.

"But as well to emphasize the support we all share as parliamentarians for the important work they do on our behalf of our country, and we appreciate it.

"We consider it a terrible loss whenever we lose anyone, but obviously losing six is a terrible tragedy."

Harper told the crowd, "I speak to families that lose loved ones. I'm aware of the pain that causes. I'm also aware of the pride they feel for their loved ones who have served their country and have been prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice."

Despite Wednesday's deaths, which come just two weeks after three other men died in a similar attack, Harper said the government's commitment to the mission remains firm.



# Comrade's death adds to resolve; Colin Bason's regiment 'will carry on with task at hand'

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060016

**PUBLICATION:** Vancouver Sun

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** A8

**ILLUSTRATION:** Colour Photo: Richard Lam, Vancouver Sun / Ron O'Bray, a former member of the Royal Westminister Regiment, pins a poppy at a memorial for Master Cpl. Colin Bason at the armoury in New Westminister. ;

**BYLINE:** Jonathan Fowlie

**SOURCE:** Vancouver sun

**WORD COUNT:** 382

---

Sgt. Curtis Beglaw says he was hit with a wave of "shock and disbelief" when he first heard his colleague and friend, Master Cpl. Colin Bason, had been killed in Afghanistan.

"I just sat around and was sad," said Beglaw, 36, who belongs to the same New Westminister-based regiment as Bason.

As he spoke on Thursday, however, Beglaw said Bason's death has also given him something else as well — a stronger commitment to go overseas.

"You just have to carry on with the task at hand," said Beglaw, explaining he is scheduled to go to Afghanistan with 27 other members of the Royal Westminister Regiment this coming February.

"If anything, it [Bason's death] just strengthens my resolve to go," he added, echoing a sentiment expressed by several others at the New Westminister armoury on Thursday afternoon.

Bason, a regiment member since 2000, was killed along with five other Canadian soldiers and an interpreter in southern Afghanistan earlier this week when their vehicle hit a roadside bomb. The 28-year-old from Abbotsford left behind a loving family that includes his girlfriend and five-month-old baby, who was born only four days before he went overseas.

The death is the first time someone in the regiment has died in battle since June 1945, and on Thursday that loss was clearly taking its toll.

"Right now, we are in mourning," said commanding officer Lt.-Col. Matthew Haussmann.

"One of our family has died and it's a mixture of anger and sadness," he added.

In a news conference, Haussmann recalled Bason as being a "very well regarded soldier" with a penchant for leadership.

"He had a fascination and interest in military history," Haussmann said, adding Bason had been to Bosnia in 2002 with the Forces.

"Soldiering was his life, his passion," he added, saying Bason, who was a reservist, had planned to join the regular forces upon his return.

Haussmann said two temporary memorials will be established for Bason, one at the regiment's armoury on Queens Avenue in New Westminster, and the other outside Canadian Forces Station Aldergrove. He added a funeral will be planned once Bason's body is returned to B.C.

In the meantime, however, members of Bason's regiment continue to deal with the loss.

"We're all here for each other. We really miss Colin," said Cpl. Paul Khullar, who went to Bosnia in 2000 and knew Bason through the regiment.

"He was a great guy," he added, saying that while Bason was a serious and professional soldier, he could make people smile during even the most austere of missions.

"We are going to miss the pranks and the jokes and everything he brought to the unit," he said.

Pte. Cody Morck said he looked up to Bason.

"It definitely hurts," said 20-year-old, who says he'd like to get to Afghanistan in the coming year.

"I guess in the end we just have to carry a piece of him with us and train harder than ever."

jfowlie@png.canwest.com

# He knew the danger—and liked being a soldier; Slain city infantryman was proud of Afghan mission

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060198  
**PUBLICATION:** Edmonton Journal  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A1 / FRONT  
**COLUMN:** Graham Thomson  
Colour Photo: Journal Stock / Cpl. Jordan Anderson; Colour Photo: Journal Stock / Capt. Jefferson Francis ; Photo: Graham Thomson, The Journal, file / Cpl. Jordan Anderson  
**ILLUSTRATION:** takes a break after a daylong patrol in southern Afghanistan on March 23. Cpl. Anderson, five other soldiers and an Afghanistan interpreter died on Wednesday in a roadside explosion that destroyed their armoured vehicle. ;  
**DATELINE:** EDMONTON  
**BYLINE:** Graham Thomson  
**SOURCE:** The Edmonton Journal  
**WORD COUNT:** 878

---

EDMONTON – Just about every day for five months, Cpl. Jordan Anderson slogged his way through the dangerous Afghan countryside toting a rifle, a rucksack and a dream — that one day he could return without having to wear body armour and travel in armed convoys.

He wanted to come back as a tourist.

"I would like to see Afghanistan turn into somewhere I could visit one day," he said last January, just days before he left Edmonton for his second tour of duty in Afghanistan.

He will never see that dream come true. On Wednesday, he and five fellow soldiers were killed by a bomb planted on a gravel road.

Overnight Thursday, the military identified Anderson and Capt. Jefferson Francis, a Halifax native and member of 1 Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, based in Shilo, Man., as the final two of six soldiers killed in a roadside explosion in Afghanistan on Wednesday.

There is always a terrible sadness when word comes that a Canadian soldier has died. Jordan's death hit me especially hard because he was one of the soldiers I had come to know personally. He was 25 and married. He e-mailed me in April to say he had spent his few weeks' leave from Afghanistan in Florida with his wife.

I had come to know Jordan because he had volunteered to help me prepare for my stint as an embedded journalist with the military in Afghanistan this spring. I liked him immediately. He was friendly, articulate and as curious about the media as I was about the military.

He was also blunt, expressing skepticism of the media's coverage of the military mission, thinking reporters focused too much on Canadian casualties and too little on the work soldiers were doing to make Afghanistan a better place.

I didn't see Jordan again until after we had both been in Afghanistan almost six weeks. I had been trying to link up with his unit — Charlie Company of 3 Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry from Edmonton — but Afghanistan has a way of turning plans upside down.

It was March 23, when I was tagging along on what the military had dubbed Operation Marguerite, that I heard a friendly voice call out to me, "Hello, Mr. Thomson."

I looked up, and even though he was one of 250 identically uniformed soldiers with helmets and sunglasses walking along that dusty path, I knew immediately it was Jordan from his smile and easygoing attitude.

We didn't have time to chat at that point. The day was just starting and Jordan was busy helping sweep the district clear of Taliban fighters so that Afghan police could set up a permanent checkpoint to improve security in the area. As patrols go, this was a relatively quiet day. There were all kinds of reports of Taliban fighters, but no shots were fired. At one point we found an improvised explosive device (IED) planted in our path, but it was blown up by engineers.

At the end of the day, with the sun beginning to set and the troops preparing camp for the night, Jordan made a point of seeking me out. He talked about his experiences since arriving in country and his brush with death while on patrol just three days before. A bomb-sniffing dog had triggered an IED that had killed the dog, severely wounded the dog's handler and sent shrapnel tearing through the legs of a military engineer. Jordan was the first soldier on the scene, and I heard later from officers that he had handled the situation so coolly and professionally that he was in line for a commendation.

He was quietly proud of the work he and his colleagues were doing. He genuinely felt he was making life safer and better for Afghans and thus helping rid the country of international terrorism. And, as odd as it might sound in a war zone, Jordan seemed content.

"There's no such thing as a typical day here," he said as troops around him began preparing for the night. "The first three weeks we were here was really slow. We did perimeter security at our FOBs (forward operating bases), just our general shakeout, and we responded to two suicide bombings a day and then nothing for three or four days, and then a whole bunch of patrols, like one a day for a week.

"Everything changes in a heartbeat here. There is no typical day for a (soldier) in the battle group."

He seemed to be actually enjoying himself.

"Oh, yeah," he said. "This is what I joined the army to do. Nobody joined the army to stay in Edmonton."

How could he be so relaxed, I asked him. What about the constant danger?

"Everybody dies," he said with a laugh. "It's dangerous, yeah, but with the equipment we have and the training we have, it's a lot more dangerous for the Taliban here than it is for us."

Sadly, on Wednesday he was proven wrong.

But on that day in late March, he was optimistic and upbeat. Jordan knew the danger and enjoyed being a soldier. On his helmet he had written in ink "Death From Above," a reference to his training as a paratrooper. But he was no rifle-waving Rambo. He was quiet and thoughtful, and when I asked permission to take his picture he didn't strike a "hero pose" with rifle at the ready, as many soldiers happily do.

He placed his weapon on the ground, perched himself on a low mud wall and put his arm around his rucksack. He looked at ease, as if he had finally realized his dream of being a backpacker on vacation in the Afghan

He knew the danger—and liked being a soldier; Slain city infantryman was proud of Afghan miss159

countryside.

[gthomson@thejournal.canwest.com](mailto:gthomson@thejournal.canwest.com)

# Families, friends mourn loss of dedicated soldiers

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060195  
**PUBLICATION:** Edmonton Journal  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A3  
**KEYWORDS:** COURT MARTIAL  
**DATELINE:** EDMONTON  
**BYLINE:** Meghan Hurley, With files from Ryan Cormier and EliseStolte  
**SOURCE:** The Edmonton Journal  
**NOTE:** Afghan Mission  
**WORD COUNT:** 731

---

EDMONTON – Capt. Matthew Dawe knew he would miss his son's birthday while he was in Afghanistan, but thought he would see him next month.

Instead, he was killed by a roadside bomb on the very day his son turned two.

"He believed in what he did," his father Peter said in a phone interview from his Kingston, Ont. home. "He loved it and it killed him."

Peter Dawe broke down in tears as he talked about his son's dedication to the military.

The entire Dawe family remembered him as a determined soldier who wouldn't let a torn Achilles tendon stop him from going to Afghanistan.

"Matt was a superb soldier. He was very fit and prided himself on leading from the front," a statement issued by the Dawe family read. "He loved his soldiers very much and we know that this feeling was reciprocal."

Dawe, 27, was one of the four Edmonton-based soldiers killed by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan. Only two weeks earlier, three soldiers Dawe commanded were killed in a similar attack.

His father, a retired lieutenant-colonel, said that Dawe joined the military as a private in Kingston when he was 17. He then went to the Royal Military College where he graduated at the top of his class in 2004. He was posted to Afghanistan shortly after graduation.

Dawe was two-thirds of the way through his tour and was expected to return home mid-August, he said.

Dawe's wife, Tara, will be escorted from Edmonton to Kingston to be with the rest of the family, Peter Dawe said. She should be in Kingston by tonight.

Meanwhile, other families of the Canadian soldiers killed mourned the loss of their sons, brothers, husbands and friends.

CPL. COLE BARTSCH

The family of Cpl. Cole Bartsch gathered at their Whitecourt home. Bartsch's parents, Dennis and Juanita, were not ready to speak to media Thursday and did not issue a statement.

Relatives of Bartsch who live in Calgary said their 23-year-old nephew would have done just about anything for his brothers and sisters.

He took a leave from serving in the army four years ago when his brother had heart transplant surgery, Bartsch's aunt, Karen Shilson, said. He wanted to help his younger brother in his recovery.

"He was an easygoing and friendly type of guy," Shilson said. "He was a great kid and he had a lot of friends."

Bartsch graduated from high school and immediately joined the military in 2003, she said. He was scheduled to return home at the end of July.

A friend from the military said Bartsch was a great person and a dedicated soldier who always put others before himself.

"If anyone said they didn't get along with Cole, they were lying," Jamie

Rutledge, a military friend, joked. "He's one of those guys you could always have around and he wasn't afraid to make a goof of himself to make other people laugh."

Shilson got the tragic news that her nephew had been killed from her sister, Juanita, on Wednesday morning.

"You don't want to believe it. You don't want it to happen to someone you know. But that's what happens when you take on that kind of job," Shilson said.

As soon as his body returns to Alberta, around 15 Bartsch family members from Calgary will take a bus to Whitecourt. Southland Transportation is providing the family with a bus, Shilson said.

#### CPL. JORDAN ANDERSON

Cpl. Jordan Anderson, 25, lived in Edmonton with his wife, Amanda.

They were married less than two years. Anderson was supposed to come home July 21, on his 26th birthday. The following day was to be their second anniversary.

"We're still learning to deal with this," said his mother Sheila, reached in Inuvik, N.W.T.

Other members of his family declined comment Thursday, adding they expected to release a statement through the military at a later time.

Anderson was born in Iqaluit, Nunavut, but spent most of his childhood years in Inuvik along with his parents and three brothers.

He moved to Saskatchewan for high school to play football and rugby, his mother said.

Anderson joined the Canadian Forces six years ago after one year studying political science and history at the University of Regina. He continued to take correspondence courses as he trained and served and was only one course away from graduating.

On June 22, two days after three members of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry were killed in

Afghanistan, Anderson posted the following message for friends on the social networking website Facebook: "Bad couple of days here, gave the boys a good send-off, the next order of business is to locate and repay those responsible."

Friends, who described him as an example-setter and an amazing soldier, posted several messages to his site Thursday.

"You were doing something that only a special person could do... again," wrote one friend, who promised Anderson's memory would not be forgotten.

Another wrote, "You were one of the toughest guys I have ever known... I have been sitting on pins and needles for the last day waiting for the message from you, like always, saying you were OK. I will miss you."

#### PTE. LANE WATKINS

In Crystal City, Man., the family of Pte. Lane Watkins did not wish to comment.

A memorial page for Watkins on the Facebook website had nearly 200 friends from across the country registered 24 hours after his name was publicly released.

Watkins served with the Edmonton-based 3rd Battalion of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. He is survived by his mother, father and two brothers, one of whom is his twin.

[mhurley@thejournal.canwest.com](mailto:mhurley@thejournal.canwest.com)



# Homemade bombs more sophisticated; Soldiers in Iraq, Afghanistan face lethal array of new threats

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060194

**PUBLICATION:** Edmonton Journal

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** A4

**ILLUSTRATION:** Photo: file / Iraqi police discovered this improvised explosive device in 2005 in eastern Baghdad and disarmed it before it could be detonated in a terrorist attack. ;

**KEYWORDS:** WAR; IRAQ; ARMED FORCES; UNITED STATES

**DATELINE:** OTTAWA

**BYLINE:** Richard Foot

**SOURCE:** CanWest News Service

**NOTE:** Afghan Mission

**WORD COUNT:** 805

---

OTTAWA – In Iraq today, where militants have been honing their hit-and-run bombing tactics for more than four years, improvised explosive devices (IEDs) are no longer just makeshift packages of random, roadside terror.

They are the single most important weapon in the insurgents' arsenal, used in a methodical and increasingly sophisticated way to impede the entire U.S. war effort and represent what could be the deadliest threat to the Canadian mission in Afghanistan, where a powerful IED killed six Canadian soldiers on Wednesday.

Many observers of the Afghan insurgency believe the Taliban imports its IED methods from its Islamic brethren in Iraq, where bombing tactics are tested on the streets and suburbs of Baghdad.

What happens with IEDs in Iraq today may foreshadow the kind of problems that await Canadian troops in Kandahar.

On May 30 in Iraq, six American soldiers were killed by a roadside bomb as they rushed to rescue the crew of a U.S. helicopter shot down by Islamic insurgents. The men who attacked the chopper had placed their bomb on a road on which they knew the rescuers would come.

Two weeks earlier, Iraqi insurgents killed one soldier and wounded three others after luring them into a palm grove laced with homemade bombs. Moments earlier, the insurgents had attacked a U.S. patrol, and then fled into the palms knowing the Americans would follow.

"Iraq is the testing ground for IEDs," says Francois Boo, a research analyst with Globalsecurity.org, a U.S.-based military information website.

"IED tactics are first used and proven in Iraq, and then those same tactics start appearing in Afghanistan.

"And in Iraq there has certainly been an evolution of tactics — how the bombs are employed, how they're made up, and how they're detonated."

IEDs have been responsible for the deaths of 27 of the 66 Canadian troops killed in Afghanistan since 2002, or 41 per cent. In Iraq, they are now responsible for about 80 per cent of all U.S. combat deaths, according to a recent Time magazine investigation.

Where once U.S. soldiers in Iraq faced the same threat now dealt with by Canadians in Afghanistan — random roadside attacks against individual vehicles — U.S. forces must now cope with a lethal array of IED threats, while patrolling on foot, in their vehicles or in the air.

"This country needs to focus on one thing, and that is defeating IEDs," a U.S. defence official told the Christian Science Monitor last May. "If we could figure that out, we could change the face of the war."

According to a 2006 report prepared for the U.S. Congress, Iraq insurgents have planted "daisy-chain" IEDs — a single detonator triggering a series of bombs along a roadway, in the hopes of crippling not just a single vehicle but an entire military convoy, for the past two years.

IEDs have also been used to kill soldiers in pursuit of fleeing insurgents, or to attack first responders rushing to the scene of an emergency.

Insurgents have experimented with shortening the fuses on mortar bombs, to be fired at helicopters, creating the first "aerial IEDs," according to the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Methods of remotely detonating IEDs have also evolved from simple electronic radio devices such as cellphones, to infrared "trip-wire" technology.

And in Iraq, IEDs are no longer just hidden under rocks or inside road culverts. They are stashed in refrigerators abandoned on curbsides, or camouflaged under mounds of human feces, or stuffed into animal carcasses. Sometimes they are shoved inside live sheep, which are herded towards military patrols.

The U.S. military has spent more than \$6 billion, recruited teams of engineers and set up an entire Defence Department agency — all in the hopes of solving the deadly threat of IEDs.

## WHAT IS AN IED?

Improvised explosive device, or IED, is military jargon for a homemade bomb, particularly the bombs that are the backbone of the insurgencies in Iraq and increasingly, Afghanistan.

Sometimes they are detonated remotely by a hidden insurgent, watching and waiting for his target. At other times, they are placed inside cars and used in suicide-bombing attacks. In this case, they are known as VBIEDs — vehicle-borne IEDs.

Munitions for the bombs typically include artillery shells, rocket-propelled grenades and landmines, but can also include smaller explosives such as hand grenades.

In many cases munitions are packaged together — with multiple landmines sometimes stacked one on top of the other — for a bigger explosive punch.

More lethal IEDs include sophisticated, conically shaped bombs, designed to penetrate the armour of tanks or the bodies of landmine-resistant vehicles.

IEDs are typically detonated remotely by someone activating a radio-controlled device. More recent IEDs have been equipped with infrared beams similar to those found in household burglar alarms.

The explosives come from a range of sources: in Iraq, from the munitions left behind by the regime of Saddam Hussein. In Afghanistan, from the arsenal of explosives that littered the country following the insurgency against the Soviets and the years of civil war.

Some experts believe IED "factories" in various cities in Iraq and southern Afghanistan are also supplied by sources in Iran and Pakistan.

IEDs are designed, principally, to spread terror among both civilian populations and soldiers, and assert the will of insurgents in areas where they lack the strength to fight with conventional military means.

CanWest News Service

# 'Today is not the day to have a debate'; Harper urges public to grieve fallen soldiers, not argue about mission in Afghanistan

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060193

**PUBLICATION:** Edmonton Journal

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** A4

**ILLUSTRATION:** Photo: Chris Schwarz, The Journal / Flags fly at half-mast behind Brigadier General Mark Skidmore, Commander, Land Force Western Area in Edmonton, as he listens to a reporter's question on Thursday at a press conference concerning the deaths of six Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan. At left is Colonel Jon Vance, Commander, 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group. ;

**KEYWORDS:** PRIME MINISTERS; POLITICIANS; POLITICAL PARTIES; GOVERNMENT; CANADA

**DATELINE:** EDMONTON

**BYLINE:** Ryan Cormier

**SOURCE:** The Edmonton Journal; With files from Reuters

**NOTE:** Afghan Mission

**WORD COUNT:** 463

---

EDMONTON – Prime Minister Stephen Harper as well as military leaders in Edmonton have called for public focus on the deaths of six soldiers, and not the debate surrounding the Afghanistan mission they died on.

At a televised news conference in Halifax Thursday, Harper said: "Casualties at this level weigh very heavily upon my mind. Obviously, casualties weigh very heavily on the government."

Harper, who has said there would have to be general political agreement to extend the 2,600-strong Canadian mission to Afghanistan past 2009, did not reply when asked whether other NATO countries should be shouldering more of the load.

"Obviously today is not the day to have a political debate on the future of the mission," he said.

Speaking at the Edmonton Garrison, Col. Jon Vance, commander of 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group, said the immediate priority must be the grieving families.

"These are the saddest of days and saddest of events for our brigade," he said. "We must ensure that their families hear a clarion call of love and support from Canada."

Vance called that "the most sensitive and mature approach" to the tragedy, although he added that the military embraces debate about the mission from all corners of the country.

"No matter what your opinion is, these soldiers are working on behalf of all Canadians. They are pursuing a mission they believe in and, in fact, to the reasonably well-informed, has demonstrated some progress."

'Today is not the day to have a debate'; Harper urges public to grieve fallen soldiers, not argue about mission in Afghanistan 167

Brigadier-General Mark Skidmore, commander, Land Force Western Area, said the military will have to grieve as best they can and then prepare itself for what lies ahead.

"We'll tend to our fallen and steel ourselves for future challenges," he said.

"For now, though, we'll focus on the sacrifice of our comrades and the anguish of our loved ones. We will remember them."

Six Canadian soldiers and an Afghan interpreter were killed on Wednesday when their RG-31 Nyala armoured vehicle hit a roadside bomb approximately 20 kilometres southwest of Kandahar City.

Skidmore said little about the fact the soldiers were killed in an armoured vehicle on a road that was thought to be safe.

"We're up against a wily and clever enemy who are used to observing," he said as flags flew at half-mast behind him. "They see patterns and react to patterns. That's something we always have to be ready to accept. The enemy will adapt their tactics as we adapt ours."

The soldiers have been identified as Pte. Lane Watkins, Capt. Matthew Dawe, Cpl. Cole Bartsch, and Cpl. Jason Anderson — all with the Edmonton-based 3rd Battalion of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.

Master-Cpl. Colin Bason, a reservist from the Royal Westminster Regiment, and Capt. Jefferson Francis of the 1st Regiment Royal Canadian Horse Artillery out of Shilo, Man., were also killed.

Skidmore also paid tribute to the unnamed interpreter.

"He was their comrade, he shared their values, shared their risks and we honour his memory and sacrifice."

Premier Ed Stelmach was at the Western Premiers Conference in Iqaluit, but released a statement of support.

"The bond between Albertans and their military families is unwavering.

"Canada's soldiers are the best of the best, and need to know we stand firmly with them at times like these. Their sacrifices will not be forgotten."

Defence Minister Gordon O'Connor gave condolences as well.

"Canada will remain grateful for their sacrifice, and we are all saddened by this loss."

The Canadian mission has now suffered 66 deaths in Afghanistan.

rcormier@thejournal.canwest.com

# Death strengthens resolve of comrades

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060192  
**PUBLICATION:** Edmonton Journal  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A4  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Photo: Journal Stock / (Master Cpl. Colin) Bason;  
**KEYWORDS:** CANADIANS; WAR  
**DATELINE:** VANCOUVER  
**SOURCE:** Vancouver Sun; CanWest News Service  
**NOTE:** Afghan Mission  
**WORD COUNT:** 229

---

VANCOUVER – Sgt. Curtis Beglaw says he was hit with a wave of "shock and disbelief" when he first heard his colleague and friend, Master Cpl. Colin Bason, had been killed in Afghanistan.

"I just sat around and was sad," said Beglaw, 36, who belongs to the same New Westminster-based regiment as Bason.

As he spoke on Thursday, however, Beglaw said Bason's death has also given him something else as well — a stronger commitment to go overseas.

"You just have to carry on with the task at hand," said Beglaw, explaining he is scheduled to go to Afghanistan with 27 other members of the Royal Westminster Regiment this coming February.

"If anything it (Bason's death) just strengthens my resolve to go."

Bason, a member of the Royal Westminster Regiment since 2000, was killed along with five other Canadian soldiers and an interpreter in southern Afghanistan earlier this week when their vehicle hit a roadside bomb.

The 28-year-old from Abbotsford left behind a family that includes his girlfriend, Katrina Blain, and five-month-old daughter, Vienna, who was born only four days before he went overseas.

The death is the first time someone in the regiment has died in battle since June 1945, and on Thursday that loss was clearly taking its toll.

"Right now we are in mourning," said Lt.-Col. Matthew Haussmann, commanding officer of the Royal Westminster Regiment. Haussmann recalled Bason as a "very well-regarded soldier" with a penchant for leadership. "Soldiering was his life, his passion," he added, saying Bason, a reservist, had planned to join the regular forces upon his return to Canada.

# Afghan mission complex, but vital

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060156  
**PUBLICATION:** Edmonton Journal  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** Opinion  
**PAGE:** A18  
**KEYWORDS:** WAR; IRAQ; ARMED FORCES; UNITED STATES  
**SOURCE:** The Edmonton Journal  
**WORD COUNT:** 467

---

How do we honour the six Canadians who died on a gravel road in southern Afghanistan this week? First, by appreciating how terribly dangerous the Canadian mission is, and how much we're asking of our soldiers. Sixty-six dead in just a few years, all of them young people with their lives ahead of them and families who loved them.

Members of the 3rd Battalion of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry made up most of the 250 Edmonton troops that headed to Kandahar in February for their six-month rotation.

This battalion, just 570 people in all, has suffered heartbreaking losses.

Four of the six killed this week were from this group, as were three soldiers killed June 20.

It's hard to imagine what the members of 3PPCLI are suffering.

Second, let's think of the mission itself.

It's not enough to put a Support Our Troops bumper sticker on our car. Canadian soldiers aren't served well by citizens who unquestioningly accept what their government says about our need to have troops in this faraway nation.

There may be a point in which our soldiers are dying for no good reason, and when that happens, Canadians need to recognize it and demand a troop withdrawal. That point hasn't happened yet, but it could.

Similarly, it's not enough to say, "I'm against war, bring the troops home." We all need to do our homework, try to understand what's going on and what our duty as a nation is.

This is a complex, confusing mission because the modern world is complex. When terrorists in southern Afghanistan were able to plot and execute the Sept. 11 attack on the World Trade Center, we all learned that this is a small planet in which one out-of-control country can cause global problems.

Today, thanks to the NATO mission, much of Afghanistan is gradually recovering from decades of warfare and brutal Taliban rule.

Thousands of kilometres of roads have been built, millions of children have gone back to school, 2,500 villages have received electricity, and a national government has been operating in Kabul.

None of those things could have happened if outside forces hadn't taken on the Taliban.

Canada, along with the Americans and British, is doing the mission's hardest task, battling Taliban fighters in the country's two southern provinces.

The British have lost nearly as many soldiers as we have, the Americans six times as many — not counting its troops in Iraq.

It's a brutal job, and it's a job where success has been hard to measure.

How important it is to have journalists like Canwest's Don Martin in Afghanistan to give us a sense of what's happening.

The Journal's Graham Thomson provided similar vital reporting from the war zone earlier this year.

As things stand right now, Afghanistan is where Canadian troops need to be. We are doing our part to create a stable Afghanistan, to eliminate a global base for terrorism, to show solidarity with 36 other nations supporting the NATO mission, to demonstrate that a rich western nation is willing to fight for a better world for all.

Canada is committed to the Afghan mission until at least February 2009.

Until then, the government should give our soldiers everything they need to do their job.

Let us not begrudge such expenses as the \$29 million spent this spring on new vehicles designed to detect roadside bombs.

The rest of us can do our bit by paying attention to this difficult war, wrestling with its complexities, tracking its ragged progress.

And, sadly, mourning its dead.



# It all changes 'in a heartbeat'; Slain soldier knew risk, but was proud of Afghan mission

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060250  
**PUBLICATION:** Calgary Herald  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A1 / FRONT  
**COLUMN:** Graham Thomson  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Colour Photo: Andy Clark, Reuters / Lt.-Col. Matthew Hausmann remembers Master Cpl. Colin Bason in New Westminster, B.C., on Thursday. ; Colour Photo: Capt. Jefferson Francis ; Colour Photo: Cpl. Jordan Anderson ; Colour Photo: Graham Thomson, Edmonton Journal / Cpl. Jordan Anderson, who was killed with five comrades on Wednesday, is pictured in Afghanistan in March. ;  
**KEYWORDS:** WAR  
**DATELINE:** EDMONTON  
**BYLINE:** Graham Thomson  
**SOURCE:** The Edmonton Journal  
**WORD COUNT:** 839

---

Just about every day for five months, Cpl. Jordan Anderson slogged his way through the dangerous Afghan countryside toting a rifle, a rucksack and a dream — that one day he could return without having to wear body armour and travel in armed convoys.

He wanted to come back as a tourist.

"I would like to see Afghanistan turn into somewhere I could visit one day," he said last January, just days before he left Edmonton for his second tour of duty there.

He will never see that dream come true. On Wednesday, he and five fellow soldiers were killed by a bomb planted on a gravel road.

There is always a terrible sadness when word comes that a Canadian soldier has died. Jordan's death hit me especially hard because he was one of the soldiers I had come to know personally. He was 25 and married. He e-mailed me in April to say he had spent his few weeks of leave from Afghanistan in Florida with his wife.

I had come to know Jordan because he had volunteered to help me prepare for my stint as an embedded journalist with the military in Afghanistan this spring. I liked him immediately. He was friendly, articulate and as curious about the media as I was about the military.

He was also blunt, expressing skepticism of the media's coverage of the mission, thinking reporters focused too much on Canadian casualties and too little on the work soldiers were doing to make Afghanistan better.

I didn't see Jordan again until after we had both been in Afghanistan almost six weeks. I had been trying to link up with his unit — Charlie Company of 3 Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry from Edmonton — but Afghanistan has a way of turning plans upside down.

It was March 23, when I was tagging along on what the military had dubbed Operation Marguerite, that I heard a friendly voice call out to me, "Hello, Mr. Thomson."

I looked up, and even though he was one of 250 identically uniformed soldiers with helmets and sunglasses walking along that dusty path, I knew immediately it was Jordan from his smile and easygoing attitude.

We didn't have time to chat at that point — the day was just starting and Jordan was busy helping sweep the district clear of Taliban fighters so Afghan police could set up a permanent checkpoint to improve security in the area. As patrols go, this was a relatively quiet day. There were all kinds of reports of Taliban fighters, but no shots were fired. At one point we found an improvised explosive device (IED) planted in our path, but it was spotted and blown up by engineers.

At the end of the day, with the sun beginning to set and the troops preparing camp for the night, Jordan made a point of seeking me out. He talked about his experiences since arriving in country and his brush with death while on patrol just three days before. A bomb-sniffing dog had triggered an IED — it killed the dog, severely wounded the dog's handler and sent shrapnel tearing through the legs of a military engineer. Jordan was the first soldier on the scene and I heard later from officers that he had handled the situation so coolly and professionally that he was in line for a commendation.

He was quietly proud of the work he and his colleagues were doing. He genuinely felt he was making life safer and better for Afghans and thus helping rid the country of international terrorism. And, as odd as it might sound in a war zone, Jordan seemed content.

"There's no such thing as a typical day here," he said as troops around him began preparing for the night. "The first three weeks we were here was really slow. We did perimeter security at our FOBs (forward operating bases), just our general shakeout, and we responded to two suicide bombings a day and then nothing for three or four days, and then a whole bunch of patrols, like one a day for a week.

"Everything changes in a heartbeat here. There is no typical day for a (soldier) in the battle group."

He seemed to be actually enjoying himself. "Oh, yeah," he said. "This is what I joined the army to do. Nobody joined the army to stay in Edmonton."

How could he be so relaxed, I asked him. What about the constant danger?

"Everybody dies," he said with a laugh. "It's dangerous, yeah, but with the equipment we have and the training we have, it's a lot more dangerous for the Taliban here than it is for us."

Sadly, on Wednesday, he was proven wrong.

But on that day in late March, he was optimistic and upbeat. Jordan knew the danger and enjoyed being a soldier. On his helmet he had written in ink "Death From Above," a reference to his training as a paratrooper. But he was no rifle-waving Rambo. He was quiet and thoughtful and when I asked permission to take his picture he didn't strike a "hero pose" with rifle at the ready, as many soldiers happily do.

He placed his weapon on the ground, perched himself on a low mud wall and put his arm around his rucksack. He looked at ease, as if he had finally realized his dream of being a backpacker on vacation in the Afghan countryside.

## Local help risk it all for \$40 a day

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060238  
**PUBLICATION:** Calgary Herald  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A4  
**COLUMN:** In Afghanistan  
**KEYWORDS:** WAR; TERRORISM  
**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR  
**BYLINE:** Don Martin  
**SOURCE:** Calgary Herald  
**WORD COUNT:** 499

---

They hide behind oversized sunglasses and face scarves. Even while masked, the military prohibits media from taking their photos or using their real names.

Freelance interpreters are the key to NATO soldiers communicating with villagers and tribal leaders in Afghanistan, a service that has earned them top spot on the Taliban's most-wanted list.

They are paid about \$40 a day to tag along with the Canadian military, which is a fortune in a country where the per capita gross domestic product is roughly \$300 per year.

But the Taliban have put a \$50,000 price on their heads, viewing "terps" as tattlers to the infidels and traitors to what they see as Allah's extremist calling.

The first Canadian-hired interpreter was killed Wednesday alongside six soldiers when the armoured vehicle they were riding in was demolished by a roadside bomb.

Officials remained tight-lipped about the tragedy on Thursday, refusing to allow media embedded here to talk to the brass in charge of the ill-fated convoy.

A ramp ceremony for the six soldiers is scheduled for today, but the interpreter will be denied a memorial service or Canadian help covering the considerable expenses that accompany the traditional Afghan funeral.

His real name will never be released. He will simply disappear, his family desperately trying to conceal the cause of his death, lest the Taliban seek to avenge his service to Canadians by killing parents or siblings.

An interpreter I'll call Mohammed is assigned to the provincial reconstruction team at the frontier outpost of Patrol Base Wilson.

He was introduced to me by Warrant Officer Jim Hunter as the best source of local cultural intelligence in the region.

Mohammed is quiet and, unfortunately, prone to mumbling. He has a curious tendency to listen to five minutes of dialogue in Pashto and deliver a two-sentence reply in English. It makes you wonder if the full meaning of the discussion is being relayed.

But he often goes beyond abbreviated translation to inform soldiers what the villagers are really saying behind their backs.

Without people like Mohammed, interaction between Canadian forces and Afghans would be limited to hand gestures. There'd be no way of knowing if the Taliban were active or absent from a given district or what Afghans living in poverty really need to improve their lives.

"Many of the locals support the Taliban because the military doesn't stay there 24 hours. They arrive, talk for a few minutes and leave for weeks or months," he says. "The minute the soldiers leave the village, the Taliban might return."

The way Mohammed sees it, the risk of his job is manageable for the rewards of earning more money in a day than most Afghans earn in a week. "It's all about the money here," he shrugs. "If police were paid \$150 a month, there'd be no need for other countries to be here. But they get paid half that amount, so they're mostly corrupt."

The challenge of cross-cultural interpretation will increase next month when the Quebec-based Van Doo take over command. Bilingual military brass will have to be placed in every convoy because Mohammed knows of no French-speaking Pashto interpreters.

But without someone to bridge the linguistic divide, any Canadian message of hope to the locals will be meaningless if our offers are lost in translation.

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

# 'Soldiers died in a mission they believed in': commander; Loved ones share stories of fallen men

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060237

**PUBLICATION:** Calgary Herald

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** A4

**ILLUSTRATION:** Colour Photo: Chris Schwarz, Edmonton Journal / The Canadian Forces Ensign flies at half-mast behind Brig.-Gen. Mark Skidmore, commander of Land Force Western Area, in Edmonton as he discusses the deaths of six Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan on Wednesday. ;

**KEYWORDS:** CANADIANS; WAR; ARMED FORCES; CANADA; ALBERTA

**BYLINE:** Nicole Baer, Meghan Hurley and Ryan Cormier

**SOURCE:** CanWest News Service

**WORD COUNT:** 793

---

Senior military officers called on Canadians to rally around the families of all the soldiers who have died in a mission they truly believed in as the sixth soldier to die in a roadside explosion in Afghanistan earlier this week was identified Thursday as Capt. Jefferson Francis.

"The families are well aware that there is debate on this mission," Col. Jon Vance, commander of 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group, told a news conference at the Edmonton base of four of the fallen soldiers.

"Nonetheless, at this particular point in time, the most sensitive and, I think mature, approach would be to show them a clarion call of love and support, that these soldiers died in a mission they believed in.

"No matter what your opinion is, these soldiers are working on behalf of all Canadians," Vance said.

"They are pursuing a mission they believe in and, in fact, to the reasonably well-informed, has demonstrated some progress."

Francis, of 1 Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, based in Shilo, Man., was killed Wednesday, along with five other Canadian Forces members and their Afghan interpreter, when their armoured vehicle struck an improvised explosive device along a road approximately 20 kilometres southwest of Kandahar City.

Overnight, the military also identified Corp. Jordan Anderson of Edmonton's 3rd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, as one of the dead.

"We're proud to have known these soldiers," said Brig.-Gen. Mark Skidmore, commander of Land Force Western Area, his voice breaking repeatedly during his remarks. "We're privileged to have served alongside them and we would be honoured to replace them in this noble cause and in the accomplishment of our shared mission."

Skidmore said the dead soldiers' families and their "brothers and sisters in uniform" will have to grieve as best they can.

"We'll tend to our fallen and steel ourselves for future challenges," he said. "For now, though, we'll focus on the sacrifice of our comrades and the anguish of their loved ones."

The latest deaths, which bring to 66 the number of Canadian soldiers who have died since the Afghan mission began in 2002, cast a pall over a government announcement in Halifax of a \$3.1-billion upgrade for Canada's 12 Halifax-class frigates.

"Today is the day to express our condolences for these soldiers and to their families and their comrades," said Prime Minister Stephen Harper, standing on the deck of HMCS Halifax. "We consider it a terrible loss whenever we lose anyone, but obviously losing six is a terrible tragedy."

As the day unfolded, portraits of the fallen soldiers began to emerge. It was learned, for instance, that Master Cpl. Colin Bason, 28, a member of the 39 Canadian Brigade Group Reserve of the Royal Westminster Regiment, left for Afghanistan just four days after his daughter Vienna was born in February.

Bason's father, Gary, said his son had wanted to be in the military since he was a young child. "He used to read books on the army," his father recalled.

Vienna's mother, Katrina Blain, said her longtime boyfriend never lost his passion and dedication for the military.

But she acknowledged he was shaken by the June 20 deaths of three friends from his platoon, Pte. Joel Wiebe, Sgt. Christos Karigiannis and Cpl. Stephen Bouzane.

"You could hear that he was sad in his voice, but he didn't let on; he just moved on and did his job."

Just two weeks before he died in a roadside bomb blast, Capt. Matthew Dawe, 27, had struggled to come to terms with the deaths of Wiebe, Karigiannis and Bouzane, all three of them under his command. This week, Dawe suffered the same fate as his men.

"Matt was a superb soldier. He was very fit and prided himself on leading from the front," a statement issued by the Dawe family read.

"He loved his soldiers very much and we know that this feeling was reciprocal."

The 27-year-old, who joined the military a decade ago, was expected home mid-August and was killed on the second birthday of his son, Lucas, said his father, Peter.

Dawe is also survived by his wife, Tara, of Edmonton.

Hours after news broke of Cpl. Cole Bartsch's death, his friends began posting their goodbyes on his Facebook web page, alongside his favourite Churchillian quote: "Courage is rightly esteemed the first of human qualities because it is the quality that guarantees all others."

Bartsch, 23, was remembered on the popular social networking website as a gentle person who was more worried about his family than himself as he headed off to serve.

The native of Whitecourt, Alta., about 180 kilometres northwest of Edmonton, took a leave from serving in the army four years ago when his brother had major heart surgery, Bartsch's aunt, Karen Shilson, said in an interview from her Calgary home. He wanted to help his younger brother in his recovery.

"He was an easygoing and friendly type of guy," Shilson said. "He was a great kid and he had a lot of friends."

'Soldiers died in a mission they believed in': commander; Loved ones share stories of fallen men 177

Like all the Edmonton-based soldiers, Pte. Lane Watkins, 20, was nearing the end of his deployment in Afghanistan. The son of Charles and Wanda Watkins of Clearwater, Man., about 200 kilometres southwest of Winnipeg, Watkins had two brothers, including a twin.

Cpl. Jordan Anderson, who lived in Edmonton with his wife, Amanda, was supposed to come home July 21, his 26th birthday. The following day would have been the couple's second anniversary.

"We're still learning to deal with this," said his mother, Sheila, from Inuvik, N.W.T.

# Aid and comfort to the enemy

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060207  
**PUBLICATION:** Calgary Herald  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** The Editorial Page  
**PAGE:** A22  
**KEYWORDS:** POLITICIANS; POLITICAL PARTIES; GOVERNMENT;  
CANADA  
**SOURCE:** Calgary Herald  
**WORD COUNT:** 464

---

A peaceful observer might suppose it this country's good fortune to have led such a sheltered national life for 60 years, that the arts of war are so poorly understood by those who seek to lead it.

Yet, when impregnable ignorance is broached as a serious contribution to debate on the war in Afghanistan, it is revealed as a national embarrassment. Sadly, both Liberal Leader Stephane Dion and NDP Leader Jack Layton ladled out their share in the wake of news that six Canadian soldiers and their Afghan interpreter had been killed, when their armoured vehicle was destroyed by an improvised explosive device.

Dion, a member of the government that first committed Canadian troops to Afghanistan (ironically, believing it a soft option to supporting U.S. operations in Iraq,) is effectively sending a defeatist message to those now actively attacking Canadian troops.

For, even as Prime Minister Stephen Harper holds out the prospect of extending Canada's NATO mission in Afghanistan past February 2009, with the consent of parliament, so Dion promises, "This consensus (in Parliament, to extend the mission,) will never exist."

Likewise, NDP Leader Jack Layton goes so far as to call the Canadian war effort "wrong," and would have troops returned immediately: "We (the NDP) believe that two more years is two years too long . . . If the mission is wrong in 2009, why isn't it also wrong in 2007?"

For the leader of a party that promotes the rights of women and gay people to question the morality of a struggle against an enemy who oppresses the one and slaughters the other, it is a peculiar disconnect.

His repeated calls for a negotiated peace compounds his error: Negotiate what? How expeditiously Afghanistan can be returned into the hands of people who brutalized its people, and gave terrorists space to prepare attacks on the West?

Thanks to these two, even Taliban discouraged by the maulings they have received from Canadian regiments must get the message: Just hang on until February 2009, and there's a good chance that whether they're winning or losing, the Canadians will just go home.

War is something one fights to the finish, or until no longer able. Imagine a politician of the stripe of either Dion or Layton telling Canadians during the Second World War, right after the ill-conceived 1942 Dieppe raid when 907 Canadians were killed in a few hours, that they should give the struggle with this Hitler guy until May 1944, and not a month longer.



Would that have lent aid and comfort to an enemy worth defeating? Absolutely.

What happens in Afghanistan, affects southern Asia and the Middle East. What happens there, matters to people in New York, London and every other western city of consequence — including those in Canada. The death toll — 66, and counting — is a matter of profound sorrow.

However, Canada cannot walk away from this fight.

# Soldiers get help as they recuperate; Family friend inspired to raise funds for wounded

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060161

**PUBLICATION:** Calgary Herald

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Final

**SECTION:** City &Region

**PAGE:** C2

**ILLUSTRATION:** Photo: Canwest News Service Archive / Mike McTeague, a Canadian soldier wounded in Afghanistan, was the inspiration for a fund to supply other Canadians, recuperating in Germany, with personal items, like CD players, to help pass the time. ;

**BYLINE:** Meghan Waters

**SOURCE:** Calgary Herald

**NOTE:** Acts of Kindness: People – Volunteers – Good Deeds EveryFriday in the Herald

**WORD COUNT:** 349

---

Soldiers wounded overseas often leave their possessions behind in the war zone.

Soon, they will be able to look forward to a care package, thanks to the Sapper Mike McTeague Wounded Warrior Fund and some Alberta supporters.

"It's stuff to keep their mind off the hurt, and build a bit of self-esteem and pride back into them," said Wayne Johnston, fund president and a captain in the Canadian Forces.

The first shipment of care packages, which consist of personal DVD players, books and CDs, are assembled and will soon be sent to a hospital in Germany, where most Canadian troops injured in Afghanistan are treated.

The fund has already distributed money so hospitals can buy entertainment systems for the wounded troops, Johnston said.

The fund is based in Toronto, but some of its biggest supporters are based in Western Canada, he said.

One of those is Sean Wentzel, a former South African soldier living in Pincher Creek, 210 kilometres south of Calgary, who has served around the world and is running five marathons this summer to raise money for the cause.

"I am not trying to run fast times in these races, just to complete it for this worthy cause," said Wentzel.

He has a torn calf muscle, but will still compete in Calgary this Sunday and plans to do two marathons in B.C.

"Even though I am injured, this is nothing compared to what your soldiers have to endure abroad, and that would be my biggest motivation," said Wentzel.

This summer, he will run more than 190 kilometres.

Johnston said the fund has also received support from communities such as Lethbridge, which raised \$14,000

at a single event.

"They got hearts of gold out there," Johnston said. "The issue is viewed a whole lot differently out west."

Johnston pointed to the recent debate over the placement of temporary Support Our Troops decals on Toronto ambulances. Some critics suggested the decals were a sign of support for the Afghanistan war and should be removed.

"That's incredibly insensitive," he said. "Our young men are getting hurt. The rights and wrongs of the mission don't matter."

The fund started after Mike McTeague was hit by a ball bearing in the neck during a deadly suicide bombing last September while serving in Afghanistan.

Johnston, a friend of the McTeague family, went to Germany, where the soldier was recovering slowly.

While Johnston waited for McTeague to get better, he realized the other wounded soldiers were bored. He drew out a plan on the back of a beer mat and he says it quickly took off.

"They're not heroes because they got wounded," he said. "They're standing up, trying to gain normality, learning to walk again. That's courage to me."

Visit [www.woundedwarriors.ca](http://www.woundedwarriors.ca) for more information.

# Three NATO soldiers die; mass grave found

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060115  
**PUBLICATION:** Times Colonist (Victoria)  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Final  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A4  
**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR, Afghanistan  
**SOURCE:** Agence France–Presse  
**WORD COUNT:** 125

---

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (AFP) — Two soldiers with the NATO–led force were killed yesterday in eastern Afghanistan, the alliance said today.

Several NATO and Afghan soldiers and one civilian worker were also wounded in the incident, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) said in a statement that gave no further details.

Meanwhile, a third soldier with the NATO–led force died in a separate incident when a bomb struck a vehicle in southeastern Afghanistan. The 37–nation force does not release the nationalities of its casualties.

Meanwhile, a mass grave containing hundreds of bodies was unearthed in an underground prison north of Kabul, a report said today. The BBC reported that the grave was found in a former military base dating back to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s.

# Blasts kill 11, including NATO soldier

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060114  
**PUBLICATION:** Times Colonist (Victoria)  
**DATE:** 2007.07.06  
**EDITION:** Early  
**SECTION:** News  
**PAGE:** A4  
**DATELINE:** KANDAHAR, Afghanistan  
**SOURCE:** Agence France–Presse  
**WORD COUNT:** 130

---

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (AFP) — A suicide attacker blew himself up at a police gathering in southern Afghanistan yesterday, killing nine other people, including a boy. A NATO force soldier died in a separate blast.

The two attacks occurred as a German national and his driver abducted a week ago in the southwest of the country were released, but the Taliban denied being responsible for their capture.

The suicide attack blew off the ceiling of a room at the highway police command in the southern town of Spin Boldak, near the border with Pakistan, where a lunch was being held to welcome a new district police chief.

The nationality of the NATO soldier killed by a bomb in the southeastern province of Paktika was not released. Two other soldiers with the International Security Assistance Force were injured.

# 'A clarion call of love, support' issued for families of the fallen; Members of Royal Westminster Regiment undeterred in desire to serve mission

---

**IDNUMBER** 200707060113

**PUBLICATION:** Times Colonist (Victoria)

**DATE:** 2007.07.06

**EDITION:** Early

**SECTION:** News

**PAGE:** A4

**ILLUSTRATION:** Photo: Department of National Defence / Capt. Jefferson Francis, left, was a member of the 1 Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, based in Shilo, Man. Cpl. Jordan Anderson was from Edmonton's 3rd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. ; Photo: Department of National Defence / Cpl. Jordan Anderson was from Edmonton's 3rd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. ; Photo: Capt. Matthew Johnathan Dawe ; Photo: Cpl. Cole Bartsch ; Photo: Pte. Lane Watkins ; Photo: Master-Cpl. Colin Bason ;

**DATELINE:** EDMONTON

**BYLINE:** Nicole Baer, Meghan Hurley and Ryan Cormier

**SOURCE:** CanWest News Service

**WORD COUNT:** 580

---

EDMONTON — Senior military officers called on Canadians to rally around the families of all the soldiers who have died in a mission they truly believed in as the sixth soldier to die in a roadside explosion in Afghanistan Wednesday was identified as Capt. Jefferson Francis.

"The families are well aware that there is debate on this mission," Col. Jon Vance, commander of 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group, told a news conference at the Edmonton base of four of the fallen soldiers.

"Nonetheless, at this particular point in time, the most sensitive and, I think mature, approach would be to show them a clarion call of love and support, [an acknowledgement] that these soldiers died in a mission that they believed in.

"No matter what your opinion is, these soldiers are working on behalf of all Canadians," Vance said. "They are pursuing a mission they believe in and, in fact, to the reasonably well-informed, has demonstrated some progress."

Francis, of 1 Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, based in Shilo, Man., was killed Wednesday, along with five other Canadian Forces members and their Afghan interpreter, when their armoured vehicle struck an improvised explosive device along a road approximately 20 kilometres southwest of Kandahar City.

Overnight, the military also identified Cpl. Jordan Anderson of Edmonton's 3rd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, as one of the dead.

The other four killed, along with an Afghan interpreter, were: Capt. Matthew Johnathan Dawe, Cpl. Cole Bartsch and Pte. Lane Watkins, all of 3rd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, based in Edmonton, and Master-Cpl. Colin Bason, a reservist from The Royal Westminster Regiment.

"We're proud to have known these soldiers," said Brig.-Gen. Mark Skidmore, commander of Land Force Western Area, his voice breaking repeatedly during his remarks. "We're privileged to have served alongside them and we would be honoured to replace them in this noble cause and in the accomplishment of our shared mission."

Skidmore said the dead soldiers' families and their "brothers and sisters in uniform" will have to grieve as best they can.

"We'll tend to our fallen and steel ourselves for future challenges," he said. "For now, though, we'll focus on the sacrifice of our comrades and the anguish of their loved ones."

The latest deaths, which bring to 66 the number of Canadian soldiers who have died since the Afghan mission began in 2002, cast a pall over a government announcement in Halifax of a \$3.1-billion upgrade for Canada's 12 Halifax-class frigates.

"Today is the day to express our condolences for these soldiers and to their families and their comrades," said Prime Minister Stephen Harper, standing on the deck of HMCS Halifax. "But as well to emphasize the support we all share as parliamentarians for the important work they do on our behalf of our country, and we appreciate it."

At the New Westminster armoury yesterday afternoon., Sgt. Curtis Beglaw says he was hit with a wave of "shock and disbelief" when he first heard Bason, a friend and colleague, had been killed.

"I just sat around and was sad," said Beglaw, 36, who belongs to the same regiment as Bason.

Beglaw said Bason's death has also given him something else as well — a stronger commitment to go overseas.

"You just have to carry on with the task at hand," said Beglaw, explaining he is scheduled to go to Afghanistan with 27 other members of the Royal Westminster Regiment in February.

"If anything, it [Bason's death] just strengthens my resolve to go," he added, echoing a sentiment expressed by several others at the New Westminster armoury.

The 28-year-old from Abbotsford left behind a loving family that included his girlfriend and five-month old baby, who was born only four days before he went overseas.

The death is the first time someone in the regiment has died in battle since June 1945.