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WHERE WE GO FROM HERE: CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

Interim Report

Special Study on the National Security
and Defence Policies of Canada

The Honourable Pamela Wallin, Chair
The Honourable Roméo Dallaire, Deputy Chair

Standing Senate Committee
on National Security and Defence

June 2010

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on National Security and Defence**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

MEMBERSHIP.....	i
A WORD OF THANKS	iii
ORDER OF REFERENCE.....	v
INTRODUCTION	1
WHY WE ARE IN AFGHANISTAN	1
WHAT WE ARE DOING THERE.....	2
COUNTERINSURGENCY STRATEGY	3
OPERATIONAL MENTOR AND LIAISON TEAM.....	4
POLICE OPERATIONAL MENTOR AND LIAISON TEAM.....	6
THE BIGGER PICTURE IN AFGHANISTAN.....	8
THE REGIONAL PICTURE.....	13
WHERE FROM HERE?.....	14
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION.....	21
APPENDIX A.....	23
APPENDIX B	27

MEMBERSHIP

THE STANDING SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY AND
DEFENCE
40TH PARLIAMENT, 3RD SESSION
(March 3, 2010 - ...)

The Honourable Pamela Wallin
Chair

The Honourable Roméo Dallaire
Deputy Chair

and

The Honourable Senators:

Tommy Banks
*James S. Cowan (or Claudette Tardif)
Joseph A. Day
Daniel Lang
*Marjory LeBreton, P.C. (or Gérald J. Comeau)
Fabian Manning
Michael A. Meighen
Pierre Claude Nolin
Lucie Pépin

*Ex officio members

Other Senators who have participated from time to time on this study:
The Honourable Senators Cordy, Marshall, Martin, Mercer, Mitchell, Patterson, Segal and
Tkachuk

Committee Clerk:
Kevin Pittman

*Analysts from the Parliamentary Information and
Research Service of the Library of Parliament:*
Holly Porteous
Martin Auger

A WORD OF THANKS

I would like to offer a special thanks, on behalf of the committee, to Mark Fisher, my Senior Policy Advisor, for his tireless work crafting this concise and clear report from the many hours testimony and doing so in such a timely manner.

Pamela Wallin
Senator
Chair, National Security and Defence Committee

ORDER OF REFERENCE

Extract from the *Journals of the Senate*, Wednesday, March 17, 2010:

The Honourable Senator Wallin moved, seconded by the Honourable Senator Raine:

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence be authorized to examine and report on the national security and defence policies of Canada, including, but not limited to:

(a) the capability of National Defence to defend and protect the interests, people and territory of Canada both here and abroad; and its ability to prevent and respond to a national emergency or attack;

(b) the role of our Forces in Afghanistan and post 2011;

(c) the relationship with NATO, NORAD, the UN, other international bodies and our allies; the role and use of reservists; the effectiveness of humanitarian efforts such as Haiti; and the Canada First Defence Strategy;

(d) the working relationships among the various agencies involved in intelligence gathering, security, protection and defence, and how they collect, coordinate, analyze and disseminate information and whether these functions might be enhanced;

(e) the existing mechanisms to review the performance and activities of the various agencies involved in security, intelligence, defence and humanitarian assistance;

(f) the security of our borders and critical infrastructure and the impact on consumers, transport systems, border security and budgets;

That the papers and evidence received and taken and work accomplished by the committee on this subject since the beginning of the First session of the Thirty-seventh Parliament be referred to the committee; and

That the committee report to the Senate no later than June 16, 2011 and that the committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings until 90 days after the tabling of the final report.

After debate,

The question being put on the motion, it was adopted on division.

Gary W. O'Brien

Clerk of the Senate

INTRODUCTION

Canada's combat mission in Kandahar is slated to end in July 2011. Determined by a Parliamentary decision of 2008, Canadian Forces are to be withdrawn from that province by December 2011.¹

Our NATO allies, however, are stepping up calls for Canadian Forces to stay. Now, after some opposition members of the House said they were open to the idea, the House of Commons Special Committee on Canada's Mission in Afghanistan has officially reported that it is time for Parliament "to begin a serious discussion on the future of the Canadian mission."²

Given the importance of Canada's contribution to NATO's mission and to Afghanistan's future, and in light of the sacrifices Canadians have made, the Senate Standing Committee on National Security and Defence has been studying "the role of our Forces in Afghanistan and post-2011."³

The Committee has decided to present a short interim report, looking first at why Canadian Forces are in Afghanistan, what they have been doing there, what they have achieved; and then at factors that will shape the mission into the future, and at whether the Canadian Forces should continue to play a role in Afghanistan beyond 2011.

Canada's consistent and crucial involvement with Afghanistan will not end when Canadian Forces come home. Although post-2011 details are not yet entirely clear, Canada will still work on its six priorities for Afghanistan: helping provide security, basic services, humanitarian assistance, institution building, reconciliation with elements of the insurgency, and a more secure border with Pakistan.⁴ Non-military assistance is being provided by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), and the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC).

WHY WE ARE IN AFGHANISTAN

Canada is in Afghanistan for one very clear reason: Canada's national security. We went to Afghanistan following the attack on the United States on September 11, 2001, when 2,976 people from 77 countries were killed, including 24 Canadians.⁵ The Al Qaeda hijackers responsible trained at camps in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. NATO, of which the United States and Canada are founding members, took the unprecedented step of invoking Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty by which an attack on one member

¹ Proceedings of the House of Commons, 2nd Session, 39th Parliament, Hansard number 053, February 25, 2008.

<http://www2.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?Language=E&Mode=1&Parl=39&Ses=2&DocId=3296893#SOB-2328886>

² First Report of the Special Committee on the Canadian Mission in Afghanistan, June 17, 2010, <http://www2.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?DocId=4627845&Language=E&Mode=1&Parl=40&Ses=3>

³ "Backgrounder: Canada's Six Priorities in Afghanistan", Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan", May 7, 2009, http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/news-nouvelles/2009/2009_05_07b.aspx

⁴ "Backgrounder: Canada's Six Priorities in Afghanistan", Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan", May 7, 2009, http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/news-nouvelles/2009/2009_05_07b.aspx

⁵ This number excludes the 19 hijackers.

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE: CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

country is considered to be an attack on all, and which requires that all assist by taking such actions as collectively deemed necessary.⁶

As the Committee was told by Brigadier-General (Retired) Don Macnamara of the Canadian International Council, "We must understand that the Afghanistan situation was declared to be an Article 5 situation for NATO. Canada had an obligation, and that obligation still exists. It has not been withdrawn."⁷

The United States did not initially call on the NATO alliance in Afghanistan. later, an International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was established under the aegis of the United Nations, with the United States, Canada, and other partners as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. NATO, however, took over ISAF in 2003, and Afghanistan has been a NATO responsibility since then – a UN-sanctioned, NATO-led operation.

In the initial fray against the Taliban after 9-11, Canada hit the ground in February 2002, with an 850-strong battalion of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (PPCLI) in Kandahar province, part of U.S.-led Operation Enduring Freedom. After these troops returned home, other Canadian units served in Kabul, protecting the nascent electoral and democratic process. In 2005, Canadian Forces began redeploying again to Kandahar, a process completed in 2006 – where they have since been holding the line against the Taliban.⁸

Canada, it should be remembered, is but part of a very large international effort in Afghanistan. Forty-six nations are involved, not all of them members of NATO. Troop contributions range from 93,000 and rising from the U.S.⁹ and 9,500 from the United Kingdom; down to 40 from Mongolia and 3 from Austria. Canada's contribution at present is 2,830.¹⁰ Numbers aside, not all play equal roles. Some nations' forces operate under different and often more restrictive rules of engagement. And Canadian Forces are concentrated in one of the two or three most dangerous provinces, Kandahar, birthplace of the Taliban.

WHAT WE ARE DOING THERE

While Canada's (and NATO's) mission in Afghanistan has evolved over time, the overarching goal is to prevent that country from ever again serving as a safe haven for terrorists, and to leave in place a functioning state, capable of governing and defending itself.

⁶ "The North Atlantic Treaty", http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm

⁷ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, Issue 3, April 26, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/03evb-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76

⁸ "Independent Panel on Canada's Future in Afghanistan", January 2008, p.11.

⁹ Peter Blake and Mark Landler, "Setbacks Cloud US Plans to Get Out of Afghanistan," The New York Times, June 14, 2010. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/15/world/asia/15military.html?hp>

¹⁰ "Troop Numbers and Contributions", NATO-ISAF website, June 7, 2010, , <http://www.isaf.nato.int/troop-numbers-and-contributions/index.php>

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE: CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

To this end, the allied countries in Afghanistan are working to bring Afghans to the point where they can secure and govern their fragile, developing democracy, to stand on their own feet. The Canadian Forces' part in this includes:

- providing security for the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Kandahar province, so it can provide development and humanitarian aid;
- training and mentoring soldiers of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP) by way of an Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (OMLT);
- conducting combat operations with Afghan and other forces in Kandahar province.

COUNTERINSURGENCY STRATEGY

Heavily armed insurgent forces continue to hamper efforts to help Afghanistan secure its own future, using violence and intimidation against the people. To create a safer, more stable climate for development work and institution building, Canadian Forces took the lead in adapting longstanding counterinsurgency (COIN) methods to local circumstances. Brigadier-General Jonathan Vance, now commanding Canada's Joint Task Force Afghanistan for a second time, told the Committee that: "... counter-insurgency is about re-establishing the social, political and economic fabric of communities such that they grow resistant to the coercive effects of the insurgency."¹¹

Brig.-Gen. Vance elaborated:

In that environment you need troop density, be it military or police - a combination of international and indigenous - to allow for sufficient presence for the international and national actors involved in development activities to gain confidence and that re-establishment of the economic fabric. They will not leave the safety of their compounds or even engage in rehabilitative practices unless they have some confidence.¹²

Canadian Forces were largely alone in Kandahar until recently. Now thousands of Americans are flooding into the province, part of the on-going 'surge' ordered by U.S. President Obama, joining just under 3,000 Canadians and 12,000 Afghan soldiers.¹³ Many who are or have been in Afghanistan have told the committee that the situation has turned around, and that despite pessimistic reports, the Afghan government is being more cooperative. Chief of the Defence Staff General Walt Natynczyk indicated that the COIN strategy in Kandahar is now proving successful.

At this point a year ago, it was five towns and now it is 30 towns, so that the troops are dispersed into the villages, providing security where the

¹¹ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, April 19, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/03eva-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ben Farmer, "NATO to launch surge against Taliban in Kandahar", The Telegraph, March 30, 2010, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/afghanistan/7538510/Nato-to-launch-surge-against-Taliban-in-Kandahar.html>

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE: CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

Afghans live, partnering with Afghan units such that when the Taliban come back, their efforts to intimidate locals are thwarted by the fact that the NATO forces, Canadian, U.S. and others, are right there.¹⁴

Colonel Gregory D. Burt, now Director of Future Security Analysis for the Department of National Defence, described to the Committee the security pay-off in having a localized, ongoing presence, including security forces living in the villages.

The people are showing us where the IEDs are located. We find more than 80 per cent of them before they go off. It is a very high number. Living amongst the people creates the necessary sense of security.¹⁵

OPERATIONAL MENTOR AND LIAISON TEAM

An independent, self-sufficient Afghanistan will stand or fall on its ability to provide for its own security. That is why Canadian Forces are deeply involved in training and mentoring the Afghan National Army (ANA), and to a lesser extent the Afghan National Police (ANP). They are doing it by way of an Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (OMLT) – pronounced ‘omelette’ – of about 200 Canadian troops who work with the Afghan Army, and a smaller number of Canadians in a Police Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (POMLT – pronounced ‘pomlette’) who work with the Afghan Police.

Canada's OMLT has been mentoring the 1st Brigade of the ANA's 205th Corps, made up of 5 battalions or kandaks (each numbering about 600) – a total of about 3,000 Afghans. The OMLTs are also the liaison between the ANA and ISAF in Kandahar province, Canada's Joint Task Force Afghanistan.

In practice the OMLT is broken into smaller units, also called OMLTs, that are assigned to different locations for different purposes. NATO's ISAF website states that there are 143 of these OMLTs throughout Afghanistan with 12 more expected in the months ahead, and “approximately 12 more” needed to field the entire ANA of 134,000 troops by October 2010.¹⁶ Canada has six of these OMLTs, and one Police Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (POMLT) whose combat arms specialists and military police train and mentor the ANA.¹⁷

It should be stressed that although the terms are used interchangeably by some, there is a distinction between training and mentoring. As described to the Committee by Col. Burt, training happens “behind the wire” in the comparative safety of guarded compounds, while mentoring means taking Afghan forces into the field “outside the wire” to gain

¹⁴ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, June 7, 2010 (not yet published).

¹⁵ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 4*, May 3, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/04eva-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76.

¹⁶ Fact Sheet: NATO's Operational and Mentor Liaison Teams (OMLTs) June 2010, NATO-ISAF website, <http://www.isaf.nato.int/images/stories/File/factsheets-june/June%202010-Fact%20Sheet%20OMLT.pdf>

¹⁷ “Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams”, Canadian Expeditionary Force Command website, April 27, 2010, <http://www.cefc.com.forces.gc.ca/pa-ap/ops/fs-fr/omlt-eng.asp>

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE: CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

experience, including combat experience.¹⁸ OMLTs and POMLTs both go” outside the wire”.

The philosophy of the OMLT and POMLT was explained to the Committee by Canadian Major-General Mike Ward, Director General of Police Development and Training with the NATO Training Mission in Afghanistan,

The cliché is ‘for, with and by.’ Initially, you may do it for the Afghans to demonstrate how it might be done ... However, the next time around you would be doing it with them, side by side and, lastly, in the final cycle, they would be doing it and you would be assisting and advising.¹⁹

Col. Burt, who commanded Canada's OMLT in 2009, compared the job of OMLT members to “a hockey coach who tries to stay on the bench, but sometimes he has to get on the ice.” But he added,

Do not forget that the [Canadian] guy on the ground must not take over. If there is shooting happening, my officer – non-commissioned officers, or soldiers in some cases – will have to, through an interpreter, tell the [ANA] guy in charge that he may want to move his machine gun to another area while he [the Canadian] is under fire himself, but not take over. That was a difficult role for our guys.²⁰

Col. Burt is proud of the Canadian OMLT's success with the ANA's 1-205 Brigade. “I had an American Embedded Training Team (ETT) come in with an extra kandak. We showed him how Canadians do it. I made sure he learned the same as we did. That is Canada's 1-205 Brigade [of the ANA], and we are proud of that.”²¹ (Col. Burt was asked by the Committee whether a Canadian training force could function in Kandahar after the withdrawal of the larger Canadian force. He compared the OMLT to a remora, a type of fish which feeds on scraps leftover by a larger fish such as a shark – in this case the larger Canadian presence. He replied, “Without the big Canadian machine, we are almost on our own.” He said that the Americans could provide the required artillery support, communications, helicopter transport, and medical care needed, but not without joint training and its attendant costs. And “I would want my Canadian medics with me from what I saw.”²²

Asked if the ANA would be ready to take control in February 2011. Col. Burt replied, “No, they will not.” Would they be ready in five years with the current number of

¹⁸ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 4*, May 3, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/04eva-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76.

¹⁹ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 4*, May 10, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/04eva-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76.

²⁰ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 4*, May 3, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/04eva-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE: CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

Canadian troops devoted to the OMLT? Col. Burt replied, "That is a very good question. I cannot answer it ... That is something you cannot predict."²³

Nevertheless, Brig.-Gen. Vance told the Committee that, "International engagement with the Afghan National Army will be seen by historians as a great success." As for Canada's engagement with the ANA's 1-205 Brigade,

... we had a brigade with one effective battalion go to one that is now largely meeting the highest capability milestones put before it. Two battalions [of five] are at Capability Milestone 1, and others are on the verge of that.²⁴

POLICE OPERATIONAL MENTOR AND LIAISON TEAM

The story is less hopeful with the Afghan National Police. When asked what state the ANP were in when ISAF began to train them, Maj.-Gen. Ward replied,

I will not try to go back to Genghis Khan. We may not be far advanced from that model. The recent history of Afghanistan has been so fractured that there have been many different models of policing and no consistent model until the development of a more recent approach that we started in 2002 and we are still working on now.²⁵

As the Committee was told by Brig-Gen. Vance, "It is so much easier to produce an infantry soldier than it is to produce a town [or] village constable..."

... the undertaking was much more of an onerous task than had originally been conceived. The institution was badly damaged in every respect, including the moral plane, which is so critical for police. In many parts of the country it is the mujahedeen wearing the uniform. It has the vestiges of the old warlord structure embedded in it.²⁶

What we would regard as corruption (but which has been part of Afghan life for centuries) is endemic in Afghanistan, and in the ANP. Perhaps more distressing, Maj.-Gen. Ward says, "researchers and people who have interviewed police in the field tell us that asking a simple question to a police officer like, 'Do you understand your mission?'

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, April 19, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/03eva-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76

²⁵ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 4*, May 10, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/04eva-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76.

²⁶ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, April 19, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/03eva-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE: CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

Results in a failure to supply a correct answer. Most officers are unaware of his or her job description.”²⁷

There is also a high attrition rate – “alarmingly high” according to Maj.-Gen. Ward, who particularly cites the élite Afghan National Civil Order Police: “... highly qualified and literate, really the high-water mark of what is capable in terms of police development, but used at a rate of about 95 per cent commitment on a full-time basis.”²⁸

Many of these policemen have had to say they are proud to serve their country but need a break and some predictability in life. Their families need them at home at certain points in time. They have voted with alarmingly high attrition rate - 75 per cent to 80 per cent in the Civil Order Police.²⁹

There is another form of attrition: death on the job. According to Maj.-Gen. Ward, in 2009, 700 policemen were killed in the course of their operations, two and a half times more than in the ANA and about five times more than among coalition forces...

Furthermore, the original practice with the police was to hire-deploy-train. Police officers were being deployed before they were trained. Now the practice is hire-train-deploy. This has resulted in a greater than four-fold increase in national police training in the past year, according to ISAF Commander, General Stanley McChrystal, who noted that a year ago few received any training.³⁰

Despite their problems, Maj.-Gen. Ward praises the ANP.

We have had some spectacular, complex attacks in Kabul in recent months, all of which were successfully dealt with by the Afghan National Police, exhibiting extraordinary bravery, putting their lives on the line, including in one case a police brigadier-general who fought a suicide bomber to a standstill. We are now seeing police intercepting suicide bombers on a daily basis and disrupting them.³¹

He also believes that with recruitment now higher owing to improved pay, it will be possible for NATO to meet its target of 134,000 ANP by October 2011, up from the current 96,000, provided attrition is reduced.³²

²⁷ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 4*, May 10, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/04eva-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ John D. Banusiewicz, “Gen. McChrystal Assesses Past Year, Looks Ahead”, American Forces Press Service, June 10, 2010, <http://www.isaf.nato.int/article/news/gen.-mchrystal-assesses-past-year-looks-ahead.html>

³¹ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 4*, May 10, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/04eva-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76

³² Ibid.

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE: CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

According to Maj.-Gen. Ward, there are some 30 training centres for police around Afghanistan, offering training “behind the wire” in a comparatively safe haven. But he points out that, “There are very few international civilian police [trainers] that work outside the wire.”

There are missions and there are needs for many more international civilian police trainers from NATO countries everywhere you look. We need that professionalism and role modelling to take place, both in the institutional part of the Afghan National Police, but also out on the field. We can do the best job we know how inside the school house, but if we do not actually provide that policeman with someone who is a role model to help him walk through the community to meet with the locals -

Senator Meighen: It sounds like a POMLT, Police Operational Mentor and Liaison Team.

Maj.-Gen. Ward: Actually, that is exactly the right model. Our POMLTs have done extremely well in Kandahar. We want to see more of them.³³

THE BIGGER PICTURE IN AFGHANISTAN

Christopher Alexander, Canada's former ambassador to Afghanistan, is upbeat about Afghanistan's future.

There is a momentum in economic life in society. There is bustle in the cities and real momentum to what the international community is doing, which is unprecedented in the last ten years.³⁴

That said, and although key national institutions like the Ministry of Defence have advanced considerably, the consensus among witnesses is that much work remains. Most emphasized the importance of institutional capacity-building to the success of ISAF's mission.

Brigadier-General (Retired) Serge Labbé, Deputy to the NATO Senior Civilian Representative, and the second head of the now-defunct Strategic Advisory Team, conceived of by General Rick Hillier to advise Afghan government ministries, told the Committee by satellite link that, for most of Afghanistan's civil service, professionalism is still a distant prospect:

[t]he biggest problem in this country is lack of human capacity. We have, for instance, in Kabul and throughout the country, 320,000 civil servants that cannot provide a civil service.

³³ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 4*, May 10, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/04eva-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76

³⁴ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, June 14, 2010 (not yet published).

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE: CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

It is fundamental to the ability of this government to be able to take up the responsibilities it has at all levels here in Kabul. However, particularly at the sub-national level, at the provincial and district levels, there is almost no capacity whatsoever.

This is what we are finding in Marja, for instance, where we are having to bring in talent and having to train people in an emergency mode with a view to inserting them into Marja at the district centre so they can take on the responsibilities, but that is not ideal.³⁵

Reinforcing this point, Brig.-Gen. Vance told the committee that Canada's efforts to rebuild Afghanistan's National Security Forces will have been for naught if the state is incapable of using these instruments appropriately and effectively:

There must be linkages between the government in Afghanistan and its security forces. Every ministry of the Afghan government lacks the capacity, not the will or desire to do better. The white collar capacity to turn ideas into action in Afghanistan has either been killed off or is in the Diaspora. There are good ministers who want to do better, but the levers and linkages with their forces are still badly damaged. One of the important aspects of international engagement is to help them to re-establish the reins.³⁶

According to Maj.-Gen. Ward, the judiciary is a troubling "weak link" among national institutions. He said, "The rule of law is not well supported. Positions are not well paid. Therefore, opportunities for corruption of a judge or prosecutor are extremely high. Threats to judges and prosecutors are also extremely high. It is almost a no-win situation currently."³⁷

To date, ISAF has focused on building governance capacity in the security sector – the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of the Interior and the National Directorate of Security (NDS, the domestic intelligence agency). By contrast, progress in other ministries has been largely contingent on the personalities and inherent leadership capabilities of individual ministers. In this connection, Colonel (Retired) Mike Capstick, spoke of his close work with the Minister of Mines, and Brig.-Gen (Ret'd.) Labbé highlighted the strengths of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development. However, while describing the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development as well-led and

³⁵ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 4*, May 3, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/04eva-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76.

³⁶ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 3*, April 19, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/03eva-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76.

³⁷ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 4*, May 10, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/04evb-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76.

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE: CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

“probably the best ministry in the government,” he said lack of know-how means the 600-strong organization is essentially run by about 50 foreign and Afghan contractors.³⁸

Many witnesses expressed regret that the strategy used to reconstitute Afghanistan's National Security Forces is absent from efforts to reform other sectors of that country's civil service. For example, noting the “huge” investment to ensure the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of the Interior and the National Director of Security can undertake operations and function within government, Brig.-Gen (Ret'd.) Labbé lamented the lack of an “equal civilian, joined up, coherent approach to doing the same thing in the non-security ministries.” He called for Canada to take the lead on Afghan governance, using one of its centres of excellence – such as the Canada School of Public Service – as a vehicle to partner with the Afghan Civil Service Commission and the Afghan Civil Service Institute to provide training and professional development.³⁹

According to Brig.-Gen (Ret'd.) Labbé, lack of public outreach capacity is also hurting the Afghan government's cause. To reinforce the sense of progress in Afghans' minds, he advocated helping the Afghan national government develop a strategic communications capacity. Describing the Afghan Government Media and Information Centre as “a lasting legacy [of Canada's Strategic Advisory Team],” he said, “It would great if we could bring in a few Canadian strategic communications experts to facilitate their activities, to build capacity and to run courses for talented young Afghans who could be deployed to ministries as spokespersons.”⁴⁰

Emphasizing the entrepreneurial spirit of Afghan citizens and the “building boom in the construction site that is Kabul,” Col. (Ret'd.) Capstick told the committee that he has seen many hopeful signs of an emerging local economy. To illustrate how far Afghanistan has come, Col. (Ret'd.) Capstick, who is Afghanistan Country Director for Peace Dividend Trust, held up his Blackberry device, saying, “In 2005, there were two cell phone companies, with hardly any penetration of the market. I have in my hand here a BlackBerry from Roshan, a Kabul-based company, so I can get my emails standing on a road in London.” He went on to note other trappings of modernity, such as the bar code readers now found in some Kabul supermarkets.⁴¹

Col. (Ret'd.) Capstick sees untapped potential in the international community's interaction with Afghanistan. “Part of the problem here is that the international community is inside their physical security bubbles,” he explained. “... The international businesses cannot get out, and the Afghan businesses cannot get in.” He said that once his organization parlays the needs of international agencies to Afghan businesses, the response to meet that demand is immediate.⁴²

³⁸ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 4*, May 3, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/04eva-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 3*, April 19, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/03eva-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76.

⁴² Ibid.

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE: CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

Still, he and other witnesses described significant challenges to economic development. For example, noting that security is an ever-present concern for Afghan business owners, Col. (Ret'd.) Capstick said Afghanistan's weak legal and regulatory framework is also a major preoccupation.

[O]ne of the biggest complaints we hear from Afghan businesses on a daily basis is the structure within government for business – the laws, regulations and the way they are applied. A lot of work needs to be done in this area. The economy has always been dependent on aid, or it was before the Soviet invasion. It was characterized by state-owned industries and large, cumbersome bureaucracies, especially during the Soviet period. It is moving into a private-sector-oriented economy, so the laws are a mess. The laws and regulations are poorly drafted and unevenly applied. Often the laws are more honoured in the breach than they are in the application.⁴³

In his testimony, he mentioned that his organization undertakes a great deal of work with both the Canadian and British provincial reconstruction teams. Concerned that Canada's pull-out of its troops would compromise the delivery of aid and economic assistance, Lieutenant-General (Retired) George Macdonald, former deputy commander of NORAD, urged Canada to retain enough military personnel to maintain and run the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team. He felt that this could be accomplished with a low enough level of personnel to achieve overall cost savings.⁴⁴ Regardless of whether it pulls out all or only some of its troops in 2011, Col. (Ret'd.) Capstick expressed the hope that Canada would remain committed to providing economic development assistance. He said Canada's sharing of expertise in natural resource regulation and marketing boards would help Afghan businesses move to an international footing.

If all of Canada's military forces leave Afghanistan, then Canada's non-military presence (DFAIT, CIDA, NGOs, etc.) will have to rely entirely on private contractors or the military of other nations for security and protection. There are developmental and educational undertakings in Afghanistan that cannot currently be carried out unless with military protection.

Afghanistan has been Canada's number one recipient of net official development assistance (which includes disbursements through multilateral agencies and debt relief) since Fiscal Year 2002-2003.⁴⁵ According to its most recent *Statistical Report on International Assistance*, CIDA will have spent a total of about \$1.7 billion in Afghanistan through 31 March 2011.⁴⁶ Nonetheless, Brig.-Gen (Ret'd.) Labbé said there is no doubt that more can and must be done. Canada's contribution to rural development in Afghanistan has been "not particularly hands on," he said, primarily taking the form of

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 3*, April 26, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/03evb-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76.

⁴⁵ See CIDA, *Statistical Reports on International Assistance*, <http://cida71.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/ACDI-CIDA.nsf/eng/JUD-4128122-G4W>.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE: CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

funding channelled through CIDA. Terry Glavin, research coordinator for the Canada-Afghanistan Solidarity Committee, felt that CIDA has been keeping too low a profile, missing an opportunity to inform Canadians about its activities and successes in Afghanistan.

While Brig.-Gen (Ret'd.) Labbé praised Canada for having backed the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development early on, he said “[w]e should be doing much more to promote Afghan national development programs with a proven track record.” He highlighted as an outstanding example the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development’s National Solidarity Program, which he credits with helping bring grassroots democracy to much of rural Afghanistan and with achieving 38% representation for women on democratically elected community development councils.⁴⁷

Work should continue on Canadian signature projects such as the Dahla Dam and its associated irrigation systems, which, if the current security, political, and contractual difficulties can be solved, will eventually provide water for three-quarters of the population of Kandahar Province and “revolutionize people’s lives,” said Brig.-Gen (Ret'd.) Labbé. Only Canada and other international partners possess the technical knowhow and project management expertise to see these large-scale and essential undertakings through to completion, he argued. However, he cautioned that any contracts for such projects should include capacity-building clauses aimed at involving Afghans in the process and enabling them to assume increasing responsibility.

Though he did not discount the possibility of diverted funds, Brig.-Gen (Ret'd.) Labbé supported President Karzai’s call for 50% of international development assistance to flow directly into Afghan government coffers. At present, only 30% of such funding is directed to the government’s core budget, meaning all but less-significant activities must meet with external approval before they are resourced. Terry Glavin said this funding structure effectively locks the Afghan civil service into its current dysfunctional state. He also believes the existing system reveals something about Afghanistan’s corruption problem. With only 20% of aid dollars going directly to the Afghan state, he said, corruption on a large-scale is not possible and “if there is corruption, you cannot blame the Afghan bureaucracy for all of it.”

It is widely understood that the confidence of Afghans in their government depends largely on their seeing that good things are being done by that government rather than by foreigners. For his part, Brig.-Gen (Ret'd.) Labbé said the experience of the World Bank’s Afghanistan Reconstruction Fund should offer comfort. Donor nations place money into this trust fund, he explained, and Afghan ministries then submit project or program funding requests that, if accepted, result in monies being deposited into that ministry’s float account. According to Brig.-Gen (Ret'd.) Labbé, the World Bank verifies that the ministry has spent these funds appropriately and is able to do so because “[e]very

⁴⁷ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 4*, May 3, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-04eva-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76.

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE: CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

single transaction is registered.” He noted that a recent World Bank verification mission prompted by a British allegation of impropriety had accounted for “every penny.”⁴⁸

“Where you get corruption is when we foreigners get involved,” said Brig.-Gen (Ret’d.) Labbé. “[B]ecause we really do not know how things work in this country, that causes the more entrepreneurial Afghans to be able to take advantage of our naïveté.” He noted that the National Solidarity Program has avoided these problems because it “was created by Afghans, for Afghans, with Afghans.” That meant the program was created “by honest Afghans who knew what the loopholes might be, closed them all”⁴⁹

Col. (Ret’d.) Capstick highlighted another reason to place more responsibility in the hands of Afghans: security. The logic is simple, he explained, when projects are viewed as “giving jobs to the local people,” these projects and their workers “tend not to get attacked.” This is why the United States Agency for International Development and the United States military have adopted a strategy of relying on Afghan firms to deliver infrastructure projects “to the maximum extent possible If the local people feel they have an ownership in the project, things tend to calm down quite a bit. If it is a great, big international company, it is a different story.”⁵⁰

THE REGIONAL PICTURE

The Committee has not extensively examined Afghanistan’s relationships with its neighbours, but Brig.-Gen. (Ret’d.) Don Macnamara pointed out one broader security concern, “that al Qaeda would get their hands on nuclear warheads in Pakistan.”⁵¹ He also reminded the Committee that there are other nuclear weapons powers nearby in Asia.

Even more troubling was what we heard about Pakistan from Christopher Alexander, Canada’s former ambassador to Afghanistan.

... Afghanistan’s conflict is not a cross-border insurgency. It is a proxy war waged indirectly by Pakistan’s military against the legitimate Afghan government and its partners.⁵²

As Mr. Alexander explained,

There will be no stability in Afghanistan so long as military councils in Quetta and other parts of Baluchistan province; in Miranshah and other parts of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas; in Peshawar and other parts of Khyber Pakhtunwa province...; in Karachi and other Pakistani

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 3*, April 19, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/03evb-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76.

⁵¹ Proceedings of the Senate Standing Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 3*, April 26 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/03evb-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76

⁵² Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, June 14, 2010 (not yet published).

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE: CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

cities, continue with impunity to prepare and launch guerrilla-style attacks on Afghanistan.

These networks – whose leadership, fundraising, training, bomb making, supply and planning centres are based overwhelmingly on the territory of Pakistan – constitute the primary threat to peace and security in Afghanistan today. They have only achieved their current scale and capabilities due to covert support they receive from Pakistani military authorities, including the ISI [Intelligence Services Intelligence Directorate].⁵³

Mr. Alexander added, “Without ISI’s support, they [Taliban and other terrorist groups] would collapse like the puppets they have become.”⁵⁴

WHERE FROM HERE?

While much has been accomplished by ISAF and the many countries and NGOs assisting Afghanistan, no one, even optimists among our witnesses, could say when the country might be able to govern and secure itself to the extent that foreign troops can leave. This should not be surprising. As His Excellency, Jawed Ludin, Afghanistan’s ambassador to Canada, pointed out,

I will just say: ‘Imagine where Afghanistan was 10 years ago.’ It was not any other country in a normal state, or in a state of poverty or conflict. It was a country that was utterly devastated and did not have a state structure to speak about. For that kind of state, you suddenly bring it and make it responsible for a task that would probably take an extremely well developed state a lot of effort to achieve.⁵⁵

And yet troops from some of the bigger NATO players in Afghanistan will be leaving, shortening the timeline for success at nation-building. At the moment, American troops are surging into the country to provide the numbers needed for COIN to work. They are bolstering Afghan and other ISAF forces, particularly our Canadian Forces in Kandahar. When they secure towns and villages, Afghan government departments and development organizations can function there. But the U.S. will start withdrawing their forces in 2011 (although there is no plan yet to remove them all). The Dutch will depart this year – unless their newly elected parliament amends that decision. Canadian Forces will be leaving. The UK’s military commitment, however, was renewed June 14, 2010. Prime Minister Cameron told the House of Commons that British forces would come home, “their jobs done, their heads held high,” when, “Afghans can chart their own way in the world without their country posing a threat to others.”⁵⁶ Prime Minister Cameron’s measurement of success – not of “victory”, but of the clearly- achievable goal of Afghan

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, June 7, 2010 (not yet published).

⁵⁶ Rt. Hon. David Cameron, “PM Statement on Afghanistan”, June 14, 2010,

<http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/statements-and-articles/2010/06/pm-statement-on-afghanistan-51813>

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE: CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

self-sufficiency makes sense. On top of this, the security situation remains poor in parts of the country, particularly in Kandahar and Helmand provinces. As pointed out by the Sunday Times, the week starting June 6, 2010, was one of the worst for NATO forces since the start of the war in 2001, with 32 military personnel killed.⁵⁷ Brig.-Gen (Ret'd.) Serge Labbé, Deputy to the NATO Senior Civilian Representative, however, takes issue with this focus.

I keep hearing on television and in the media the fact that we are losing. The comment that we are losing is predicated on the old definitions of campaigns, where we talked only about security operations. In today's environment, there is no such thing as just security operations. It involves governance, development, the judiciary and all aspects of government. Therefore, to say that we are losing is a misnomer and reflects old thinking.⁵⁸

What is needed for success, says Canada's Chief of the Defence Staff, General Walt Natynczyk, is "a game changer," and he says that must come about through reconciliation with the insurgency, a priority for the Afghan government, NATO, and the Canadian government. It is recognized that success cannot be achieved by military means alone. The insurgency must also be weakened by a process of reconciliation which persuades as many Taliban fighters as possible to re-join civil society.⁵⁹ The logic is to isolate the truly implacable by co-opting insurgents who have been motivated more by tribal conflict, disenfranchisement, lack of opportunity or plain naivety than by hard-core Taliban beliefs. Gen. Natynczyk is a firm believer in reconciliation.

All the huge reinforcement of forces on the ground is there to enable that game change. That is why I am sure everyone is looking at the jirga [the Consultative Peace Jirga] that just occurred over the last few days [June 2-4, 2010], and everyone is looking at the outcome of that. Some people have their concerns about it, but will it be the game changer that changes what happens with regard to those who are sitting on the fence whether to go with the Taliban or to go with a government of Afghanistan? I would just say that the issue is time.

... The lead is with the Afghan government. It is difficult as we, with our Western lenses and glasses, watch what they are doing and try to understand the messaging that they are providing. At the end of the day, the solution to this counterinsurgency must be an Afghan solution. All of us on the bleachers watching this must be patient to see how this unfolds for the game changer that I talked about before.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Michael Smith and Jonathan Oliver, , The Sunday Times, June 13, 2010.

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/politics/article7149104.ece>

⁵⁸ Proceedings of the Senate Standing Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 4*, May 3, 2010.

⁵⁹ "Political Reconciliation", Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan website, August 27, 2009,

<http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/priorities-priorites/reconciliation.aspx>

⁶⁰ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, June 7, 2010 (not yet published).

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE: CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

The “messaging” about reconciliation by President Karzai makes some people nervous. “The great fear,” says Terry Glavin, with the Canada-Afghanistan Solidarity Committee, “is that when President Karzai talks about negotiating with the Taliban, he means making some sort of extra-constitutional arrangement that entrenches an old notion of Pashtun prerogative to govern Afghanistan. The Tajiks, Uzbeks and the Hazaras are particularly terrified of this, especially the women and democrats.”⁶¹

Political reconciliation, however, is key. Afghanistan's Ambassador to Canada, Jawed Ludin, explained that the President has proceeded consultatively to arrive at his mandate for reconciliation,

[President Karzai] thought he needed a specific mandate for reconciliation and that is what he has done. Today he has it because the peace Jirga basically unanimously endorsed that this should be done and that we should speak to the Taliban. It was not supposed to be a forum with the Taliban. It was only supposed to be a forum with all sorts of other elements in the society that would give the President and the government the mandate and the parameters in which to reconcile with the Taliban.⁶²

President Karzai is also sending a renewed message of support for the major NATO counterinsurgency operation starting to unfold in Kandahar. At a shura, or gathering, of tribal and religious elders there on June 13, 2010, he assured residents the operation was about fighting corruption and bad government as much as the insurgents. He told the shura, “We need your cooperation for this operation. I don't accept any excuse for not cooperating. We want this operation to be successful.”⁶³

Canada has spent considerable blood and money in Afghanistan. At the time of writing, 148 Canadian Forces personnel and one diplomat have lost their lives serving on this mission. A 2008 Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) report projected that overall spending, predominantly military, could reach an estimated cumulative total of up to \$18.1 billion based on operations over 10 fiscal years from 2001-2002 through 2010-2011.⁶⁴ Given Defence Minister's MacKay's statement that the incremental costs of the mission to the military will stand at \$9.4 billion by the time the last Canadian Forces personnel have withdrawn, it is clear that the military component of the mission has accounted for the lion's share of cost.

There is no question that Canadian Forces and Canadians have acquitted themselves superbly in Afghanistan. We heard praise from many witnesses. We heard criticism from none. Mr. Glavin, with the Canada-Afghanistan Solidarity Committee, told us,

⁶¹ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 3*, April 19, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/03evb-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76.

⁶² Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, June 7, 2010 (not yet published).

⁶³ Associated Press, June 13, 2010, [Karzai: Ramping up security is a 'go' for Kandahar, http://www.newstimes.com/news/article/Afghanistan-s-Karzai-seeks-support-for-Kandahar-op-521344.php](http://www.newstimes.com/news/article/Afghanistan-s-Karzai-seeks-support-for-Kandahar-op-521344.php)

⁶⁴ Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer, “The Fiscal Impact of the Canadian Mission in Afghanistan,” October 9, 2008, <http://www2.parl.gc.ca/sites/pbo-dpb/documents/2008-10-09%20Statement%20-%20Afghanistan.pdf>.

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE: CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

We held the fort with the contribution of the Canadian Forces and the dignity with which the Canadian Forces has conducted itself. We make mistakes, but we pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off and carry on. We are respected in that country. Canada is respected in that country in no small part because of the contribution that Canadian soldiers have made. No one we spoke to wants the Canadian Forces to withdraw completely.⁶⁵

Ambassador Ludin said,

One important thing that Canada's mission has there is not the scale but the approach. The approach that General McChrystal, the NATO commander, has now adopted is essentially what the Canadians did in the previous years and there is credit to Canada for that. There is credit for the fighting that Canadians did in the previous years and there is credit to the approach that they are now implementing in feeding into the broader NATO strategy.⁶⁶

Canada's current commander in Afghanistan, Brig.-Gen. Jonathan Vance told the Committee,

Canada has earned a leadership role in this emerging environment in Kandahar due to the quality of our troops, our ability to execute the counterinsurgency doctrine we share with our allies and our capacity to command and control allied forces, including U.S. forces in Kandahar.⁶⁷

Not only has Canada done well, but the mission has set us up for future success according to Chief of the Defence Staff Gen. Natynczyk.

The Afghan experience has brought the level of the Canadian Forces' professionalism – air, land, sea and special forces – to a level we have not seen in generations ... Not only are we in better shape because of this experience but also the confidence in the men the men and women of the Canadian Forces to do a combat operation, no matter what, will set us for the future. In fact, you saw a reflection of that in Haiti. [Operation Hestia, following the January 2010 earthquake there.] We rolled into Haiti basically overnight.⁶⁸

As to the Canadian Forces' ability to take on additional tasks on top of its current Afghanistan commitment, Lieutenant-General Andrew Leslie, Chief of the Land Staff at the time of his appearance, said:

⁶⁵ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 3*, April 19, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/03evb-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76.

⁶⁶ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, June 7, 2010 (not yet published).

⁶⁷ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, April 19, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/03eva-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76

⁶⁸ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, June 7, 2010 (not yet published).

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE: CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

Right now, we could deploy a light battalion group on whatever task the Government of Canada may wish it to do, commensurate with a relatively light scale in terms of protective equipment, composed of both regular and reserves. As you know so well, we just finished doing that in Haiti [...] What the investment of the Canadian people in their army has acquired for them is a world-class army that has a higher degree of responsiveness and readiness than I have seen in many a decade. Indeed, an extraordinary period in terms of the sweep over the last three decades. We are at a state where we are truly running hot.⁶⁹

On the question of whether or not Canadian Forces need to come home for a rest after the rigours of Afghanistan, Brig.-Gen. Vance, while declining to offer his own opinion, told the Committee,

I have not been made aware of any policies or any ambitions on the part of anybody in the Canadian Forces to take a rest. I am not aware of any such desire or need for a rest. It would not be up to me to state an opinion as to whether we need a rest. We did Afghanistan, the Olympics and Haiti at the same time. Without Afghanistan, we can still do Olympics and Haiti and probably something else. I do not perceive, nor did I perceive as a commander, that we are desperate for a rest. [...] I am answering you as honestly as I know; I have not heard of anything that would demand that we take a rest.⁷⁰

The Committee wanted to know whether or not NATO's overall mission in Afghanistan would be hurt by the withdrawal of Canadian Forces. Brig.-Gen (Ret'd.) Serge Labbé, deputy to the Senior NATO Representative in Afghanistan, said,

If you pulled all the troops from Afghanistan, you would have to find some way of protecting the development experts that remain behind. That would severely limit their freedom of action and their ability to undertake their responsibilities.⁷¹

But Brig.-Gen. Vance said that provided Afghans and other military players step in, there would not be a problem.

I tend to look at this in terms of effects, not who is delivering them. You are okay as long as there are good enough effects to achieve what you want. A military and police presence by Afghans and the international community without Canada after 2011 can still provide the necessary

⁶⁹ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, May 31, 2010 (not yet published).

⁷⁰ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, April 19, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/03eva-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76

⁷¹ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 4*, May 3, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/04eva-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76.

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE: CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

security environment for all of the other actors to bring their effects to bear.⁷²

One witness, Brig.-Gen. (Ret'd.) Don Macnamara, expressed concern that removal of all CF from Afghanistan might damage Canada's standing in world councils.

... if we go ahead with this decision, my nightmare is that Canada will forever be known in NATO [for] 'the Canadian position on deployment.' From this point forward, people will say they will take the Canadian position and leave in two years or whatever. I do not want Canada to be seen in that context.⁷³

Then there is the matter of the 148 Canadian soldiers and one diplomat who, to the date this was written, have died in Afghanistan. What would a complete withdrawal say about their ultimate sacrifice, and the sacrifice of the many thousands of others who have done or are doing tours of duty there? "We cannot bring those soldiers back to life." says Terry Glavin of the Canada-Afghanistan Solidarity Committee, "However we can ensure they did not die in vain."⁷⁴

... it is so difficult to show the many victories those soldiers have won for our Afghan friends and for Canada. It is hard to draw direct cause and effect lines between the death of a soldier and a young girl who learns how to write her name for the first time, but those lines are there.⁷⁵

No witnesses recommended that Canadian Forces entirely leave Afghanistan. In fact, Mr. Glavin told us, "We have to change the nature of the debate and not think of 2011 as something that ends but think of 2011 as something that is beginning, completely change the nature of the debate."⁷⁶

Several witnesses urged we stay. Brig.-Gen (Ret'd.) Labbé, for instance, questioned the logic of Canada's present position, saying,

At precisely the time when we need more troops to turn the tide with a view to ensuring that we can actually fully support this government in winning the campaign, it seems odd to me that we would be talking about removing all the troops." He wondered, "Why do we not train another [Afghan army] brigade with a view to ensuring that, the faster we train

⁷² Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, April 19, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/03eva-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76

⁷³ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, Issue 3, April 26, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/03evb-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76

⁷⁴ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 3*, April 19, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/03evb-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE: CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

Afghan National Security Forces, the sooner we can leave ... we cannot leave them in the lurch.⁷⁷

The role of Canadian Forces as trainers and mentors, was praised several times. The Minister of Defence, Peter MacKay, testified that Canada has had direct requests – most notably from the government of Afghanistan – for Canadian Forces to stay:

“... we are admired. We are in a category unto ourselves as far as the respect and the admiration that is felt. We have no colonial or conquering past in that country. So the Canadian flag and the Canadian brand and most of all the Canadian people are in high demand in Afghanistan today.”⁷⁸

Afghanistan's Ambassador in Canada, Jawed Ludin, urged Canada: “Remain involved in the security agenda by building up our forces ... that is our single most important and strategic priority. We would like to get it right, with your help.”⁷⁹

Canada's former ambassador to Afghanistan went further,

Canadian Forces are ... among the only ones with the depth of experience, in combat, in peace support, in peacekeeping, across the board, to do it all. If we use them but limit that function, we are really doing them and probably ourselves a disservice. This is a hypothetical discussion for the time being. However, it is an issue of principle for any deployment.

⁷⁷ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, *Issue 4*, May 3, 2010, http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/defe-e/04eva-e.htm?Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3&comm_id=76.⁷⁷

⁷⁸ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, June 21, 2010 (not yet published).

⁷⁹ Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 3rd Session, 40th Parliament, June 7, 2010 (not yet published).

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE: CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

If there is a recurring theme to what witnesses have told us, it is that the job in Afghanistan is not done and that Canadian troops should stay in some capacity. With the surge of NATO forces now underway, gains are at last being consolidated instead of lost. That surge of forces is importantly fighting alongside soldiers of the Afghan National Army. Ultimately, this fight against the Taliban is their fight. It will be a key part of Canada's legacy in Afghanistan that Canadian soldiers helped prepare them for this fight.

Based upon the evidence, testimony, and suggestions we have heard; upon our deliberations; and given our concern for our nation's standing among its allies, this Committee believes and recommends that Canada's important and highly-valued contribution to the development of the leadership, training and mentoring of the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police must continue beyond 2011, and that Parliament should, at its earliest opportunity, give careful consideration to the question of the role of the Canadian Forces in Afghanistan after 2011.

APPENDIX A

WITNESSES HEARD

ORGANIZATION	NAME, TITLE	DATE OF APPEARANCE
As an individual	Colonel (Retired) Mike Capstick, Peace Dividend Trust	April 19, 2010
Canada-Afghanistan Solidarity Committee	Terry Glavin, Research Coordinator	April 19, 2010
National Defence	Brigadier-General Jonathan Vance, Former Commander, Joint Task Force-Afghanistan	April 19, 2010
As an individual	Paul Chapin, Former Director General International Security, Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Member of the Board of Directors, Conference of Defence Associations	April 26, 2010
Air Force Association of Canada	Lieutenant-General (Retired) George Macdonald, Honourary National President, Former Deputy Commander of NORAD	April 26, 2010
As an individual	Brigadier-General (Retired) Don Macnamara, OMM, CD, Past President and Board Member, Conference of Defence Associations Institute, and Board Member, Canadian International Council	April 26, 2010

National Defence	Colonel Gregory D. Burt, Director of Future Security Analysis	May 3, 2010
As an individual	Brigadier-general (Retired) Serge Labbé, Deputy to NATO Senior Civilian Representative (SCR), HQ ISAF, Kabul, Afghanistan	May 3, 2010
National Defence	Colonel Jean-Marc Lanthier, Commander, 5 th Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group, (Former Deputy Commander, Joint Task Force Haiti)	May, 10, 2010
National Defence	Major-General Mike Ward, Deputy Commander, NATO training Mission-Afghanistan, Joint Task Force Afghanistan, International and Security and Assistance Force HQ	May, 10, 2010
National Defence	Lieutenant-General André Deschamps, Chief of Air Staff	May 31, 2010
National Defence	Chief Warrant Officer Wayne Ford, Army Sergeant Major	May 31, 2010
National Defence	Lieutenant-General Andrew Leslie, Chief of Land Staff	May 31, 2010
Ambassador of Afghanistan in Canada	His Excellency Jawed Ludin, Ambassador	June 7, 2010

National Defence	General Walter Natynczyk, Chief of Defence Staff	June 7, 2010
As an individual	Chris Alexander, Former Canadian Ambassador to Afghanistan and former United Nations Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Afghanistan for Afghanistan	June 14, 2010
	The Honourable Peter MacKay, P.C., M.P., Minister of National Defence	June 21, 2010
National Defence	Vice-Admiral Denis Rouleau, J.A.D., OMM, MSM, CD, Vice Chief of the Defence Staff	June 21, 2010

APPENDIX B

Extract of the *Journals of the House of Commons*, Thursday, March 13, 2008:

Pursuant to Order made Wednesday, March 12, 2008, the House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform), seconded by Mr. Prentice (Minister of Industry), -

Whereas,

the House recognizes the important contribution and sacrifice of Canadian Forces and Canadian civilian personnel as part of the UN mandated, NATO-led mission deployed in Afghanistan at the request of the democratically elected government of Afghanistan;

the House believes that Canada must remain committed to the people of Afghanistan beyond February 2009;

the House takes note that in February 2002, the government took a decision to deploy 850 troops to Kandahar to join the international coalition that went to Afghanistan to drive out the Taliban in the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and that this deployment lasted for six months at which time the troops rotated out of Afghanistan and returned home;

the House takes note that in February 2003, the government took a decision that Canada would commit 2000 troops and lead for one year, starting in the summer of 2003, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Kabul and at the end of the one-year commitment, Canada's 2000 troop commitment was reduced to a 750-person reconnaissance unit as Canada's NATO ally, Turkey, rotated into Kabul to replace Canada as the lead nation of the ISAF mission;

the House takes note that in August 2005, Canada assumed responsibility of the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Kandahar province which included roughly 300 Canadian Forces personnel;

the House takes note that the government took a decision to commit a combat Battle Group of roughly 1200 troops to Kandahar for a period of one year, from February 2006 to February 2007;

the House takes note that in January 2006, the government participated in the London Conference on Afghanistan which resulted in the signing of the Afghanistan Compact which set out benchmarks and timelines until the end of 2010 for improving the security, the governance and the economic and social development of Afghanistan;

the House takes note that in May 2006, Parliament supported the government's two year extension of Canada's deployment of diplomatic, development, civilian police and military personnel in Afghanistan and the provision of funding and equipment for this

extension;

the House welcomes the Report of the Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan, chaired by the Honourable John Manley, and recognizes the important contribution its members have made;

the House takes note that it has long been a guiding principle of Canada's involvement in Afghanistan that all three components of a comprehensive government strategy – defence, diplomacy and development – must reinforce each other and that the government must strike a balance between these components to be most effective;

the House takes note that the ultimate aim of Canadian policy is to leave Afghanistan to Afghans, in a country that is better governed, more peaceful and more secure and to create the necessary space and conditions to allow the Afghans themselves to achieve a political solution to the conflict; and

the House takes note that in order to achieve that aim, it is essential to assist the people of Afghanistan to have properly trained, equipped and paid members of the four pillars of their security apparatus: the army, the police, the judicial system and the correctional system;

therefore, it is the opinion of the House,

that Canada should continue a military presence in Kandahar beyond February 2009, to July 2011, in a manner fully consistent with the UN mandate on Afghanistan, and that the military mission should consist of:

(a) training the Afghan National Security Forces so that they can expeditiously take increasing responsibility for security in Kandahar and Afghanistan as a whole;

(b) providing security for reconstruction and development efforts in Kandahar;

(c) the continuation of Canada's responsibility for the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team;

that, consistent with this mandate, this extension of Canada's military presence in Afghanistan is approved by this House expressly on the condition that:

(a) NATO secure a battle group of approximately 1000 to rotate into Kandahar (operational no later than February 2009);

(b) to better ensure the safety and effectiveness of the Canadian contingent, the government secure medium helicopter lift capacity and high performance Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance before February 2009; and

(c) the government of Canada notify NATO that Canada will end its presence in Kandahar as of July 2011, and, as of that date, the redeployment of Canadian Forces troops out of Kandahar and their replacement by Afghan forces start as soon as possible,

so that it will have been completed by December 2011;

that the government of Canada, together with our allies and the government of Afghanistan, must set firm targets and timelines for the training, equipping and paying of the Afghan National Army, the Afghan National Police, the members of the judicial system and the members of the correctional system;

that Canada's contribution to the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan should:

(a) be revamped and increased to strike a better balance between our military efforts and our development efforts in Afghanistan;

(b) focus on our traditional strengths as a nation, particularly through the development of sound judicial and correctional systems and strong political institutions on the ground in Afghanistan and the pursuit of a greater role for Canada in addressing the chronic fresh water shortages in the country;

(c) address the crippling issue of the narco-economy that consistently undermines progress in Afghanistan, through the pursuit of solutions that do not further alienate the goodwill of the local population;

(d) be held to a greater level of accountability and scrutiny so that the Canadian people can be sure that our development contributions are being spent effectively in Afghanistan;

that Canada should assert a stronger and more disciplined diplomatic position regarding Afghanistan and the regional players, including support for the naming of a special envoy to the region who could both ensure greater coherence in all diplomatic initiatives in the region and also press for greater coordination amongst our partners in the UN in the pursuit of common diplomatic goals in the region;

that the government should provide the public with franker and more frequent reporting on events in Afghanistan, offering more assessments of Canada's role and giving greater emphasis to the diplomatic and reconstruction efforts as well as those of the military and, for greater clarity, the government should table in Parliament detailed reports on the progress of the mission in Afghanistan on a quarterly basis;

that the House of Commons should strike a special parliamentary committee on Afghanistan which would meet regularly with the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and National Defence and senior officials, and that the House should authorize travel by the special committee to Afghanistan and the surrounding region so that the special committee can make frequent recommendations on the conduct and progress of our efforts in Afghanistan;

that, the special parliamentary committee on Afghanistan should review the laws and procedures governing the use of operational and national security exceptions for the withholding of information from Parliament, the Courts and the Canadian people with those responsible for administering those laws and procedures, to ensure that Canadians

are being provided with ample information on the conduct and progress of the mission;
and

that with respect to the transfer of Afghan detainees to Afghan authorities, the government must:

(a) commit to meeting the highest NATO and international standards with respect to protecting the rights of detainees, transferring only when it believes it can do so in keeping with Canada's international obligations;

(b) pursue a NATO-wide solution to the question of detainees through diplomatic efforts that are rooted in the core Canadian values of respect for human rights and the dignity of all people;

(c) commit to a policy of greater transparency with respect to its policy on the taking of and transferring of detainees including a commitment to report on the results of reviews or inspections of Afghan prisons undertaken by Canadian officials; and

that the government must commit to improved interdepartmental coordination to achieve greater cross-government coherence and coordination of the government's domestic management of our commitment to Afghanistan, including the creation of a full-time task force which is responsible directly to the Prime Minister to lead these efforts;

(Government Business No. 5)