

# Research Package #2

(Junior and Senior High)

## PM FIRMS UP AFGHAN EXIT

CANADA GONE IN 2009 WITHOUT  
'EVOLVING' ROLE, INCREASED NATO  
BACKUP, HE SAYS

**“BIRT the 2009 Canadian commitment in Afghanistan be extended.”**

**(VALUES DEBATE)**

**Mid-Year Topic (Nov./Dec./Jan.) 2007-2008**

Topic #1 was a Policy debate. Topic #2 will be a values debate.

A values debate is a unique and enjoyable form of debate. It involves a clash of ideas rather than a clash of policy.

The affirmative does not introduce a plan in a values debate. The affirmative will provide reasons to support the resolution and the negative will provide reasons to oppose the resolution.



# Values Debate Flow Sheet

## Junior High Beginner – Discussion

**The Task of the Proposition Team**

- The Proposition will argue **for the resolution**
- Members of the Proposition team will provide contentions and arguments and evidence in support of the resolution
- If the Proposition Team’s Position is, on balance, more credible than the Opposition, then the Proposition wins the debate

**The Task of the Opposition Team**

- The task of the Opposition is to argue **against the resolution**
- Members of the Opposition team will provide contentions and arguments and evidence in opposition to the Proposition and in support of the Opposition position
- If, on balance, the Opposition Team’s Position is more credible than the Proposition, then the Opposition team wins the debate.

1 <sup>st</sup> Proposition (5 min)	1 <sup>st</sup> Opposition (5 min)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Proposition (5 min)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Opposition (5 min)	Discussion (10 min)	Break (5 min)	Opposition Reply Speech (1 <sup>st</sup> Opposition) (4 min)	Proposition Reply Speech (1 <sup>st</sup> Proposition) (4 min)
Introduction	Introduction	Introduction	Introduction	All four debaters remain seated. The debaters raise their hands, and upon being recognized by the chair/timer, proceed to ask and respond to questions from their opponents. When a debater is finished answering a question, he/she may then ask a question and so on. All four debaters should show participation.	Debaters use this time to work on reply speech.	Both reply speeches summarize their position and point out the basic flaws of the opposition.  No new arguments can be introduced.  Explain why your team should win and the other team should lose.  Remind the judges of your arguments.  Tell the judges why they should believe your arguments even after the other team’s attack.  Explain why the judges should not listen to the other team.  Review critical evidence.	
Definitions	If necessary, attack definitions	Show unity with Caseline	Show unity with Caseline				
Theme/Caseline	Theme/Caseline	Clash with Opposition arguments	Clash with Proposition arguments				
Arguments in support of resolution	Clash with Proposition arguments	Additional arguments to support resolution	Further arguments against resolution				
Conclusion	Arguments against resolution	Conclusion	Conclusion				
	Conclusion						

# Values Debate Flow Sheet

## Jr. High Open & High School – Cross Examination

### The Task of the Proposition Team

- The Proposition will argue **for the resolution**
- Members of the Proposition team will provide contentions and arguments and evidence in support of the resolution
- If the Proposition Team’s Position is, on balance, more credible than the Opposition, then the Proposition wins the debate

### The Task of the Opposition Team

- The task of the Opposition is to argue **against the resolution**
- Members of the Opposition team will provide contentions and arguments and evidence in opposition to the Proposition and in support of the Opposition position
- If, on balance, the Opposition Team’s Position is more credible than the Proposition, then the Opposition team wins the debate.

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Proposition</b> (Jr. Open / Sr. Beg – 6 min, Sr. Open – 7 min)	<b>Cross X</b> (3 min)	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Opposition</b> (Jr. Open / Sr. Beg – 6 min, Sr. Open – 7 min)	<b>Cross X</b> (3 min)	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Proposition</b> (Jr. Open / Sr. Beg – 6 min, Sr. Open – 7 min)	<b>Cross X</b> (3 min)	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Opposition</b> (Jr. Open / Sr. Beg – 6 min, Sr. Open – 7 min)	<b>Cross X</b> (3 min)	<b>Break</b> (5 min)	<b>Opposition Reply Speech</b> (1 <sup>st</sup> Opposition) (4 min)	<b>Proposition Reply Speech</b> (1 <sup>st</sup> Proposition) (4 min)
Introduction	1 <sup>st</sup> Proposition Cross examined by 2 <sup>nd</sup> Opposition	Introduction	1 <sup>st</sup> Opposition Cross examined by 1 <sup>st</sup> Proposition	Introduction	2 <sup>nd</sup> Proposition Cross examined by 1 <sup>st</sup> Opposition	Introduction	2 <sup>nd</sup> Opposition Cross examined by 2 <sup>nd</sup> Proposition	Debaters use this time to work on reply speeches	Both reply speeches summarize their position and point out the basic flaws of the opposition.  No new arguments can be introduced.  Explain why your team should win and the other team should lose.  Remind the judges of your arguments.  Tell the judges why they should believe your arguments even after the other team’s attack.  Explain why the judges should not listen to the other team.  Review critical evidence.	
Definitions		If necessary, attack definitions		Show unity with Caseline		Show unity with Caseline				
Theme/Caseline		Theme/Caseline		Clash with Opposition arguments		Clash with Proposition arguments				
Arguments in support of resolution		Clash with Proposition arguments		Additional arguments to support resolution		Further arguments against resolution				
Conclusion		Arguments against resolution		Conclusion		Conclusion				
	Conclusion									

Canadian troops have been fighting in Afghanistan for over five years. This military mission has endured for longer than the First World War and the Korean conflict. If the mission continues for another year, it will exceed the Second World War in duration, to become the lengthiest war in which Canadians have ever fought. To date, 70 Canadians have died in Afghanistan. On a per capita basis, more Canadians have been killed during the mission, than has been the case for any of the other allied countries who have sent forces to Afghanistan.

The Harper government has presented the mission to Canadians as combining a military element with the provision of aid to the people of Afghanistan. In fact, in dollars spent, the mission has been ninety per cent military, and only ten per cent reconstruction aid.

The Chretien government propelled Canada into the Afghan War with little thought in the autumn of 2001. The mission has since been sustained and extended by the Martin and Harper governments. Despite the brief debate and vote on the issue in the House of Commons in May 2006, this country has had no authentic national debate on the Afghanistan mission.

Increasingly Canadians are insisting on an authentic national dialogue on the Afghanistan question. Many, if not most, Canadians are deeply troubled by our country's military mission in that country. And just as Americans have brushed aside the argument that to debate the war in Iraq is unpatriotic, Canadians are not impressed by flag waving attempts to avoid debate on our Afghan mission.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper said his government has no plans to prolong Canada's combat role in Afghanistan beyond its February 2009 commitment, arguing that any extension would be for a new mission and contingent upon stronger NATO support. Harper reaffirmed his government's plans to seek a "reasonable degree" of parliamentary support before considering any extension to the current Afghan mission or agreeing to a new one.

Canada's current commitment in Afghanistan is scheduled to end in February of 2009. Few military personnel expect that the problem in Afghanistan will be solved by then. Some speak of decades; some speak of generations; but all speak of a long term commitment. This raises the question of whether the mission ought to be extended or not.

Canadians deserve a full and open debate on any extension to the Afghanistan mission. **Should Canada remain in Afghanistan beyond the 2009 deadline?**

**The Proposition Team supports the resolution and will say "YES"**

**The Opposition Team opposes the resolution and will say "NO"**

Both Proposition and Opposition Teams will try to pick about 5 good reasons to support their position and try to develop each by going through 4 steps:

1. State your point.
2. Explain your point.
3. Provide evidence in support of your point (give an example).
4. Explain how that evidence proves your point (tie it back to your theme).

Each argument will look like this:

**Point #1:** \_\_\_\_\_

Explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

Example: \_\_\_\_\_

Tie point to theme: \_\_\_\_\_

**Point #2:** \_\_\_\_\_

Explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

Example: \_\_\_\_\_

Tie point to theme: \_\_\_\_\_

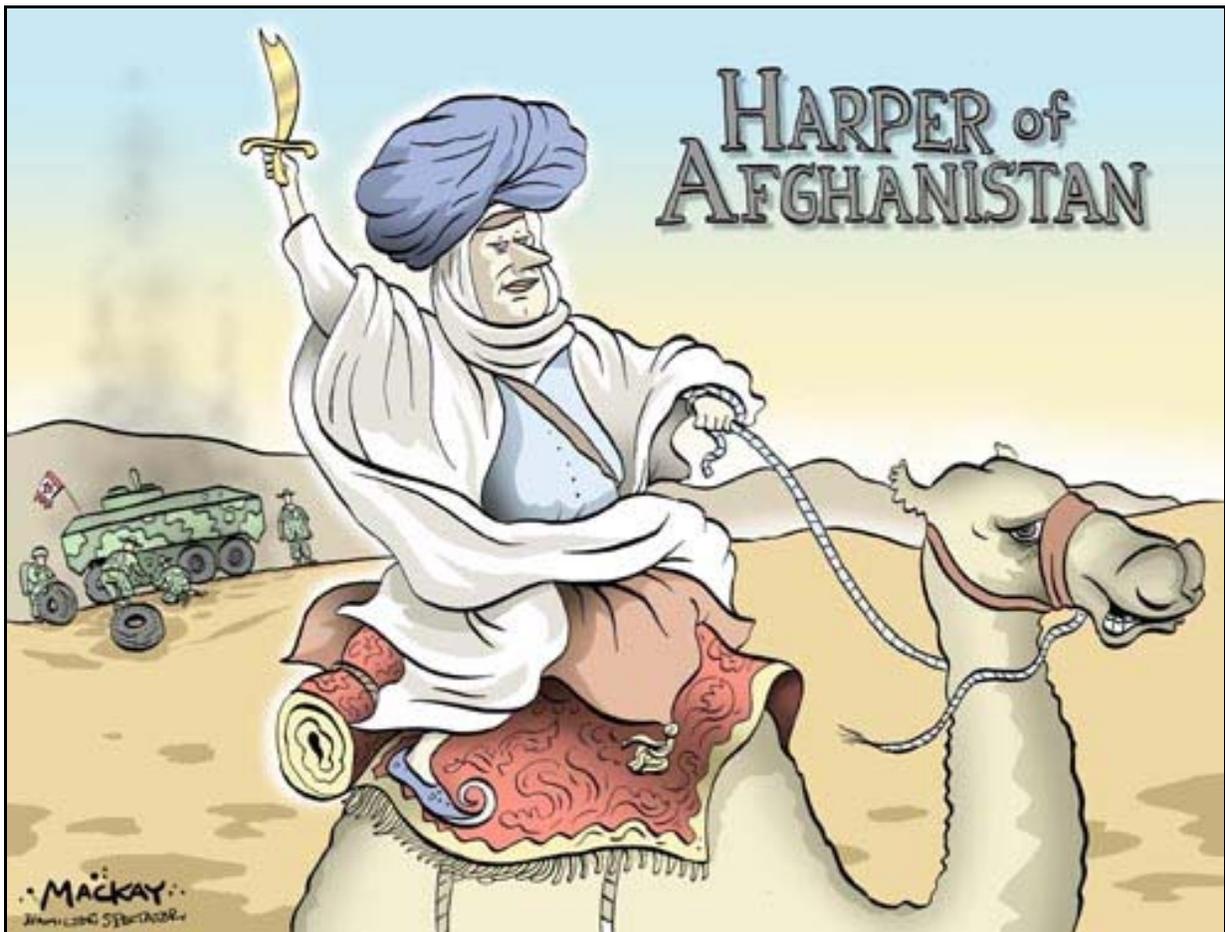
# PROPOSITION TEAM

## The Proposition will be saying:

The events of September 11, 2001 were a wake-up call. Not just to Americans but to all people in free and democratic nations. We need to be clear: Canada is not immune to such attacks. And we will never be immune as long as we are a society that defends freedom, democracy and human rights. Not surprisingly, Al-Qaeda has singled out Canada along with a number of other nations for attack. The same Al-Qaeda that, together with the Taliban, took an undemocratic Afghanistan and made it a safe haven from which to plan terrorist attacks worldwide. We cannot let the Taliban, backed by Al-Qaeda, or similar extremist elements return to power in Afghanistan.

Together, diplomats, aid workers and soldiers from 35 countries are working with the Government of Afghanistan to re-build their country. We are working together with our partners from Afghanistan, the UN, NATO and NGOs in an integrated international effort to support the country's reconstruction. Key to this are the troops from dozens of countries - including Canadian Forces personnel - who are helping to stabilize Afghanistan so that vital humanitarian and development work can be undertaken. The challenges are enormous and there are no quick fixes.

Working with our allies and the Afghan people, Canada has achieved great things. But there is more to do. Afghanistan remains the fifth poorest country in the world. The Taliban is seeking to regain power. And too many people have to resort to drug trafficking to meet their families' needs. We need to extend our mission so we can work to finish the job. Our men and women need to know that we share their goals and support their efforts. A re-affirmation of Canada's intent: expressed through a clear and renewed commitment. A commitment that builds on past achievements. A commitment in line with Canadian values.





Here are some arguments that the Proposition can use in developing their case for extending Canada's commitment in Afghanistan past 2009:

### Why the 2009 Canadian Commitment in Afghanistan SHOULD be Extended

1. Both the Netherlands and the United Kingdom – our two primary partners in southern Afghanistan – have recently renewed their commitments: two- and three-year commitments respectively. **If Canada leaves, our allies will be forced to carry our load.**
2. **By withdrawing we would be giving into the terrorists.** It is a tragedy that so many Canadian and allied soldiers have lost their lives in Afghanistan, but their sacrifice will be meaningless if we cut and run now. Leaving Afghanistan ahead of time would show the terrorists that we are weak, and only encourage them to use the same evil methods elsewhere. Our allies too will be discouraged and take the message that Canada is not a reliable friend.
3. **It takes time to rebuild a country destroyed by two decades of war.** We are needed to provide Afghanistan with the security it needs to reconstruct its shattered infrastructure and to build some democratic institutions. If this is accomplished, ordinary Afghans will be won over and the new government will gain a legitimacy that will inevitably choke off the Taliban. Canada must take whatever time is necessary to achieve this goal. In a recent poll, 77 per cent of Afghans thought that NATO's presence was a good thing. We should stay in Afghanistan as long as we are wanted and remain a positive force. We have committed a lot of lives and money to Afghanistan and should not just turn around and walk away in 2009 regardless of whether our mission has been accomplished. What if 2009 rolls around, Afghanistan is still foundering, and no other country is willing to take up the job we've started? If it is truly a vital mission, we should see it through. If it isn't, why are we there in the first place?
4. In Afghanistan Human Rights Watch (a U.S. human rights group) issued a report which plainly stated that the Taliban was waging a campaign of war crimes against the Afghan people. In 2006, Taliban attacks on ordinary Afghans killed 669 civilians, two-thirds through bombings, the other third in ambushes and executions. The primary victims of the Taliban remain ordinary Afghans struggling to eke out an existence in that hard land. **Canada has a moral obligation to provide support and humanitarian aid.**
5. **NATO (Canada included) is the glue holding Afghanistan together.** The central government (the elected government) isn't strong enough to defeat the Taliban. The results of a NATO withdrawal are eminently predictable; the nation would disintegrate into factions and descend into civil war. It happened in the 1990s after the Soviets abandoned Afghanistan, and it led to the military takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban.
6. **Life in Afghanistan has gotten far better by most measurable standards.** Since the ouster of the Taliban regime (in 2001) more than three million Afghan refugees have returned to their homeland from Iran, Pakistan, and neighbouring states. Currently more than six million children (approximately one-third of them girls) attend school, up from fewer than 700,000 students (all boys) under the Taliban. Since 2001, NATO and the NGOs (non-governmental organizations) have constructed or repaired more than 6,000 kilometres of roads, have brought electricity to more than 2,500 villages, and have provided basic health care to 80 per cent of the Afghan population (versus 8 per cent in 2001). In 2006 alone, 328 new schools were constructed. At the end of April the New York Times reported that infant mortality in Afghanistan had dropped by 18 per cent since 2002. As a result, this year between 40,000 and 50,000 more Afghan children will survive their first year, primarily because of the expansion of health clinics and vaccination regimes in rural areas.
7. **It makes no sense to tell the enemy when you plan to start withdrawing.** All the terrorists would have to do is mark their calendars and gather their strength -- and begin plotting how to overthrow the government and take control of the country of Afghanistan.
8. **The goal of the Taliban is simple: they don't have to defeat the NATO forces.** They simply have to inflict enough casualties so that political support for the mission among NATO nations erodes. The Taliban think in terms of decades. The coalition countries think in terms of months. By following the arbitrary deadline of February 2009, we are giving the time advantage to the Taliban.
9. **Occupation was the only way to prevent future terrorists using Afghanistan as a base.** The Taliban have provided a supportive base for a range of terrorist groups seeking to overthrow regimes in former-Soviet Central Asia, China and Kashmir, as well as for the global terrorist campaign of Al-Qa'ida. The stability of the whole Central Asian region pivots upon the installation of a new government in Afghanistan dedicated to peaceful coexistence with its neighbours, and this can only be achieved through occupation.
10. If NATO leaves, **Afghanistan is likely in the long run to lead to a prolonged power struggle or civil war between different ethnic groups or local warlords,** as before 1996. This will lead to many innocent lives being lost in the crossfire, prevent humanitarian aid that is desperately needed after three years of drought reaching millions of starving Afghans, and create a terrible refugee crisis.

## Ten reasons to stay in Afghanistan

Stephen J. Mariano and Benjamin Zyla. National Post. Apr 11, 2006.

A U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel explains why Canada must stay the course in Afghanistan

This week's Parliamentary debate on Canada's Afghanistan deployment is sorely needed: Until now, there has been a lack of clarity regarding Canada's interests and policy in that country. The best approach is to keep things simple. So here are the top 10 reasons why Canada should stay committed to Afghanistan:

10. Economics. Afghanistan has substantial untapped natural resources, including not only oil, natural gas and copper but hydro- electric power sources as well. Developing Afghanistan's capacity to export energy could help improve the nation's economy and defuse regional tensions. An oil pipeline running from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan to an Indian Ocean port in Pakistan would be particularly lucrative. Canadian corporations should be ready to take part in such major development projects. Our involvement would benefit Canada and Afghanistan alike.
9. Poppies. Afghanistan is the world's number-one grower of poppies, which are the precursor product for opium, which then turns up on our shores as heroin. Since the heroin trade fuels organized crime and street violence, Afghanistan's poppy industry poses an indirect security risk to Canadians. (The poppy trade also discourages foreign investment in Afghanistan, since few investors want to involve themselves with an illegal industry.)
8. Rule of law and human rights. Canada has worked hard, both inside and outside the United Nations, to promote human rights and the rule of law. In particular, Canada has been a leading advocate of the "responsibility to protect" doctrine, which asserts that wealthy nations have a duty to prevent human-rights abuses in other nations.

Unless Afghanistan's government respects the rule of law, the country will be at risk of slipping back into anarchy and tribal fiefdoms. Abandoning one of the world's poorest countries would send a negative message about the value Canadians place on basic human rights.

7. Democracy: The people of Afghanistan have freely and fairly elected President Hamid Karzai and two houses of the Afghan parliament. Promoting democracy has been a Canadian value for a long time. Moreover, a successful and stable democratic government in Afghanistan would help dispel the discredited notion that Muslim societies are somehow incapable of accommodating democratic governance.
6. Reinforcing success: The international community's chance of success is better in Afghanistan than most other war-torn nations. Despite occasional spasms of violence, stability and reconstruction efforts are proceeding apace. Canada's "diplomacy, development and defence" (or 3-D) approach is working. Shifting Canadian efforts to other crisis spots -- such as the Darfur area of Sudan -- is tempting, but pre-mature. By making Canada's commitment to Afghanistan a priority, foreign and defence policy makers can maximize the impact of scarce Canadian resources. Taking on too many commitments with too few resources risks ineffective engagement in all endeavors.
5. Treaty Obligations: On September 12, 2001, NATO invoked for the first time its self-defence clause -- Article 5 of the Washington Treaty -- asking NATO members to support a U.S.-led mission in Afghanistan. Since that time, Canada has shared the burden, politically and military.

When NATO took command of the Afghanistan mission in 2003 under a new UN Security Council Resolution, all 19 members committed to stability and reconstruction in the country, including Canada. It should continue to fulfill its obligations.

4. Central Asian regional security: A secure Afghanistan means a secure Central Asia. Afghans live in a rough neighbourhood with wobbly governments on its northern borders, a pre-nuclear Iran on one side and a post-nuclear Pakistan on the other. Afghanistan's failure to establish self-rule would encourage meddling by neighbours, and destabilize a potentially radioactive region. An unstable Central Asia cannot be in the interest of Canada.
3. Canada-U.S. relations: Like it or not, you have to live with your neighbours. By taking over the southern region in Afghanistan, Canada has helped the United States accomplish a vital security mission that overstretched U.S. forces would be unable to accomplish on their own. American willingness to hand over the volatile Kandahar province is a sign of confidence in Canada. (Indeed, America seems to have more confidence in Canadian soldiers than Canadians do.) At a time of strained relations over the U.S. presence in Iraq and quarrels over softwood lumber, it's good to accentuate the positive.
2. Pride: Canadians have a desire to "hit above their weight" on the world stage. Afghanistan offers a perfect venue for Canadians to demonstrate their 3-D abilities to the world. Long thought of as a soft, outmoded "peacekeeping" force, Canada's military is demonstrating that it still has the ability to perform and sustain real combat missions in a hostile environment. Canadian diplomats are assisting the Afghan government with everything from parliamentary procedures to health education. Aid workers from the Canadian International Development Agency are showing the world that Canadians have big hearts. Canadians should be proud that they are making a difference with their actions, not just offering kind words and money.
1. Canadian Security: Canada must help prevent Afghanistan's ungoverned tribal areas from becoming a Petri dish in which extremist germs can flourish. Though Canadian territory was not physically attacked on 9/11, its people, political culture and economy were. Since long before Canadian troops deployed to Kandahar, Canada has been on al-Qaeda's list of most

hated nations. Given the recent attacks in London, Madrid and Bali, it seems only a matter of time before terrorists attack Canadian soil. Better to halt bacterial growth in the petri dish now rather than letting it grow and one day infect our shores.

Taken together, this list of reasons run across party lines; and across ideological lines as well, from hawks to doves. Instead of looking for a single decisive justification for our presence in Afghanistan, Canadians should understand that there are many reasons. As the Parliamentary debate over Afghanistan unfolds, the governing Conservatives should set those reasons out.

- Stephen J. Mariano is a Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army, and Visiting Defence Fellow at the Centre for International Relations, Queen's University. Benjamin Zyla is a German PhD student in the War Studies Program at the Royal Military College of Canada.

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## Afghan mission complex, but vital

Editorial. Edmonton Journal. Jul 6, 2007.

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.

## Political pullout would kill Afghan success

If Canada leaves before the job is done, our gains will be lost;

Don Martin. Edmonton Journal. Jul 30, 2007.

KANDAHAR - They're ghosts from a lost war, a 20-year-old reminder that a foreign-led military victory in Afghanistan may be impossible.

Hundreds of Soviet tanks, troop carriers, trucks and artillery guns, perfectly preserved by Kandahar's desert-dry environment right down to goggles and binoculars, lie abandoned in a gated compound within sight of Canadian base headquarters.

For nine bloody years in the 1980s, the Soviet Union tried to prop up a Communist government in Kabul and annihilate the mujahedeen insurgency before the fading superpower ditched its military hardware here in the rush to flee a fight they couldn't win. To the skeptics viewing Canada's counter-insurgency mission, this military graveyard could preview our future if we botch the battle to rid Kandahar of the Taliban.

Seven weeks in southern Afghanistan is but an observational blink in a country that's been at war within itself for most of the last 30 years, but as I leave Kandahar today, trends and patterns are possible to detect and decipher. Some are hopeful. Others border on hopeless.

Right off the bat, let me argue that Canada cannot impose a political timetable on successfully ending this military mission.

It's like picking a date before the Normandy invasion for Canada to withdraw from the Second World War, yet we're just 18 months from a House of Commons vote to retreat, with no obvious heir to our United Nations responsibility for the dangerously volatile Kandahar province.

Canadian-assisted progress on redevelopment, political reform, army training, police education and humanitarian relief will be terminated for political expediency, not measurable accomplishment. Canadian soldiers will be demoralized by any tail-between-legs departure and billions of dollars worth of upgraded military equipment purchased specifically for the Afghanistan climate and terrain will be left without an active purpose. Perhaps they could be parked alongside the Soviet equipment here as our contribution to Afghan military history.

**- Prime Minister Stephen Harper should not revisit Kandahar any time soon.**

His sudden wimpiness on the file, replacing unconditional support for the mission with a shrugged surrender to a fix-is-in consensus of Parliament, is seen as inexplicable here. Soldiers who believed they had a Churchillian prime minister now know he's just another political weather vane, twisting in response to the winds of public opinion.

**- Canada is transferring leadership of military operations to the Afghan army.**

While local soldiers only receive a rudimentary three-week training and \$100 per month pay cheque, they are

nevertheless improving as a military force. During the only combat reporters witnessed recently, Afghans were leading the charge against the Taliban while Canada provided backup firepower.

**- The humanitarian and redevelopment pillars of this mission have become a higher priority, in words if not deeds.**

Reconstruction and mentoring teams are being beefed up, and their efforts praised in every second breath from military brass.

**- The war against the poppy is lost.**

Even with eradication activity picking up under British supervision, the opium-producing plant is setting record-high harvests. Detection is not a problem -- soldiers often remark how beautiful the poppy fields look when they're in full red bloom. But British military officials tell me it's an uphill struggle to convince farmers to switch their illegal crop for less lucrative melons, grapes or even marijuana.

**- The Taliban are not beaten.**

The combined air and ground firepower of the joint forces here is a sight to behold. How so much destructive technology can be neutralized by a few thousand religious extremists armed with ancient rocket launchers, last-generation rifles and old anti-tank mines boggles the mind. Yet the Taliban are having considerable success in planting bigger and better roadside bombs to put security forces on edge, slow reconstruction efforts and, most importantly, prevent Afghans from any sense their lives are returning to normal.

**- Okay, so I left the brightest development for last, but Kandahar City is on an economic roll, booming in population and building activity.**

The lineup of truck traffic outside the city's customs terminal is a sight vaguely reminiscent of a Windsor border crossing, albeit with colourful jingle trucks in lieu of 18-wheelers. There are billboards extolling the virtues of a university education over becoming a suicide bomber. It is, veteran observers say, an echo of what happened in Kabul several years ago when the capital prospered and security concerns abated. If the south's largest city can thrive in spite of chronic security problems, hope springs anew the entire region will stabilize and revitalize.

But know this for sure: If Canada pulls out in early 2009 as expected, hope for Kandahar will fade. It seems to me imperative that Canadian forces stay here until the job is done, even if the surrender monkeys in Ottawa think it's politically convenient to leave.

# OPPOSITION TEAM

## And the Opposition will say:

The war in Afghanistan, like the struggle in Iraq, is doing more to promote the cause of terrorism throughout the Islamic world than it is doing to win the so-called War on Terror. The argument made by some that to advocate withdrawal is appeasement and that we have a choice between fighting this enemy in Asia or on our own doorstep is a completely phony one.

Like previous invasions of Afghanistan, this one is almost certain to end in failure. Eventually, the West will decide to pull its troops out, leaving an even more despoiled country to sort itself out. The values touted by the West—democracy, human rights, and equality for women—are considered by many in Afghanistan and in other parts of the Middle East and Central Asia as nothing more than the crusader myths of outside invaders. The causes which we hold most dear are being sullied in this war.

Canada is not a great power, and has no strategic interests in Central Asia. It is time for this country to signal its NATO allies that we intend to pull our troops out of Afghanistan, giving them reasonable notice of our decision. Withdrawing from Afghanistan will enable Canada to pursue a more independent foreign policy, one that is not hopelessly compromised by support for the failing global policies of the Bush administration.



Some of the arguments that the Opposition can use in developing their case against Canada remaining in Afghanistan are:

### Why the 2009 Canadian Commitment in Afghanistan SHOULD NOT be Extended

1. **Canadians do not support an extension.** Research polls found that two thirds of those questioned agreed Canadian troops should return home when the current mandate expires. Only 26 per cent said the commitment should go beyond 2009 -- and only if that is necessary. Every day in Afghanistan Canadians are at risk of being killed. The death toll of Canadian forces is now at 70. Furthermore, the Harper government has no clear plan or explanation of what we can hope to accomplish in Afghanistan. We must go home before more of our troops are killed unnecessarily. Major-General Andrew Leslie was quoted last August as saying it would take 20 years to turn Afghanistan around. And Chris Alexander, our former ambassador to Afghanistan, said it would take five generations to turn Afghanistan into a civil society with a workable state. Are Canadians up for this long a haul?
2. **Occupying Afghanistan makes Canada a target for terrorist attack throughout the world.** The Madrid and London bombings, as well as attacks on coalition interests worldwide (e.g. Australians in Indonesia) show that the Afghanistan war has made us less safe. Until western forces are withdrawn from Afghanistan, the citizens of coalition countries will continue to be unnecessarily at risk from terrorism.
3. **Canada would benefit internationally from withdrawing their forces from Afghanistan.** Mending relations with the Arab and Muslim world would make it easier to fight the war on terror, as well as advancing other diplomatic goals (e.g. restraining Iran and North Korea's nuclear ambitions). Withdrawal would also make it easier for an over-stretched Canada to focus on a broader anti-terrorism strategy, aimed at building democracies and promoting human rights in the Middle East and elsewhere.
4. **Canada is bearing a disproportionate amount of the burden.** The British, Dutch and Americans are all fighting and dying, shoulder-to-shoulder with the Canadians. The same can't be said of the French, Italians and Germans who prefer to stay in the safe northern region of Afghanistan. Canada should not have to continue its sacrifice if other NATO allies are not pulling their weight.
5. **After 9/11, many Afghans favoured a real peacekeeping force in their country.** Canada needs to push diplomatically for genuine UN peacekeeping, not a pretense of one.
6. **There are real challenges in Afghanistan.** The insurgency is being fueled by heroin poppies, and there are a lot more of them blooming now than there were under the Taliban. Our opponents – warlords, drug traffickers and religious radicals – are both relentless and patient, comfortable on their own terrain.
7. **Canada's supposed 3D approach to rejuvenating the country -- defence, diplomacy and development -- has not been offering much more than defence.** Diplomat Glyn Berry was killed by terrorists in January. Since then the only Canadian official in charge of aid in Kandahar has also been removed. Of the 2,200 troops we have in Afghanistan, only 250 are on the provincial reconstruction team. Proposed projects for Kandahar have been put on hold since Mr. Berry's death. That means **Canada is down to one D in Kandahar, and military force alone isn't going to turn this part of the country around.**
8. **There are great dangers involved in fighting a ground war in Afghanistan,** as the British discovered in the nineteenth century and the USSR found in the 1980s. The mountainous terrain and hostile weather conditions make a normal land campaign impossible and make it ideal for guerrilla warfare. Nor did invading Afghanistan guarantee the capture of Osama Bin Laden; his familiarity with the hostile terrain offered him plenty of hiding places. The failure of US forces to apprehend warlords in Somalia ten years ago showed how hard it was to target particular individuals, even in more promising circumstances.
9. **An occupation using conventional military tactics and techniques will never be an effective measure against an elusive, diffuse, highly secretive international network such as Al-Qa'ida.** If they are driven out of one country, they will always be able to find somewhere else to base their activities. To make the whole population of Afghanistan suffer in the vain hope of damaging such an elusive organisation is unacceptable. History shows that the odds of prevailing in a war of counterinsurgency are not good. For example: Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, American intervention in Vietnam, French war in Indochina, and most recently, the American war in Iraq.
10. **Ill-considered action against Afghanistan has made the West in general more widely feared and hated.** A brutal campaign increased sympathy for the Afghan people, the Taliban and Bin Laden, especially in Islamic countries. This in itself seriously increases the risk of future terrorist attacks, but it also threatens moderate and pro-western regimes throughout the Islamic world. In particular, it could seriously destabilise nuclear-armed Pakistan where the pro-USA stance of the military government had caused widespread and sometimes violent protest.

## Dissenting opinion of the New Democratic Party (Excerpt)

To the Standing Committee on National Defence  
Dawn Black, MP

### INTRODUCTION

Given the complexity, the severity and the stakes of the armed conflict in Afghanistan, the New Democratic Party does not see counter-insurgency warfare as the solution to Afghanistan's problems. We believe that the strategy being pursued by NATO and allied forces in Southern Afghanistan is endangering our forces, endangering the Afghan people, and damaging Canada's credibility. The New Democratic Party asks for a withdrawal of Canadian Forces from the counter-insurgency mission in Afghanistan.

### THE SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

Canadian Forces are currently deployed in a complex and increasingly unstable security environment. The year 2006 was characterized by increased violence, a growing insurgency, and a correspondingly dire humanitarian and human rights situation. Afghanistan is more violent now than it was in the post-invasion period. As we heard from Norine McDonald from the Senlis Council in her testimony, "Kandahar is now a complete war zone. The Taliban are not only winning militarily but, more importantly, they have begun to win the battle for the hearts and minds of the local Afghan people."

The United Nations reports that in 2006, there has been a "marked increase in insurgent forces", with more than twice as many violent incidents in January 2007 than in January 2006. According to US military estimates, there were 139 suicide attacks in 2006, up from 27 in 2005. The International Crisis Group reports that 3700 people were killed in the conflict in the first nine months of 2006 - already a four-fold increase over the year before. Human Rights Watch estimates that more than 1,000 of those killed in 2006 were civilians. Attacks on Afghan teachers and schools, especially girls' schools, doubled from their already high levels in 2005. High profile assassinations are on the rise, making it hard for the Government to do its job and recruit people, particularly women.

Much of this rise in violence can be attributed to the two "tap-roots" of the growing insurgency: 1. the growing number of Afghans who are joining or otherwise supporting the forces of the Taliban, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and other armed groups, and 2. the safe haven for these groups in neighbouring Pakistan.

#### 1. Afghans joining insurgency

Civilian deaths - from insurgent, US and NATO attacks alike - are fuelling discontent among Afghans and increasing support for insurgents. US aircraft dropped more bombs in the first six months of 2006 than in the first three years of its campaign against the Taliban, according to figures released by the Pentagon. Coalition air strikes have continued despite the high civilian death toll and the clear strategic disadvantage that they represent. According to the Christian Science Monitor, "the devastating air offences are undermining support for the Afghan government...and are turning public opinion in the four southern provinces of Afghanistan against NATO forces..." President Karzai has called repeatedly on NATO, US and Taliban forces to stop killing Afghan civilians.

As General Andrew Leslie, now Chief of the Land Staff, said in the summer of 2005 "Every time you kill an angry young man overseas, you're creating 15 more who will come after you."

The benefits of reconstruction and development have not reached large portions of the Afghan population. Six years into a major international engagement in Afghanistan, in which \$12 billion has been spent on aid, Afghanistan remains one of the world's poorest countries. Under these circumstances, the salaries offered by Taliban forces are drawing many young Afghan males into the insurgency.

The aggressive poppy eradication strategies of the American and the British soldiers are further fuelling the alienation felt by Afghans. As Norine McDonald from the Senlis Council reported to the Committee, the people of Kandahar are almost entirely dependent on poppy crops for their livelihoods. Yet the US continues to push crop eradication, without adequate or appropriate alternative livelihood programs. The impoverished farmers left behind are ripe for recruitment by insurgents. Ms. McDonald was unequivocal in front of the Committee: "Eradication is generating support for the Taliban. The U.S.-led forced eradication of poppy fields that took place in Kandahar meant that many farmers lost their livelihood and they are now struggling to feed their families."

#### 2. Safe Haven in Pakistan

The safe haven in Pakistan has further emboldened Taliban and other armed leaders. Pakistan views the Karzai government as pro-India and therefore a threat to their security. They have been supporting and/or tolerating the regrouping of Taliban in Northern Pakistan. While there is some difference of opinion over the extent to which Pakistan's aid to the Taliban is ordered by the highest levels of Musharraf's government, there is consensus among senior Western military and intelligence that the leadership in Pakistan could "disrupt the senior levels of Taliban command and control" but have chosen not to. According to Barnett Rubin, "failing to address Pakistan's support of the Taliban amounts to an acceptance of NATO's failure". Combined, these forces have heightened the conflict in Southern Afghanistan over the past year, diminishing the prospects of peace and stability in Afghanistan, and making the situation more dangerous for Canadian soldiers.

## **THE STATE OF PERSONNEL AND MATERIAL**

The current mission is taking a tremendous toll on the men and women of the Canadian Forces. The Kandahar mission has been difficult for members of the Forces and their families.

The high tempo of foreign operations during the 1990s along with stagnating pay levels had a deleterious effect on the quality of life of members of the Forces and their families. The Kandahar mission and its extension have increased demands on the CF. The Committee has noted the problems members of the Forces and their families have had in seeking counselling and Post Traumatic Stress related treatment.

Forces' members must now serve up to nine month rotations, and multiple tours in Afghanistan. The Government has also discussed "re-rolling" members of the Air Force and Navy to meet the needs of the mission.

On the ground in Afghanistan, members of the Forces have had to deal with two problems: 1) Old equipment such as utility trucks that are proving difficult to maintain in the harsh conditions and 2) An escalation of fighting, which has had a negative impact on the psychological health of the Forces.

The lessons learned by the United States in Iraq have not been heeded in Canada. A continuous push for more armour and more firepower as part of a counter-insurgency campaign will inevitably lead to more sophisticated weapons such as Improvised Explosive Devices by insurgent forces. We are already seeing evidence of this in Afghanistan. Without a review and plan, it will be members of the Forces who bear the brunt of change.

## **RECONSTRUCTION EFFORTS**

After 5 years of a major international engagement, Afghanistan is still one of the world's poorest countries.

- It ranks 173rd out of 178 countries on the UN Human Development Index;
- One in four Afghan children do not live to the age of five;
- 70% of the Afghan population is malnourished;
- Maternal mortality of 1900 per 100,000 births.

In the January edition of the journal *Foreign Affairs* Afghan expert Dr. Barnett Rubin catalogued the failures of Western countries in Afghanistan. There is less electricity in Kabul now than there was five years ago, the need for such basics as clean water, health centres and sanitation remains acute, crime and corruption is rampant, and the local economy (despite the infusion of billions of dollars in Western military and aid money) has flatlined.

Throughout this war, development advocates have argued that reconstruction by, or in close co-ordination with, coalition forces will put the beneficiaries and the deliverers of aid at risk. When assistance strengthens the military objectives of one side in the war, it becomes a weapon, and those who use it become targets.

Marc Andre Boivin of the Montreal research group, Réseau francophone de recherche sur les opérations de paix, made this point in his testimony before the Committee.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) were present in Afghanistan long before any foreign military personnel were there, and the NGOs' concern at seeing their efforts so politicized is a serious one, because if they're seen as biased to one party or to the other, the Taliban or whichever insurgent will say, well, the grain you're providing is for the international effort, so we'll shoot you up. And that's it. You will not be able to provide any aid at all.

In his comments before the Committee, Gerry Barr of the Canadian Council for International Co-operation re-enforced this message. He drew the Committee's attention to a statement, signed by 34 non-governmental organizations in Afghanistan. "Their message was unambiguous" he said, "The deliberate confusion of military and humanitarian actors in Afghanistan is seriously hampering the ability of NGOs to deliver aid to all communities in need".

One cannot expect to systematically link the reconstruction of the country to the military offensive against Al-Qaeda and the Taliban without making targets of those who benefit from and deliver the assistance.

Development must be a priority, not a tool to soften the counter-insurgency blow. Genuine development programming is essential to the future security of Afghanistan. The effectiveness of development programming will be compromised if it is perceived as a public relations exercise to win the support of Afghans.

## **CANADA'S INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS**

The enormous burden of operations in Afghanistan has limited the Canadian Forces ability to act both at home and abroad. When the Minister of National Defence assumed his responsibilities in February 2006, he was told, in writing, that the Canadian Forces had the capacity to deploy a second land task force of 1,200 personnel. Since that time the Minister has denied being told this, and has claimed no such capacity for a second task force exists. Irrespective of the Minister's comments, it seems plausible that the capacity of the CF to deploy another large contingent has been reduced by the extension of the mission in Afghanistan.

The Minister was also briefed on the obligations the 2010 Vancouver Olympics would place on the CF. He was told that the requirements would be large and that it would place significant obstacles in the way of any foreign deployment at that time.

The Government needs to explain to Parliament and to the people of British Columbia how it would maintain a battle group in Kandahar beyond February 2009, while simultaneously providing security for the Olympics.

#### **DETAINEES**

Time and again, it has become clear that the Government of Canada simply doesn't get it when it comes to handling detainees: Canada must not turn detainees over to authorities who have a self-admitted record of torture. DND and Foreign Affairs officials refused to believe that Canada has a responsibility to ensure the fair and proper treatment of detainees once they leave our custody. This is an appalling failure on the part of the Government.

Canada has a legal and moral obligation to ensure that our actions do not lead to abuse or torture. It is a mark on our country that we did not learn this lesson after the public inquiry into Maher Arar's deportation and torture. Following the detainee abuse scandal of late April, precipitated by reporting in the Globe and Mail by Graeme Smith and Paul Koring, the front benches of the government were paralyzed: inconsistent stories, contradiction and cover-up become the order of the day. The Minister of National Defence quickly lost the support of the House and the support of the Canadian people.

The Government has weakened Canada's long-standing position against the use of torture with a "no questions asked" policy of handing detainees over to the Afghan security forces. It is known that NATO is looking to create an Alliance-wide policy on the handling of detainees, and the Government should examine the possibility of jointly building a detention facility with NATO and the Afghan government. Canada has been at the forefront on human rights. Now the world asks: "what happened to Canada on human rights?"

#### **AFGHAN WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

Afghan women are not being adequately protected or supported by the international military presence in their country. Women's rights have not been made a central priority by either the new Afghan government, or the broader international community in Afghanistan.

There is little evidence of sustained progress in critical areas over the past five years in the situation of Afghan women. In spite of changes to the laws regarding women's rights, women remain subject to arbitrary imprisonment, rape, torture, forced marriages and honour killings.

In spite of frequent references to the severe oppression of women's rights as justification for the ISAF strategies in the South, Afghan women are not being protected by the international military presence. In the effort to fight the Taliban, ISAF and American forces have made alliances with local police and warlords, who have been implicated in human rights abuses against women. These figures are part of the machinery that continues to persecute women in their every day lives, arresting and imprisoning them for what are now, under new Afghan laws, legal actions.

As Ariane Brunet, of the human rights organization, Rights and Democracy, commented before the Committee, "We are talking about women's rights and it is not by concentrating on terrorism that the security problems of women can be solved in the towns, villages and schools."

#### **CONCLUSION**

In this context, the New Democratic Party believes that the safe and determined withdrawal of our troops from the counter-insurgency mission, in consultation with our allies, is now required. Canada has wandered into an international conflict in the middle of Central Asia, with little control over the direction of the mission, or with much influence on its strategy. The outcome of this conflict will almost certainly be determined in Washington, Kabul, Islamabad, Tehran and points in between. In the meantime we should not ask the Canadian Forces to be sacrificed for a mission with no clear opportunities for success or completion.

# AFGHANISTAN HISTORY

Source: <http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/world/A0856490.html>

In great-power relations, Afghanistan was neutral until the late 1970s, receiving aid from both the United States and the Soviet Union. In the early 1970s the country was beset by serious economic problems, particularly a severe long-term drought in the center and north. Maintaining that King Muhammad Zahir Shah had mishandled the economic crisis and in addition was stifling political reform, a group of young military officers deposed (July, 1973) the king and proclaimed a republic. Lt. Gen. Sardar Muhammad Daud Khan, the king's cousin, became president and prime minister. In 1978, Daud was deposed by a group led by Nour Mohammed Taraki, who instituted Marxist reforms and aligned the country more closely with the Soviet Union. In Sept., 1979, Taraki was killed and Hafizullah Amin took power. Shortly thereafter, the USSR sent troops into Afghanistan, Amin was executed, and the Soviet-supported Babrak Karmal became president.

## The Afghanistan War and Islamic Fundamentalism

In the late 1970s the government faced increasing popular opposition to its social policies. By 1979 guerrilla opposition forces, popularly called mujahidin ("Islamic warriors"), were active in much of the country, fighting both Soviet forces and the Soviet-backed Afghan government. In 1986, Karmal resigned and was replaced by Mohammad Najibullah. The country was devastated by the Afghanistan War (1979–89), which took an enormous human and economic toll. After the Soviet withdrawal, the government steadily lost ground to the guerrilla forces. In early 1992, Kabul was captured, and the guerrilla alliance set up a new government consisting of a 50-member ruling council. Burhanuddin Rabbani was named interim president.

The victorious guerrillas proved unable to unite, however, and the forces of guerrilla leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar launched attacks on the new government. As fighting among various factions continued, Afghanistan was in effect divided into several independent zones, each with its own ruler. Beginning in late 1994 a militia of Pashtun Islamic fundamentalist students, the Taliban, emerged as an increasingly powerful force. In early 1996, as the Taliban continued its attempt to gain control of Afghanistan, Rabbani and Hekmatyar signed a power-sharing accord that made Hekmatyar premier. In September, however, the Taliban captured Kabul and declared themselves the legitimate government of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan; they imposed a particularly puritanical form of Islamic law in the two thirds of the country they controlled.

In Aug., 1998, as the Taliban appeared on the verge of taking over the whole country, U.S. missiles destroyed what was described by the Pentagon as an extensive terrorist training complex near Kabul run by Osama bin Laden, a Saudi-born militant accused of masterminding the 1998 bombings of the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. In Mar., 1999, a UN-brokered peace agreement was reached between the Taliban and their major remaining foe, the forces of the Northern Alliance, under Ahmed Shah Massoud, an ethnic Tajik and former mujahidin leader, but fighting broke out again in July. In November, the United Nations imposed economic sanctions on Afghanistan; this action and the 1998 U.S. missile attacks were related to the Afghani refusal to turn over bin Laden. Additional UN sanctions, including a ban on arms sales to Taliban forces, were imposed in Dec., 2000.

The Taliban controlled some 90% of the country by 2000, but their government was not generally recognized by the international community (the United Nations recognized President Burhanuddin Rabbani and the Northern Alliance). Continued warfare had caused over a million deaths, while 3 million Afghans remained in Pakistan and Iran as refugees. Adding to the nation's woe, a drought in W and central Asia that began in the late 1990s was most severe in Afghanistan.

In early 2001 the Taliban militia destroyed all statues in the nation, including two ancient giant Buddhas in Bamian, outside Kabul. The destruction was ordered by religious leaders, who regarded the figures as idolatrous and un-Islamic; the action was met with widespread international dismay and condemnation, even from other Islamic nations. In September, in a severe blow to the Northern Alliance, Massoud died as a result of a suicide bomb attack by assassins posing as Arab journalists. Two days after that attack, devastating terrorist assaults on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, which bin Laden was apparently involved in planning, prompted new demands by U.S. President Bush for his arrest.

When the Taliban refused to hand bin Laden over, the United States launched (Oct., 2001) attacks against Taliban and Al Qaeda (bin Laden's organization) positions and forces. The United States also began providing financial aid and other assistance to the Northern Alliance and other opposition groups. Assisted by U.S. air strikes, opposition forces ousted Taliban and Al Qaeda forces from Afghanistan's major urban areas in November and December, often aided by the defection of forces allied with the Taliban. Several thousand U.S. troops began entering the country in November, mainly to concentrate on the search for bin Laden and Taliban leader Mullah Muhammad Omar and to deal with the remaining pockets of their forces.

In early December a pan-Afghan conference in Bonn, Germany, appointed Hamid Karzai, a Pashtun with ties to the former king, as the nation's interim leader, replacing President Rabbani. By Jan., 2002, the Taliban and Al Qaeda were largely defeated, although most of their leaders and unknown numbers of their forces remained at large. Fighting continued on a sporadic basis, with occasional real battles, as occurred near Gardez in Mar., 2002. The country itself largely reverted to the control of the regional warlords who held power before the Taliban. Britain, Canada, and other NATO nations provided forces for various military, peacekeeping, and humanitarian operations. Many other nations also agreed to contribute humanitarian aid; the United Nations estimated that \$15 billion would be needed over the next 10 years to rebuild Afghanistan.

The former king, Muhammad Zahir Shah, returned to the country from exile to convene (June, 2002) a loya jirga (a traditional Afghan grand council) to establish a transitional government. Karzai was elected president (for a two-year term), and the king was declared the "father of the nation." That Karzai and his cabinet faced many challenges was confirmed violently in the following months when one of his vice presidents was assassinated and an attempt was made on Karzai's life. Nonetheless, by the end of 2002 the country had achieved a measure of stability.

Sporadic, generally small-scale fighting with various guerrillas has continued, particularly in the southeast, with the Taliban regaining some strength and even control in certain districts. There also has been fighting between rival factions in various parts of the country. Reconstruction has proceeded slowly, and central governmental control outside Kabul remained almost nonexistent. A return to economic health also was hindered by a persistent drought that continued through 2004.

In Aug., 2003, NATO assumed command of the international security force in the Kabul area. A new constitution was approved in Jan., 2004, by a loya jirga. It provides for a strong executive presidency and contains some concessions to minorities, but tensions between the dominant Pashtuns and other ethnic groups were evident during the loya jirga. In early 2004 the United States and NATO both announced increases in the number of troops deployed in the country. The U.S. move coincided with new operations against the Taliban and Al Qaeda, while the NATO forces were slated to be used to provide security and in reconstruction efforts. Further increases in NATO forces, to nearly 9,000, were announced in early 2005.

By mid-2004 little of the aid that the United Nations had estimated the country would need had reached Afghanistan, while a new, Afghani-proposed development plan called for \$28.5 billion over seven years. Although foreign nations pledged to provide substantial monies for three years, sufficient forces and funding for Afghan security were not included.

Karzai was elected to the presidency in Oct., 2004, in the country's first democratic elections. The vote, which generally split along ethnic lines, was peaceful, but it was marred by some minor difficulties. Several losing candidates accused Karzai of fraud, but an international review panel said the irregularities that had occurred were not significant enough to have affected the outcome. Karzai's new cabinet consisted largely of technocrats and was ethnically balanced, although Pashtuns generally held the more important posts.

The spring of 2005 was marked by an increase in attacks by the Taliban and their allies. Reports of the possible desecration of the Qur'an by U.S. interrogators at Guantanamo, when Afghan prisoners were held by the United States, provoked protests and riots in a number of Afghan cities and towns in May, 2005. The protests were largely in the country's south and east, where U.S. forces were operating, and were believed to reflect frustration with the U.S. presence there as much as anger over the alleged desecration.

National and provincial legislative elections were held in Sept., 2005; in some locales the balloting was marred by fraud. Supporters of Karzai won a substantial number of seats in the lower house (Wolesi Jirga); religious conservatives, former mujahidin and Taliban, women, and Pashtuns (which are overlapping groups) were all elected in significant numbers to the body. Tensions with Pakistan increased in early 2006, as members of the Afghan government increasingly accused Pakistan of failing to control Taliban and Al Qaeda camps in areas bordering Afghanistan; by the end of the year President Karzai had accused elements of the Pakistani government of directly supporting the Taliban. In Jan., 2006, a U.S. airstrike destroyed several houses in E Pakistan where Al Qaeda leaders were believed to be meeting.

May, 2006, saw the U.S.-led coalition launch its largest campaign against Taliban forces since 2001; some 11,000 troops undertook a summer offensive in four S Afghan provinces, where the Taliban had become increasingly stronger and entrenched. Also in May a deadly traffic accident in Kabul involving a U.S. convoy sparked anti-American and antigovernment demonstrations and riots in the city. In July, NATO assumed responsibility for peacekeeping in S Afghanistan, taking over from the coalition. NATO troops subsequently found themselves engaged in significant battles with the Taliban, particularly in Kandahar prov. NATO took command of all peacekeeping forces in the country, including some 11,000 U.S. troops, in October; some 8,000 U.S. troops remained part of Operation Enduring Freedom, assigned to fighting Taliban and Al Qaeda forces in mountainous areas bordering Pakistan.

In the second half of 2006, as casualties mounted, NATO commanders encountered difficulties when their call for reinforcements failed to raise the necessary number of troops and matériel. NATO leaders also joined Afghan leaders in criticizing Pakistan for failing to end the Taliban's use of areas bordering Afghanistan, especially in Baluchistan, as safe havens. In Mar., 2007, NATO forces launched a new offensive in Helmand prov. against the Taliban and Al Qaeda. The same month the National Assembly passed a law granting many Afghans amnesty for human-rights violations committed during the past two-and-a-half decades of civil war.

Although the majority of the Afghan refugees abroad have repatriated since the overthrow of the Taliban, at the beginning of 2005 it was estimated that some 2.1 million Afghans were still refugees, with most of those in Pakistan and Iran.

## Resources

### Resources that Researchers Found Useful in Preparing This Package

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[http://www.senliscouncil.net/documents/Ottawa\\_Position\\_Paper](http://www.senliscouncil.net/documents/Ottawa_Position_Paper)

