

# Agence France Presse (English)

## Mortars kill three in Pakistani tribal area

Saturday, September 22, 2007  
Section: International News  
Dateline: BAJAUR  
Time: 06:17:00 GMT  
Priority: Urgent

BAJAUR, Pakistan, Sept 22, 2007 (AFP) - A soldier and two women were killed in attacks by pro-Taliban militants in a restive Pakistani tribal region near the Afghan border, officials said Saturday.

The paramilitary soldier died when mortars hit a camp in the Bajaur tribal district, and the women when a mortar shell struck their house, local official Fazal Rabi told AFP.

He said two other soldiers were injured, as were six tribesmen.

Pakistani security forces have suffered a series of militant attacks and abductions that have claimed the lives of scores of troops since a government raid on the radical Red Mosque in Islamabad in July.

Fifteen soldiers were killed earlier this week and some of their bodies mutilated after a clash with rebels in tribal district of North Waziristan.

Insurgents are still holding more than 200 soldiers who surrendered without firing a shot in the neighbouring South Waziristan nearly three weeks ago.

Officials said around 25 soldiers were released late Friday after hectic negotiations between a government-backed tribal jirga and rebels in South Waziristan.

Pakistan has lost around 1,000 troops since 2002 when it deployed forces in the tribal belt to hunt Al-Qaeda-led militants who fled the US-led invasion that toppled Afghanistan's Taliban regime after the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States.

str-rj/km

Pakistan-Afghanistan-unrest

AFP 220617 GMT 09 07

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# Agence France Presse (English)

## Fukuda ahead on eve of vote for Japan PM

Saturday, September 22, 2007  
Section: International News  
Dateline: TOKYO  
Time: 04:36:00 GMT  
Priority: Urgent

TOKYO, Sept 22, 2007 (AFP) - The two men fighting to be Japan's next prime minister led a final push Saturday ahead of a party vote expected to put Yasuo Fukuda, a moderate, in charge of the world's second biggest economy.

Latest opinion polls gave Fukuda a commanding majority over his only rival Taro Aso in the race to lead the ruling Liberal Democrat Party and, with it, the premiership.

The ruling LDP meets Sunday to elect a successor to outgoing Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who abruptly resigned last week and checked in to a hospital with exhaustion amid rock-bottom ratings and a raft of cabinet scandals.

The influential Asahi Shimbun said Fukuda had secured the support of more than 60 percent of LDP parliament members and a majority of representatives of LDP regional branches who will also vote.

The regional Tokyo Shimbun paper said Fukuda had the support of 70 percent of the LDP lawmakers.

Fukuda, 71, and former foreign minister Aso, 67 -- were to give their last campaign speeches in joint appearances in the northern city of Sendai and in Tokyo.

Asked what he would say, Fukuda, a long-serving senior lawmaker and former oilman, said Saturday "there will be no change from my previous speeches."

But Aso said he expected Fukuda to "give more details on policies so we can have an active debate."

Aso, an outspoken conservative, has recently gone on the offensive against Fukuda, criticising his past conciliatory statements on ties with arch-enemy North Korea.

In a debate Friday with Aso, Fukuda in turn made unusually public criticism of Abe, saying he should have stepped down earlier after the LDP was trounced in upper house elections on July 29.

"Mr Abe resigned at the wrong time," Fukuda told the debate. "It should have been when he was defeated in the upper house elections."

Unlike Abe and Aso, Fukuda is considered a foreign policy dove.

His late father, Takeo Fukuda, was prime minister from 1976 to 1978 and was credited with helping repair ties with other Asian nations strained by

Japan's wartime history.

The winner is almost guaranteed to become prime minister when parliament votes Tuesday as the LDP enjoys a strong majority in the more powerful lower house.

But the opposition took control of the upper house in the July 29 election and is determined to fight the new premier and push for early elections.

The first challenge for the winner will be extending the mandate of Japan's military operation in the Indian Ocean, which provides logistical support for US-led forces in Afghanistan.

The mission was ground-breaking at the time for Japan, which has been officially pacifist since World War II, and the opposition has vowed to end it, saying that Tokyo has become part of "American wars."

Abe, an advocate of a more muscular foreign policy, effectively staked his job on extending the mission. Fukuda, despite more dovish views, has also pledged to continue the naval operation.

In anticipation of the fight ahead, he has decided to reappoint key members of Abe's last cabinet including Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura and Defence Minister Masahiko Komura, the Yomiuri Shimbun reported.

The newspaper, which did not identify its sources, said Finance Minister Fukushiro Nukaga would also be among the cabinet members to stay.

kh/sct/km

Japan-politics

AFP 220436 GMT 09 07

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# Edmonton Journal

## Last Jew in Afghanistan marks Yom Kippur alone; He is sole congregant in Kabul synagogue

Saturday, September 22, 2007  
Page: B14  
Section: News  
Byline: Beatrice Khadige  
Dateline: KABUL  
Source: Agence France-Presse

KABUL - Zebulon Simentov, the last Jew in Afghanistan, is once again marking the Jewish holy day of fasting in solitude, in a deserted synagogue in the capital of a devoutly Islamic nation.

"I have everything I need for the 24 hours of praying and fasting," Simentov says before the start of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, at sunset on Friday.

Around two decades ago, there were still about 20 Afghan Jewish families living in Kabul, although all were from Herat -- the largest city in northwestern Afghanistan near the border with Iran.

Through the Soviet occupation of the 1980s, the subsequent civil war and the Taliban's 1996-2001 regime, all went to Israel or moved to neighbouring former Soviet republics -- undoing a Jewish presence built up from the seventh century.

Only Simentov has been left behind, becoming by default the guardian of Kabul's empty synagogue.

The room where he receives visitors was once a prayer room for women. On the wall are pictures of Afghan President Hamid Karzai and the late ultra-orthodox Lubavitch rabbi, Menahem Scheerson.

Adjoining this room is the bare-walled "small synagogue" for men, where he prefers to pray.

Simentov, approaching 50, dislikes the "big synagogue" across the corridor -- another large and dirty room in which stands only a platform traditionally reserved for the rabbi.

A cupboard built into the wall faces Jerusalem. Its doors are open and it has been stripped of its treasure, a scroll of the Torah.

The precious document was stolen by a Taliban during the rule of the Islamist movement which was driven from government six years ago by a coalition led by the United States.

The man "wanted to sell it, thinking it was valuable," Simentov says in Dari, one of the main languages in Afghanistan. He says he reads Hebrew perfectly but prefers not to speak it.

"Today that Taliban is jailed at Guantanamo Bay and I am waiting for him to be freed so I can ask him to return the Tables of the Law," says Simentov.

Simentov's wife and two children are in Israel, which

he says he has not visited since 1998. "I have been the only Jew in Afghanistan for two years," he says. Ishaq Levin, the synagogue's former guardian, died from illness two years ago aged around 80.

Simentov says it is not easy to practise his religion alone. He has special permission from a rabbi in Tashkent, capital of neighbouring Uzbekistan, to slaughter his own meat in the kosher way that can normally only be done by a special rabbi.

# Kyodo News International

## Japanese editorial excerpts -3-

Saturday, September 22, 2007  
Dateline: TOKYO

Selected editorial excerpts from the Japanese press:

FLAK OVER U.N. RESOLUTION (IHT/Asahi as translated from the Japanese- language Asahi Shimbun's editorial published Sept. 21)

The issue of whether to continue the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling mission in the Indian Ocean has caused wide repercussions at the United Nations in New York. The controversy concerns a resolution to extend the operation of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan for one more year.

Since the ISAF was established in 2001, resolutions to continue its operations have been adopted unanimously every year. A similar resolution was expected this year.

However, this year's resolution included words of appreciation for countries participating in maritime interdiction activities in the Indian Ocean under the U.S.-led anti-terrorism effort called Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). The MSDF is a part of this operation.

Certainly, the ISAF was established with the aim of establishing peace in Afghanistan based on a clear U.N. resolution. But the OEF has a different origin. The United States initiated the OEF as a use of force in self-defense immediately after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and several countries joined later.

The attempt to include the irrelevant "appreciation" came in consideration of the political situation in Japan. Opposition Minshuto (Democratic Party of Japan), which recently gained numerical superiority in the Upper House, opposes any extension of the anti-terrorism special measures law, under which the MSDF vessels were dispatched. The main opposition party said the OEF is not based on a clear U.N. resolution.

To continue the mission, a U.N. resolution satisfying Minshuto would need to be drawn up. Under these circumstances, the Japanese government apparently approached the United States and others about the resolution.

The government has praised the U.N. resolution, saying the MSDF operation now has U.N. endorsement. But it does not change the legal basis of the OEF.

Both the ruling and opposition parties must remember the principle of the operation in Afghanistan, and think about what sort of contribution is suitable for Japan to improve the situation there. It is important to have substantive discussions on the issue.

When MSDF troops were to be dispatched in 2001, we supported the move with certain conditions, including that the dispatch be "within the scope of the Constitution."

However, the government has not disclosed details of the actual MSDF operation. Due to this lack of information, we have objected to an extension of the mission.

The government should start giving a detailed explanation of how Japan's refueling activities and other countries' operations in the Indian Ocean have specifically helped in the anti-terrorism efforts. There are also suspicions that MSDF vessels are refueling U.S. ships supporting operations in Iraq.

Effective contributions should be discussed based on local conditions only after the government provides such information. A decision on whether to continue the refueling activities can be made after that. There should be comprehensive discussions instead of moves to seek a token U.N. resolution. (Sept. 22)

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# Kyodo News International

## Japanese editorial excerpts

Saturday, September 22, 2007  
Dateline: TOKYO

Selected editorial excerpts from the Japanese press:

**DEBATES HIGHLIGHT TASKS THAT LAY AHEAD** (The Daily Yomiuri as translated from the Yomiuri Shimbun)

What should a new Liberal Democratic Party president do first? Are the two candidates running in the LDP presidential election fully prepared to inaugurate a new administration?

LDP presidential election debates following Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's resignation announcement ended with a debate session held at the Japan National Press Club in Tokyo on Friday. Through a series of debates between former Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda and LDP Secretary General Taro Aso, issues the new administration will need to deal with have been brought to the fore.

The biggest issue the new administration needs to tackle is rejuvenating the LDP following its humiliating defeat in the July House of Councillors election.

The LDP's resounding setback in prefectural districts in which one seat each was up for grabs drove the ruling parties' loss of their majority in the upper house. How will the new administration revise the structural reform policy line spearheaded by former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi to correct disparities between large cities and rural areas?

Also important for the new LDP president is what kind of relationship he should build in the Diet with the main opposition Democratic Party of Japan, which, along with the other opposition parties, now has a majority in the upper house.

Another issue is how the new administration will continue the Maritime Self- Defense Force's refueling mission in the Indian Ocean for U.S.-led antiterrorism operations in and around Afghanistan.

Both Fukuda and Aso stressed the importance of continuing the mission as a major pillar of Japan's international peace cooperation activities.

One of the reasons for the LDP's defeat in the upper house was a series of scandals regarding politics and money. The DPJ is poised to press the LDP on the matter by preparing a bill to revise the Political Funds Control Law that will oblige all political organizations to submit receipts for all expenses if they are 1 yen or more.

When asked what the most important quality the supreme leader in Japanese politics should have, Aso pointed out the "power to put up with being alone," while Fukuda cited "determination, especially when

the leader resigns." Fukuda also criticized Abe's timing in his decision to resign.

However, a leader cannot exercise leadership merely through attitude toward his duty. Leadership requires accurately explaining the state Japan is in, placing priority and presenting a timetable for policies to work on and steadily carrying them out.

During the debates, issues such as constitutional revision and education reform -- both fundamental matters of the state -- apparently receded into the background. However, these are critical issues that should never be neglected. (Sept. 22)

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# The Windsor Star

## Soldier takes strength from students' e-mails

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Page: A1 / FRONT

Section: News

Byline: Monica Wolfson

Dateline: TECUMSEH

Source: Windsor Star

Illustrations: Colour Photo: Dan Janisse, Star photo / PEN PALS: Canadian soldier Rodney Verkoeyen gets a hug Friday from students at D.M. Eagle school.

TECUMSEH - Letters from D.M. Eagle elementary school students kept Master Cpl. Rodney Verkoeyen motivated during his six-month tour of duty in Afghanistan this year.

Three weeks after returning home from the Canadian Armed Forces base in Kandahar, Verkoeyen, 42, met with his Grade 3 pen pals for a pizza lunch Friday.

The relationship with the school started at Christmas when Verkoeyen, who is stationed in Ottawa and has been in the Armed Forces for 25 years, came home for a visit. His sister asked him to speak to his nephew's then-Grade 2 class.

### 'UNCLE ROD'

The friendship between "Uncle Rod" and the 20 students continued with regular e-mail exchanges after Verkoeyen deployed in February. He returned to Canada in late August.

When Verkoeyen arrived Friday at the Tecumseh elementary school, he was cradling "Algonquin," a camouflage-dressed teddy bear. He told the students that he took the cuddly bear with him on three convoy trips to deliver supplies to the troops in the field.

"(The bear) was a little scared, but he did all right," Verkoeyen told the children. "We had no problems. He kept out a good eye."

One student asked if the bear stuck his head out the window while the truck did its deliveries.

"No, the windows are bulletproof glass," said Verkoeyen, who was the chief clerk at the Kandahar airfield base and arranged to rent trucks and buy supplies from local Afghan businesses.

During his time in Afghanistan, the children sent him one or two e-mails a week. Verkoeyen said he would read them to his military colleagues.

"When I got the first e-mail, it was really touching," he said. "It made me so happy to hear from the kids. It boosted my morale and that of my colleagues. The kids were wonderful. They'd tell me about what they were learning in school. They showed interest in what I was doing."

Nicholas Bistrev, 8, said he wrote to Verkoeyen about a bake sale and special events at school.

"It felt really good to write to an actual soldier

fighting in Afghanistan for Canada," Bistrev said.

Danica Kontic, 8, said Verkoeyen sent them Afghan-made candles.

During a question-and-answer period Friday, one child asked if Verkoeyen had ever been under attack.

"Yes, quite a few times," he said.

While he was vague with students, Verkoeyen's tour had tense moments, said his mother, Shirley Begley. There were rocket attacks lobbed into the base.

A potential suicide bomber approached one of the caravans he was riding in. And Verkoeyen's rotation had the highest death toll -- 22 dead Canadians -- of any rotation in the past few months.

Another student asked Verkoeyen if he caught any bad guys. He told the student that it wasn't his job, but bad guys were captured.

"It's not a bad country," he said. "There are good people. They just want change and we want to help them."

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# English News Service

## Major news items in leading Afghan newspapers

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Major news items in leading Afghan newspapers

KABUL, Sept. 22 (Xinhua) -- The following are major news items in Afghan leading newspapers on Saturday.

Arman-e-Millie:

-- Afghan President Hamid Karzai in his message on the World Peace Day observed Friday hoped for lasting peace in his country Afghanistan.

Outlook:

-- Another Dutch soldier was killed in Afghanistan's southern Uruzgan province Thursday, bringing the Dutch forces' fatalities to 11 in this post-Taliban nation.

Daily Afghanistan:

-- A Clash between the Taliban and the police in the northwestern Badghis province killed around a dozen from both sides on Thursday.

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# The New York Times

## AFGHAN BOMBING KILLS FRENCH SOLDIER

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Page: 6

Section: Foreign

Byline: By

Column: AFGHAN BOMBING KILLS FRENCH SOLDIER

Illustrations: PHOTO: A French soldier was killed yesterday in Kabul, Afghanistan's capital, when a suicide bomber detonated a device near a passing NATO convoy, officials said. The explosion damaged an armored vehicle in the convoy as well as other vehicles, including a taxi, at right, shattering an otherwise quiet day of prayer in the city. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TOMAS MUNITA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

NO TEXT

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# Agence France Presse (English)

## Suicide attack in Pakistan injures soldier

Saturday, September 22, 2007  
Section: International News  
Dateline: BAJAUR  
Time: 08:40:00 GMT  
Priority: Urgent

BAJAUR, Pakistan, Sept 22, 2007 (AFP) - A suicide bomber blew up his car near a Pakistani paramilitary convoy Saturday, wounding a soldier in the latest attack on security forces battling militants, officials said.

The convoy was heading from the northwestern city of Tank to Jandola town when the bomber detonated the explosives, a security official said, adding that the attacker's car was completely destroyed.

"The bomber's body parts have been recovered from the scene and a probe is under way," the official said.

In neighbouring Bajaur tribal district the authorities reported Saturday that a soldier and two women were killed in overnight attacks by pro-Taliban militants.

The paramilitary soldier died when mortars hit a camp in the Bajaur tribal district, and the women were killed when a mortar shell struck their house, local official Fazal Rabi told AFP.

He said two other soldiers were injured, as were six tribesmen.

Pakistani security forces have suffered a series of militant attacks and abductions that have claimed the lives of scores of troops since a government raid on the radical Red Mosque in Islamabad in July.

Fifteen soldiers were killed earlier this week and some of their bodies mutilated after a clash with rebels in the tribal area of North Waziristan.

Insurgents are still holding more than 200 soldiers who surrendered without firing a shot in neighbouring South Waziristan nearly three weeks ago.

Officials said around 25 soldiers were released late Friday after hectic negotiations between a government-backed tribal jirga and rebels in South Waziristan.

Pakistan has lost around 1,000 troops since 2002, when it deployed forces in the tribal belt to hunt Al-Qaeda-led militants who fled the US-led invasion that toppled Afghanistan's Taliban regime after the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States.

strs-tj/jw

Pakistan-Afghanistan-unrest

AFP 220840 GMT 09 07

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# The Globe And Mail

## Developments

Saturday, September 22, 2007  
Page: A21  
Section: International News  
Source: AP

U.S. Admiral William Fallon, head of U.S. Central Command, said yesterday that Iran's Revolutionary Guard is supplying insurgents in Afghanistan with roadside bomb parts for the type of sophisticated and deadly bombs found in Iraq known as explosively formed penetrators. Iran has denied supplying arms to fighters in Afghanistan, but NATO's International Security Assistance Force has said that three shipments of weapons emanating from Iran have been intercepted in Afghanistan since April. The latest was discovered in the western province of Farah on Sept. 6.

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# The Globe And Mail

## Canada must stay the course

Saturday, September 22, 2007  
Page: A24  
Section: Editorial

Canada cannot abandon Afghanistan. We have made a commitment to the Afghan people and to the international community, and if we believe the governing structures there can be stabilized, we are obliged to stay on ethical, humanitarian and practical grounds that relate to our own national security interests and those of our allies. Canada therefore must make clear to its NATO partners, and to the Afghan people, that it has no intention of quitting Afghanistan until the job is done. Since the job will not be done by February 2009, the expiration date for the current mission in Kandahar, Prime Minister Stephen Harper should affirm a commitment to remaining in Afghanistan beyond 2009 - and call a vote to that effect this year. It is time for the Prime Minister to unambiguously sell the necessity of the mission to Canadians. It is time to end the notion that Canada is withdrawing from Afghanistan. To do less, to wait and see, is unfair to the Afghans and represents a failure of leadership.

There is a strong case for extending the deployment of Canada's troops in Kandahar itself. It is a dangerous place. It is also a place where this country, through the bravery and sacrifice of its soldiers, has been able to make a difference in the world. Kandahar is the front line in the fight for Afghanistan's future and the war on terror. It is in places like Kandahar that the old Afghanistan of the Taliban not only defiled the Afghan people but incubated terrorism spread around the globe. It is in such places that the new Afghanistan must be built. Kandahar is an important mission.

But the decision to remain in Kandahar is ultimately a decision for the Parliament of Canada. The mission has been weakened by the Prime Minister's inability to maintain bipartisan support - manifest in the astonishing climb-down of Liberal Leader Stéphane Dion, who is ignoring his party's lead role in sending Canadian troops to Kandahar in the first place in order to portray Mr. Harper as a George W. Bush clone. Mr. Dion is capitalizing on the Conservative government's own failure to explain to Canadians why it is important for our troops to be there. For many people, the loss of 70 soldiers is an extremely high price to pay. It is Mr. Harper's job to persuade them that the sacrifice is worthwhile, that stability can be won in Afghanistan and the West made safe. The Prime Minister must do more in Parliament, and in the country, for this mission.

If we are boxed in politically, there is another option for Canada: redeployment elsewhere within Afghanistan. Contrary to what Mr. Dion implies, Canada's presence in Afghanistan is not the product of Harper unilateralism, but is the fulfilment of a multilateral commitment. Canada is on the ground as part of a NATO mission operating under a United

Nations mandate. Afghanistan is not Iraq. It would be regrettable, but if politically absolutely necessary Canada could announce its intention to end the Kandahar mission in February 2009 and declare its availability to take up another assignment in Afghanistan - one involving an ongoing substantial commitment of troops.

If Canada is to remain in Kandahar, it must be contingent on its NATO allies also doing their part. This is not our fight alone. Here, Canada has leverage it can use on countries like France, which have so far acted largely as cheerleaders. France is a big country. It is, at least on paper, a powerful country. Yet it has only one-third as many troops in Afghanistan as Canada. Its new president, Nicolas Sarkozy, is more inclined to support NATO and value the transatlantic alliance than his predecessors. That support needs to be tested. Pressure must also be brought to bear on Germany, Italy and Spain.

Canada should remain true to its own commitment to the Afghan people. As part of next month's Throne Speech, the government should announce its intention to retain a sizable force of Canadian troops in Afghanistan until 2011, and to hold a vote on such an extension within this calendar year.

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# The Globe And Mail

## Developments

Saturday, September 22, 2007  
Page: A21  
Section: International News  
Source: AP

Six civilians, including women and children, died in a separate battle in Helmand province's Gereshk region on Wednesday after Taliban militants fled fighting with NATO forces and sought shelter in the civilians' homes, the region's district chief said. Civilians deaths from U.S. and NATO military action have become a major issue in Afghanistan this year. President Hamid Karzai has repeatedly pleaded with international forces to halt such casualties.

Afghan civilian deaths have declined since several incidents earlier in the summer. Wednesday's deaths appear to be the first since early August.

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# The Globe And Mail

## Developments

Saturday, September 22, 2007  
Page: A21  
Section: International News  
Source: AP

Heavy fighting in the south killed about 75 Taliban militants in the past 48 hours, the U.S.-led coalition said. On Wednesday, NATO launched a new operation in Helmand province, the world's largest poppy-growing region, which has seen the heaviest fighting in Afghanistan this year. Air strikes were called in against "anti-coalition militants" in the Garmsir district early yesterday, killing about 40 fighters, the coalition said. Soldiers found more than 20 rocket-propelled grenades, ammunition and land mines in the militants' compound, it said.

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# The Globe And Mail

## Canada can't find 50 Afghan detainees

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Page: A1

Section: National News

Byline: Graeme Smith

Dateline: KANDAHAR, AFGHANISTAN

Illustrations: Illustration

KANDAHAR, AFGHANISTAN -- Canada still can't account for at least 50 prisoners it captured and turned over to Afghan authorities, several sources say, frustrating efforts to put to rest concerns the detainees were subject to torture.

Canadian sources offered a benign explanation for their disappearance, blaming the Afghans' shoddy record-keeping and suggesting the detainees have likely returned safely to their homes.

Prisoners often buy their freedom from Afghanistan's corrupt jails, which may also explain the lack of records. The Canadians say they have not received any indication the missing detainees ran into trouble inside Afghan jails.

Still, officials familiar with Kandahar's medieval justice system say the Canadians must not dismiss the possibility of foul play.

"There are lots of possible explanations for how people get lost in the detention system," a Western official said. "Some are benign, others much less so."

After stories of torture were published in *The Globe and Mail* this year, Ottawa asked for a full accounting of the approximately 200 people transferred by Canadian forces into Afghan custody before May 3.

Detainees transferred after May 3 have been monitored under a deal struck in reaction to uproar over the issue, but the Canadians were also anxious to know about the earlier transfers. Sending detainees into places where they face abuse or torture might constitute a violation of the Geneva Conventions.

Months later, however, a quarter of those 200 detainees remain missing, neither listed as released nor still in custody.

Canada's own diplomatic reporting has already warned of complaints that captives are sometimes killed inside Afghan prisons.

"Extrajudicial executions, disappearances, torture and detention without trial are all too common," a report last year said.

Those problems have persisted in Kandahar. Provincial police chief Sayed Agha Saqib says he arrested 67 of his own uniformed officers in the past three months, on charges ranging from corruption to kidnapping and extrajudicial execution.

The most spectacular of these arrests was a sweep in August that rounded up 33 members of a rogue police

unit on the main highway west of Kandahar city, he said.

Two of the unit's commanders were arrested in Kabul at the same time and one remains at large.

All of the captured police have been transferred to custody in neighbouring Helmand province so their local allies can't help them escape, Chief Saqib said. Alongside the arrests, he said, his men discovered the rogue officers had been operating a small private jail in the northern slums of Kandahar city.

"They were corrupt, killing people and taking bribes," the police chief said.

He says he isn't aware of any other private jails operating in Kandahar, though the city is full of rumours about them. An Interior Ministry source recently named two warlords he suspects of holding prisoners in the same slum, Loy Wiyala.

This spring, a convicted Taliban prisoner at Kandahar's main jail said in an interview that he was arrested by local police in Maywand district and bundled into a Toyota Landcruiser that took him to an unofficial jail in the city, where he was tortured for days before being transferred to an official jail at the headquarters of the National Directorate for Security.

The idea of people disappearing in custody is not unusual for ordinary Afghans, who have learned to fear the police almost as much as the Taliban.

Haji Shaista Gul, 48, a wealthy landowner who lives west of Kandahar city, said his younger brother, Sher Mohammed, was arrested by the same rogue police unit described by the police chief.

The landowner sent his brother to water the family's grape vines near the main highway on May 12, when a roadside bomb exploded and killed five policemen. The surviving officers quickly captured two people standing nearby: Mr. Mohammed and his friend, Jema Gul.

When the older brother learned what had happened, he made frantic efforts to discover where his sibling was detained. It turned out to be a complicated job, he said, because Mr. Mohammed was not held at any of the legitimate jails in the city.

When the landowner finally managed to secure his brother's release, he heard that the younger man and Jema Gul had been taken with their faces covered to a mud-walled house somewhere in Loy Wiyala, and

thrown into the basement together. Nobody else was held there, and although they occasionally saw men in police uniforms, they also had visits from children who wandered into their makeshift cell and looked at them curiously. The private jail was apparently a room in a family home.

Although Mr. Mohammed was released, Jema Gul was not fortunate enough to have a rich brother looking for him. His mutilated body was discovered in a canal on May 29.

"The skin was falling off him," said the landowner, who saw the body at the morgue. "His neck was cut, and it looked like they cut him with knives all over his body."

The fact that the police unit involved in the killing has now been arrested does little to reassure him that this sort of thing won't happen again.

"These problems will belong to the Canadians in the end," he said.

"You have friendships with killers."

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The landowner sent his brother to water the family's grape vines near the main highway on May 12, when a roadside bomb exploded and killed five policemen. The surviving officers quickly captured two people standing nearby: Mr. Mohammed and his friend, Jema Gul.

When the older brother learned what had happened, he made frantic efforts to discover where his sibling was detained. It turned out to be a complicated job, he said, because Mr. Mohammed was not held at any of the legitimate jails in the city.

When the landowner finally managed to secure his brother's release, he heard that the younger man and Jema Gul had been taken with their faces covered to a mud-walled house somewhere in Loy Wiyala, and thrown into the basement together. Nobody else was held there, and although they occasionally saw men in police uniforms, they also had visits from children who wandered into their makeshift cell and looked at them curiously. The private jail was apparently a room in a family home.

Although Mr. Mohammed was released, Jema Gul was not fortunate enough to have a rich brother looking for him. His mutilated body was discovered in a canal on May 29.

"The skin was falling off him," said the landowner, who saw the body at the morgue. "His neck was cut, and it looked like they cut him with knives all over his body."

The fact that the police unit involved in the killing has now been arrested does little to reassure him that this sort of thing won't happen again.

"These problems will belong to the Canadians in the end," he said.

"You have friendships with killers."

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# National Post

## Still seeking clarity on Afghanistan; Federal leaders continue to quibble about Canada's role

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Page: A6

Section: Canada

Byline: Don Martin

Column: Don Martin

Dateline: OTTAWA

Source: National Post

Illustrations: Black & White Photo: Finbarr O'reilly, Reuters / Canada's 500-day countdown to its mission-ending deadline starts this weekend but the issue of what comes next is not entirely clear.

Many Canadian soldiers were pledging a return to Afghanistan even before they left the last lethal rotation, tempted as much by combat pay premiums of about \$3,000 a month as by the mission's merits.

This weekend starts Canada's 500-day countdown to its mission-ending February 2009 deadline. That sounds like a long way off, except next week also marks Stephen Harper's 600th day as Prime Minister and he still calls his government "new".

But while those who actually go to ground in the war zone are locking in their combat-or-coverage intentions, federal leaders still quibble in circular rhetoric on what role, if any, Canada will play as it seeks a retreat with honour from the Kandahar battlefield.

This week could have brought clarity on three fronts. Instead matters only got muddier.

Defence Minister Peter Mac-Kay did a grin-and-go tour of our chicken-clucking allies in Europe, trying to scare up combat replacements for our troops this week from among those who deploy their soldiers for sunbathing duty in northern regions.

He returned without a hint of help, left to sniffle about rolling out the red carpet for terrorism if we withdraw, while taking some increasingly cheap shots at the Liberal letdown of an under-equipped military that's been his party's responsibility for 20 months.

Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier tried to be heard over hecklers at a Montreal luncheon crowd this week as he declared that "Canada cannot, without losing all credibility in the international arena, simply go back on its word and abandon such a crucial mission."

Funny, then, how our 600-day prime minister still can't articulate how Canada can pull back from the mission politically without appearing to cut-and-run militarily.

Of course, there are a couple of strategic reasons the Conservatives are deliberately waffling over a new "configuration" of our duties in Afghanistan.

They didn't want to go hawkish on the eve of last Monday's by-elections in Quebec. And they hope their vagaries will lure the Liberals into a boxed

position, letting them define themselves into trouble while the success or failure of the mission remains uncertain.

The Liberals, of course, will have nothing to do with clarifying their position.

Liberal leader Stephane Dion ended his very bad week by delivering his party's foreign policy, a world where Canada would be guided by multilateral accords and peace would derive magically from "non-violent conflict resolution" --just the sort of Pollyanna view of war you'd expect from a guy who learned about counter-insurgency conflict from libraries instead of LAVs.

Given that Afghanistan will be the defining foreign policy question of our time, Mr. Dion could have done better than pledge to serve notice of our military pullout in 16 months, followed by some sort of humanitarian or redevelopment role.

How Canada could deliver effective help without a thick security blanket is beyond me. Whenever Canada's reconstruction troops venture out into the villages of Kandahar province, they are under heavy military escort. Even then, they spend a good deal of their time trapped on base due to security problems outside the walls.

If nobody replaces us militarily, what little security exists will deteriorate and Canada's ability to deliver even a bag of rice or shovels will be compromised.

Mr. Dion did land one fine punch, however, although it's probably too obscure for most voters to appreciate.

"There will not be three to four times as many Defence Public Affairs Officers in Kandahar as there are Canadian International Development Agency personnel, as is the case today," he pledged. That's a killer observation because it's so true that Canada's mostly bad military spokesmen outnumber good government samaritans over there.

But as realistic Afghanistan policy, the Liberals continue to falter and the Conservatives persist in wavering with no date for a debate or decision in the offing.

The Senlis Council, a think tank founded by Canadian Norine MacDonald, will put forward a new



idea on Monday.

Despite its small size, it offers about the only bear-witness independent take of how Canada functions in Kandahar. And while it applauds our military deployment, it will call on Canada to work with Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai on a peace process that would include negotiations with the political arm of the Taliban.

Mr. Harper supporting peace talks with the Taliban assassins of 69 Canadian soldiers? Not bloody likely. But at least it's a different and radical idea coming from people with ties to the region. That's refreshingly different from talk by politicians who only have eyes for re-election. [dmartin@nationalpost.com](mailto:dmartin@nationalpost.com)

# The Canadian Press - Broadcast News

## Bloc-Throne-Speech

Saturday, September 22, 2007  
Section: General And National News

OTTAWA -- The Bloc Quebecois may be ready to vote against the upcoming throne speech, increasing the possibility of a general election this fall.

In a speech to be delivered to Bloc members today in Rimouski, party leader Gilles Duceppe outlines five conditions the Conservative government will find almost impossible to accept.

Those conditions include eliminating all federal spending powers in provincial jurisdictions and respecting the Kyoto protocol.

The Bloc also wants a clear commitment Canadian soldiers will leave Afghanistan when the current mission ends in February 2009.

Duceppe reiterates several times during the speech that he's ready to adopt a hardline position which could send Canadians to the polls before the holidays.

The Commons resumes sitting October 16th.

The pressure will be on the Liberals or the N-D-P to support the Conservatives -- if they don't want the government to lose the vote on the throne speech.

Since the Tories were elected in January 2006, the Bloc has helped the government survive three confidence votes, including two on federal budgets.

Current standings in the 308-seat Commons are: Conservatives 126; Liberals 96; Bloc 49, NDP 30; three Independents and four vacancies.

(The Canadian Press)

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# The Daily Telegraph

## The making of the world's most dangerous country

Saturday, September 22, 2007  
Page: 025  
Byline: Simon Scott Plummer

Deception: Pakistan, the United States and the Global Nuclear Weapons Conspiracy

Adrian Levy and Catherine Scott-Clark

586pp, Atlantic Books, pounds 25

T pounds 23 (plus pounds 1.25 p&p) 0870 428 4112

Pakistan has a strong claim to be the most dangerous country in the world, or, as the authors of *Deception* more elegantly put it, "the epicentre of global instability". Tension with India has persisted since the British acceded to the partition of the jewel in their imperial crown in 1947. It has resulted in three wars, the last, in 1971, causing East Pakistan, now Bangladesh, to secede. And although talks have been held and confidence-building measures taken, the problem of Kashmir is still intractable.

Since its detonation of five devices in May 1998, Pakistan has been a recognised nuclear power. Earlier that month, India under a new Hindu nationalist government, had conducted a hot test, its first since 1974; Nawaz Sharif, the Pakistani prime minister, declared that a matching response was a matter of national survival.

After the response was made, one of the scientists, Samar Mubarakmand, said: "Our life expectancy is 122nd in the world; in literacy we are 162nd ... Now in nuclear weapons we are seventh in the world." His remark illustrates perfectly Pakistan's inferiority complex as a nation which has failed in the basic task of development and is overawed by India.

There are good grounds for arguing that the possession of nuclear weapons by both of these uneasy neighbours strengthens stability in the subcontinent: strike and counter-strike would be so catastrophic that the government on each side would collapse. However, Pakistan prides itself on having created a Bomb for the worldwide Muslim ummah or community, and has been a notorious proliferator, notably through the agency of Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan.

It is the rise and eclipse of this extraordinary man that is the thread of this third book by Adrian Levy and Catherine Scott-Clark. In 1992, Nawaz Sharif dubbed A Q Khan "Father of the Bomb". *Deception* reminds us that this sobriquet belongs to Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, whose daughter, Benazir, is now trying to return to politics.

It was Bhutto senior who invited Khan back from Europe, where he worked for the British/Dutch/German consortium Urenco on a centrifugal method for enriching uranium. Having

stolen the blueprints, Khan returned to Pakistan in 1974 and was set to work. By the time Bhutto was hanged by General Muhammed Zia ul-Haq in 1979, Khan, with Chinese help, had succeeded in enriching uranium. Shortly before his execution, Bhutto wrote: "We know that Israel and South Africa have full nuclear capability. The Christian, Jewish and Hindu civilisations have this capability. The Communist powers also possess it. Only the Islamic civilisation was without it, but that was about to change."

By the time of his death, the entire programme was in military hands, where it has remained. The authors give the lie to Musharraf's claim that the export of nuclear technology to Iran, North Korea, Libya, Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Sudan was all the work of renegade scientists. Indeed, they quote Benazir as telling them that General Mirza Aslam Beg, chief of army staff, advocated its sale to raise money for rebels in Kashmir. They conclude that the trade has gone on under Musharraf, despite his sacking of Khan.

It might well have been impossible to stop Pakistan getting the bomb. What is incontrovertible, and painstakingly documented in this book, is the blind eye turned by successive American administrations, from Carter to Bush, to the country's nuclear programme. Washington has rightly deemed Pakistan an essential ally, first after the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979, then after al-Qa'eda, which was based in that country, attacked America in 2001. Non-proliferation goals have been sacrificed to more immediate concerns.

However, the resurgence of the Taliban and the failure to capture Osama bin Laden cast doubts on that alliance, for reasons extensively rehearsed by Levy and Scott-Clark, from the jihadist tendencies of members of the military and intelligence services to the likely presence of bin Laden and Mullah Omar, his one-time protector, in Pakistan.

The authors offer a tightly written case for considering Jinnah's state to be uniquely dangerous. And they throw valuable light on the figures - Musharraf, Bhutto and Sharif - now jockeying for position. Anyone interested in South Asia and the wider subject of nuclear proliferation - or who simply enjoys a gripping tale - should read their book.

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# Times Colonist (Victoria)

## Dion not dead yet despite setbacks; The federal Liberal leader still has a chance to bring his party back to contention

Saturday, September 22, 2007  
Page: A14  
Section: Comment  
Source: Times Colonist

Federal Liberal Leader Stéphane Dion is taking a lot of heat from his party over its embarrassing results in three recent byelections. Those critics are missing the point: It's the party as a whole that Canadians are rejecting, not just Dion, and he still has an opportunity to get the Grits back on track.

and move ahead.

Voters can have notoriously short memories, but their anger at the previous Liberal administration -- first under Jean Chrétien, then Paul Martin -- still lingers.

Between Shawinigate, Adscam and the Human Resources Development Canada scandal, the Liberals came to be known as ethically challenged profligate spenders who weren't above a few political dirty tricks. It's not easy to leave a reputation like that behind.

And although he has a reputation as being smart, serious and dedicated, Dion also carries his own baggage. His English-language skills didn't seem that bad at first, but they have not improved with time. His appeal in Quebec is questionable. He can come across as downright dull.

And -- most importantly -- his idea of a Liberal platform seems to consist largely of opposing whatever the Conservatives are doing.

This is where Dion has a chance to bring the Liberals back from the edge, before the calls for his head from within the party grow too loud to ignore. He has to strike the party out in a new direction, with clearly defined objectives that have nothing to do with what the other parties are saying.

The party itself must close ranks around him, and make it clear in the public's mind that Dion is and will remain leader of the party. With four byelections coming up in B.C., Saskatchewan and Ontario -- assuming a general election isn't called first -- the Liberals will have an opportunity to put the Quebec losses behind them. But it's vital that Dion's former rivals for the leadership, Bob Rae and Michael Ignatieff, give Dion their public and private support.

It's about a lot more than personality, which seems to be what many of Dion's critics are focussing on. If that were the case, Stephen Harper would be last in the polls. Harper's success has come from being clearly in charge, even if -- as in the case of the Afghanistan mission -- he hasn't been very clear on where he's going.

If Dion can take clear charge of the Liberals and elucidate a clear direction for the party, he has a chance for a comeback. The party should support him

# Winnipeg Free Press

## Afghanistan battles kill 75 Taliban

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Page: A14

Section: World Wire

KABUL, Afghanistan -- Heavy battles punctuated by air strikes killed 75 suspected Taliban and at least six civilians in Afghanistan's south, while a U.S. official on Friday accused Iran of supplying roadside bomb components to insurgents to get American soldiers "out of the region."

Admiral William Fallon said Iran is providing development assistance in western Afghanistan, which he labelled helpful.

But he also said Iran's Revolutionary Guard is supplying roadside bomb parts for the type of sophisticated and deadly bombs known as "explosively formed penetrators."

U.S. officials have repeatedly accused Iran of supplying EFPs to insurgents in Iraq as well.

"The Iranians are clearly supplying some amount of lethal aid," Fallon told The Associated Press. "There is no doubt... that agents from Iran are involved in aiding the insurgency."

Iran has denied that it is supplying arms to fighters in Afghanistan.

Fallon said Iran is trying to ensure that it has a role in the region's politics.

"And I think they put a priority on causing us as much frustration as they can," he said. "I think it's all aimed at embarrassing us and one of their long-standing aims is getting us out of the region."

NATO's International Security Assistance Force has said that three shipments of weapons emanating from Iran have been intercepted in Afghanistan since spring. The latest was intercepted in the western province of Farah on Sept. 6.

-- The Associated Press

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# Edmonton Journal

## New foreign affairs minister tears into Dion's Afghan stance; Bernier defends Canada's 'policy of respect' toward U.S. policies

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Page: A6

Section: News

Byline: Mike Blanchfield

Dateline: OTTAWA

Source: Ottawa Citizen; CanWest News Service

Illustrations: Colour Photo: Journal Stock / (Maxime) Bernier

OTTAWA - The Conservative government has no lessons to learn from Stephane Dion and his fellow Liberals on the conduct of Canada's international relations, Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier said Friday.

In his first interview since assuming his new portfolio, Bernier shot back at the Liberal leader's widespread and scathing criticism of Conservative foreign policy during a speech earlier this week.

While Bernier did not hesitate to wade into a fight with his domestic political opponents, he treaded carefully through the international political minefield, clearly determined to avoid any rookie stumbles in his new role as Canada's top diplomat.

Barely a month on the job and fresh from fending off a series of vocal hecklers at this first major speech earlier this week, Bernier makes his international debut at the United Nations General Assembly, next week where he said he would have upwards of two dozen bilateral meetings. Pushing through a resolution condemning Iran's human rights record will be a major priority, an issue that has occupied past Liberal governments as well as the Conservatives ever since the murder of Montreal photojournalist Zahra Kazemi in a Tehran prison four years ago.

Speaking in English from his Beauce, Que., riding, Bernier offered few clues on when the Conservatives would bring a vote on Canada's future military involvement in Afghanistan before Parliament.

He also tiptoed around the upcoming elections in Pakistan, the possible return of former leader Benazir Bhutto, and the unrest the ballot could spark in the region.

But Bernier did not hesitate to slam Dion, after the Liberal leader assailed the Tories' conduct of the mission in Afghanistan and lambasted them for being too cosy with the American political right.

Bernier accused Dion and the Liberals of flip-flopping on the deployment of troops to Kandahar and for souring relations with the U.S. while in power.

"Don't forget, it's the Liberal government -- and Dion was part of that -- who decided to go to Afghanistan without any vote in Parliament," Bernier said, referring to the previous Liberal government decision in 2005 to deploy combat troops to Kandahar.

The Liberals are calling for an end to combat operations by February 2009.

"It's always like that with the Liberals. One day it's one thing, one day it's something else."

Bernier also took issue with Dion's characterization that the Harper Conservatives have formed an "ideological kinship" with the American political right that does not serve Canada's interests.

"Our policy with the U.S., it's a policy of respect. If we don't agree on certain files, we don't agree. And we agree not to agree. We have a good relationship with the U.S. We have a respectful relationship with them," Bernier said.

"That's the Liberal government, who had a position that was against Canadian interests with the U.S. in the past," he added. "So I don't think we have any lessons to learn from Mr. Dion."

Bernier would not say when the Conservatives would decide what shape Canada's military role might take after February 2009.

# The Toronto Star

## Afghan women seek justice; Ending their silence, protesters demand that Kabul probe atrocities stemming from decades of conflict

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Page: AA01

Section: World And Comment

Byline: Bruce Campion-Smith

Source: Toronto Star

Illustrations: BRUCE CAMPION-SMITH Toronto Star Wira Darwishi, 42, left, and Noveed, 23, recently joined an unprecedented protest to press the Kabul government to probe the fate of missing loved ones.

Wira Darwishi's sad brown eyes betray decades of worry and questions.

More than 20 years ago, three members of her family - a brother, uncle and cousin - vanished. For years, Darwishi wondered silently about their fate.

But this Kabul woman and hundreds like her are silent no more.

In a remarkable move, Darwishi and some 100 other women of all ages demonstrated outside the United Nations office here last month, clutching pictures of loved ones - mostly husbands and sons - who have gone missing in Afghanistan's decades of conflict.

The mass graves being found around the country - three alone in the last two months - hint at the fate of many of them.

"Thousands of people in Afghanistan lost their loved ones," Darwishi said in an interview.

"During these years, they are just thinking that they will return back to their families and they cannot accept that they are killed," she said.

These are courageous women, taking on not only a government that seems unwilling to tackle the country's dark history, but also the very warlords accused of atrocities, some of whom now sit in parliament.

Darwishi has about 200 women in her fledgling victims' group but knows that the fear of reprisals is keeping many others silent.

"They know all over Kabul and all around Afghanistan there are these criminals," she said.

"If the international community supports us with this action, then I am sure there will be thousands of people around Afghanistan who will have their voice with us," she said through an interpreter.

As Afghanistan struggles with the present, it is also haunted by its past, a legacy of violent regimes dating back to 1978 that included communist rule and Soviet occupation, a bitter civil war and the religious crackdown under the Taliban.

In a 2005 report titled "Bloodstained Hands," Human Rights Watch said documenting serious atrocities committed in the 1980s and 1990s "will not fit within the covers of a book; it will fill bookshelves. The

two-decade period was marked by widespread human rights abuses, war crimes and crimes against humanity."

Now victims of those atrocities are demanding answers. In the words of one United Nations official here, the demonstration by the women was "stunning."

"Success in 'transitional justice' depends upon the ability of victims to demand justice. That was an amazing development - I think it's a great achievement," said Javier Leon-Diaz, a human rights officer with the United Nations assistance mission in Afghanistan.

It evoked memories of the Mothers of Srebrenica, who sought answers about the disappearance of 8,000 Muslim men and boys at the hands of Bosnian Serb forces, and Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, who pressed to learn the fate of their children who vanished during the 1976-83 dictatorship in Argentina.

There's been no response from President Hamid Karzai's government to the demonstration. But it casts a spotlight on the growing push from Afghan residents to discover the fate of their loved ones.

And it's a search with a Canadian connection. Ottawa is providing money and much-appreciated staff expertise to the United Nations mission, which is spearheading "transitional justice" efforts, diplomatic lingo for the process to confront the violent past.

But getting to the truth here won't be easy. For starters, while Karzai's government has formally adopted a plan to implement a transitional justice plan, which includes a vetting system meant to keep accused war criminals out of office, there's been little real progress.

"The Afghan government is not all to blame. I think there is not enough pressure put on the Afghan government and on President Karzai by the international community," said one foreign official who is active on the file.

"The attitude of the international community is that it is too soon, that vetting current office-holders or prosecution could destabilize the country and therefore shouldn't be pushed too hard."

The country lacks the sophisticated forensic capability needed to exhume mass graves. UN

experts have done preliminary examinations of a few sites but a full excavation would require a formal invitation from Karzai's government, something that's not been forthcoming.

Add to that the fact that there's not one single regime accused of the atrocities but several, dating back to before the Soviet invasion in 1979. The victims of one era became the accused of the next. And now, human rights advocates say, some of those perpetrators sit in the Afghan parliament or serve in senior government positions.

International observers concede Afghanistan's rudimentary justice system just isn't up the task of fairly prosecuting accused war criminals.

"It is now widely recognized that there cannot be peace without justice," Leon-Diaz said in an interview at the UN compound in Kabul.

"That said, the current status of the judiciary in Afghanistan does not allow for domestic trials for war crimes or crimes against humanity. International fair trial standards cannot be observed at this stage," he said.

Still, Noveed, 23, said it angers her to see alleged criminals sitting in parliament.

"We wish that all the ones who did these crimes in Afghanistan should be jailed and judged," said Noveed, who doesn't have a last name.

"Whenever I see the faces of mujahideen criminals, I'm getting so angry and really so sad, not only me but there are many, many other families who have lost their beloveds during these regimes," she said in an interview.

Her aunt and uncle were the victims of a military raid on their house to steal their belongings. Her uncle tried to prevent the attack.

"They hit him too much and he died," she said.

Meanwhile, Darwishi's brother Ibrahim was seized along with two classmates in 1979 from Kabul's college. He was engaged and his fiancée waited 15 years before marrying someone else.

Her uncle, a retired military officer, was seized from his farm and kept in jail for six months before disappearing. His son, an air force technician, was taken too.

"These are the three lost ones. We have no information. It's been 27, 28 years," she said.

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# The Ottawa Citizen

## Bernier takes few cues from Liberals on Canada's role abroad; Minister rebuffs Dion's criticism of Tories' foreign policy

Saturday, September 22, 2007  
Page: A3  
Section: News  
Byline: Mike Blanchfield  
Source: The Ottawa Citizen

The Conservative government has no lessons to learn from Stéphane Dion and the Liberals on the conduct of Canada's international relations, Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier said yesterday.

In his first interview since assuming his new portfolio, Mr. Bernier shot back at the Liberal leader's widespread and scathing criticism of Conservative foreign policy during a speech earlier this week.

While Mr. Bernier did not hesitate to wade into a fight with his domestic political opponents, he treaded carefully through the international political minefield, clearly determined to avoid any rookie stumbles in his new role as Canada's top diplomat.

Barely a month on the job and fresh from fending off a series of vocal hecklers at his first major speech earlier this week, Mr. Bernier makes his international debut at the United Nations General Assembly next week, where he said he would have about two dozen bilateral meetings.

Speaking in English from his Beauce, Que., riding, Mr. Bernier offered few clues on when the Conservatives would bring a vote on Canada's future military involvement in Afghanistan before Parliament.

He also tiptoed around the upcoming elections in Pakistan, the possible return of former leader Benazir Bhutto, and the unrest the ballot could spark in the region.

But Mr. Bernier did not hesitate to slam Mr. Dion, after the Grit leader assailed the Tories' conduct of the mission in Afghanistan and lambasted them for being too cozy with the American political right.

Mr. Bernier accused the Liberals of flip-flopping on the deployment of troops to Kandahar and for souring relations with the U.S. while in power.

Mr. Bernier also took issue with Mr. Dion's characterization that the Tories have formed an "ideological kinship" with the American political right that does not serve Canada's interests.

"Our policy with the U.S., it's a policy of respect. If we don't agree on certain files, we don't agree. And we agree not to agree," Mr. Bernier said.

"That's the Liberal government, who had a position that was against Canadian interests with the U.S. in the past," he added. "So I don't think we have any

lessons to learn from Mr. Dion."

Mr. Bernier said he would continue to push for support of the international mission in Afghanistan, but he would not say when the Conservatives would decide what form Canada's military role might take after February 2009.

"We will have discussion at the cabinet table. After that, it will be Parliament that will take the decision."

# The Leader-Post (Regina)

## Bloc threatens to topple Tories

Saturday, September 22, 2007  
Page: B8  
Section: News  
Source: CanWest News Service

Fresh from a stinging byelection loss, the Bloc Quebecois has released a defiant list of demands of Stephen Harper's Conservative government -- including that the Tories announce a firm end to Canada's mission in Afghanistan in next month's throne speech.

The list, including the "non-negotiable" Afghanistan condition, has raised the possibility that the Conservatives' minority government could be defeated when it returns to the House of Commons.

The demands were released Friday by the Bloc, according to a CTV News report.

The Conservative government will make its throne speech on Oct. 16.

Should the opposition parties all vote against it, the minority Tory government would be defeated, setting up a fall election.

NDP Leader Jack Layton and Liberal Leader Stephane Dion have both previously said they won't support a Tory throne speech.

According to CTV, the Bloc's wish list also calls on the federal government to:

- Eliminate all federal spending powers in provincial jurisdictions;
- Respect the Kyoto Protocol;
- Provide aid for workers in the ailing forest industry; and
- Come through with changes to supply management for dairy farmers.

In Quebec byelections Monday, the Tories took Roberval-Lac-Saint-Jean, a longtime Bloc stronghold, and came close to taking a second riding, Saint-Hyacinthe-Bagot.

In another riding, Outremont, the NDP took a seat from the Liberals.

# The Toronto Star

## PM needs new tack on Afghanistan

Saturday, September 22, 2007  
Page: A20  
Section: News

Ottawa Stephen Harper wisely changed his defence minister this summer. Unwisely, his government is hesitating to change the Afghanistan channel this fall.

Peter MacKay, Gordon O'Connor's younger, more media-savvy replacement, is mouthing a familiar sound bite as he pleads for support. Reduced to its essence, the new defence minister is saying now what George W. Bush said before toppling governments first in Kabul, then Baghdad: Fighting them over there keeps us safe over here.

That the argument is suspect is no longer the point. Watching complex plots unfold in two war zones is creating a more sophisticated North American audience. Few today believe, as many did after the Taliban fled and Saddam Hussein fell, that decisive military victories are still possible.

Generals now compete with academics for airtime to argue for political solutions. Accepting that accommodation is necessary is not just a tonal adjustment, it alters the picture. Demonizing future negotiating partners no longer makes any more sense, or is any more convincing, than attacking the patriotism of those who question the mission.

Facing a debate and a decision on Canada's combat role after February 2009, this government needs to fast-forward its rhetoric to catch up to shifting reality. Canadians who knew next to nothing about Afghanistan in 2001 now know too much about the region to risk more lives and billions on the strength of the simplistic notion that killing Taliban insurgents will stop terrorism incubating.

Along with forgetting history and ignoring that extremists have many other nesting options - Al Qaeda festers in Africa's horn 20 years after embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania - the Conservative argument skips too lightly over what Canadians have learned since Liberals first sent troops to Afghanistan.

Endemic corruption, a booming opium trade and the duplicity of allies who leave borders open to enemies have stripped away the good versus evil illusions. At home, it has become patently obvious the mission has layers of motives stacking from reassuring Washington that Ottawa is serious about security to the military remaking its peacekeeping image as it rearms.

Each element has a place in a public debate that to be complete must also include an unflinching look in the mirror. If politicians can find enough courage to face the reflection, Canadians will discover that, along with imperfections, there are notable improvements. A mission dominated by the military but marketed as

combining the three Ds of defence, development and diplomacy is glacially morphing into a broader, more disciplined effort that accepts generals have agendas and writing aid cheques doesn't guarantee measurable improvements in impoverished lives.

That's progress. So is recognition that reconstructing failed states is painfully slow work with uncertain results. Six years of watching the grimmest reality TV has better prepared Canadians to answer questions about what they are willing to do for Afghanistan when the current commitment ends.

Harper and his ministers need to make two new candid arguments in favour of a continuing role. More time is needed to find a political compromise, one that inevitably includes the Taliban and excludes Al Qaeda. And development will continue in the north only as long as the military contains most of the insurgency in the south.

Along with moving the debate from fantasy to facts, that would finally change the channel from today's cartoon images to something more suitable for adults.

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

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# The Toronto Star

## Bloc set to reject throne speech; Duceppe to list party's conditions for supporting government, but Conservatives unlikely to comply

Saturday, September 22, 2007  
Page: A16  
Section: News  
Byline: Isabelle Rodrigue  
Source: THE CANADIAN PRESS

The Bloc Quebecois appears poised to vote against the Oct. 16 throne speech, increasing the possibility of a general election this fall.

In a speech obtained by The Canadian Press and to be delivered to Bloc members today, leader Gilles Duceppe outlines five conditions the Conservative government will find almost impossible to accept.

And Duceppe reiterates several times in the speech he is ready to adopt a hardline position that could send Canadians to the polls at Christmas - a real possibility because both the Liberals and NDP are unlikely to support the speech.

"For Stephen Harper's Conservatives, who have so far survived with half-truths and half-met promises, the next throne speech will be a real test," Duceppe says in notes for his speech, which will be delivered in Rimouski, Que. "Quebecers will see whether the openness of the Conservatives is real or just a facade."

The Bloc's five conditions for supporting the throne speech call for:

The elimination of all federal spending powers in provincial jurisdictions.

The government to respect the Kyoto Protocol.

The continuation of supply management in the agriculture sector.

Promises to help Quebec's battered forestry industry.

And a clear commitment from the government that Canadian soldiers will leave Afghanistan when the mission ends in February 2009.

Duceppe's conditions indicate the Bloc has decided it no longer wants to be seen as an ally of the government on critical issues. Since the Tories were elected in January 2006, the Bloc has helped them survive three confidence votes.

When the House of Commons resumes sitting Oct. 16, the pressure will be on the Liberals or the NDP to support the Conservatives if they don't want the government to lose the vote on the throne speech.

The NDP has been demanding the immediate withdrawal of Canadian soldiers from Afghanistan, a position Harper has dismissed as unrealistic. Earlier yesterday, NDP Leader Jack Layton said his party will wait to hear the throne speech before deciding

how to vote.

"Mr. Harper would have to have a significant and virtually complete change of direction on the war in Afghanistan, on his terrible policies on the environment and on issues affecting working people," Layton told reporters in Toronto, the Toronto Star's Rob Ferguson reports.

"If we see that in the throne speech, I must admit my jaw will probably drop first, but we'll give it a read."

Several Liberals have also said it is highly improbable that the party will support the throne speech.

After Monday's by-elections, the Conservatives hold 126 of the 308 seats in the Commons. The Liberals have 96, the Bloc 49 and the NDP 30. There are three independent MPs and four vacancies.

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# The Toronto Star

## UN bracing for 'intense diplomacy'; General Assembly opens with high-level talks on boosting role in Afghanistan, conflict in Darfur

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Page: AA03

Section: World And Comment

Byline: Olivia Ward

Source: Toronto Star

Illustrations: OLIVIER LABAN-MATTEI afp getty images French President Nicolas Sarkozy, left, seen with UN General Secretary Ban Ki-moon in Paris in June, delighted some and shocked others yesterday with his actions and pronouncements at the assembly's opening.

New York is battenning down for the annual limousine invasion, as hundreds of world leaders and diplomats flock to the United Nations podium in the coming week to air their policy proposals at the opening of the General Assembly.

"This is the most intense period of international diplomacy ever at the UN," said Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, adding that the world body is "once again the global forum" where solutions are hammered out.

The opening of the General Assembly - with 192 members on parade - is often the scene of great expectations and small progress, set against a backdrop of sparring, glad-handing and deal-making that outstrips the Toronto film festival.

But this year it has had a political blood transfusion, with new leaders tackling issues from the crisis in Darfur to climate change, Iran's nuclear ambitions, Middle East peace, Afghanistan, Iraq and Kosovo.

Afghanistan, a priority issue for Canada, as well as the U.S. and European troop-contributors, will be in the spotlight at a foreign ministers' meeting tomorrow aimed at increasing the UN's role in the country, promoting dialogue and reconciliation.

In spite of pleas from Afghan President Hamid Karzai, as well as Canada, Britain and France, few countries are willing to budge on increasing their forces in Afghanistan, and officials say they expect little movement there. Ban, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown and French Prime Minister Nicolas Sarkozy are the three newbies at the microphones, hinting at brave new strategies to solve some of the world's lingering problems.

Brown and Sarkozy wasted no time in jointly promising an end to the bloodletting in Darfur, currently the world's worst humanitarian crisis. Yesterday, their foreign ministers opened the debate with a high-level meeting to lay the groundwork for peace talks in Libya next month.

"The person with the potential to make the most impact is Sarkozy," says Ramesh Thakur, a distinguished fellow of the Waterloo-based Centre for International Governance Innovation, and former UN assistant secretary general.

"He seems to have a forceful personality, and he wants to make a mark as an internationalist. But whether he trips up on the hard truths we will have to

wait and see," he added.

Sarkozy, a mould-breaker in French politics, delighted some and appalled others by warming to U.S. President George W. Bush, making an arms and nuclear power deal with Libya after negotiating a French prisoner release, and sounding a wakeup call to the European Union that France would take a leadership role.

His foreign minister Bernard Kouchner set off shock waves by warning of war with Iran if it develops nuclear weapons.

Brown, by contrast, is cautious and keeps a lower media profile.

Brown's interest in Africa is the most persistent among Western leaders, and he backed the UN goal of raising international aid to the impoverished continent. With Sarkozy he spearheaded a UN resolution for a new "hybrid" Darfur peacekeeping force, widely hailed as a breakthrough.

And says Colin Keating, executive director of the Security Council Report, which analyzes the work of the council, "it's worth bearing in mind that in his first week, he came straight to New York and gave a speech focused on the Millennium Development Goals and the root causes of Africa's instability. Britain and France are major leaders in the council, and fresh approaches and energy are likely to have a huge impact on issues."

Some are skeptical.

"Brown is undoubtedly committed to development in Africa," said Thomas Cargill, Africa program manager for the London-based think-tank, Chatham House. "The real test is if he wants to spend the time and resources to get at the political challenges."

Brown, he points out, shrank the budget for foreign office operations in Africa while he was Britain's treasury secretary.

The range of issues for leaders and diplomats to wrestle with beyond Africa's woes is wide. And with the departure of outspoken former secretary general Kofi Annan, there are whispered doubts that the mild-mannered Ban, a former Korean diplomat, has the personal authority to knock heads together.

Although he has warned that Iran's differences with the West over development of its nuclear program

should be solved through diplomacy rather than war, it is uncertain that he would stand up to Washington on military action, as Annan did over the invasion of Iraq.

While the "big picture" issues are most in focus, the problem of tiny Kosovo's independence is one of the most volatile and complex. Serbia refuses to accept the separation bid of its mainly ethnic Albanian province, with backing from Moscow. Both countries reject a UN envoy's plan for transition to independence.

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# The Globe And Mail

## As if the mining business weren't risky enough...

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Page: B10

Section: Report On Business: International

Source: CP

Illustrations: Illustration

Robert Schafer offers a laugh when asked why on Earth his company, Vancouver-based Hunter Dickinson Inc. , would want to operate a copper mine in the war-ravaged hills of Afghanistan.

It's a question he's obviously been asked before and the answer is simple. "The quality of this deposit would place it as one of the best copper mines in the world," says Mr. Schafer, vice-president of business development.

According to decades-old Russian estimates, the Logar province of Afghanistan holds reserves of 11 billion tonnes of copper, which would make it the biggest copper mining area in the world.

Last October, in a bid to plant the seeds of a viable economy where right now there is none, the Afghan government put exploration and exploitation rights to the Aynak deposit out to international tender.

According to the Afghanistan Geological Survey and the British Geological Survey, the Aynak copper deposit, located about 35 kilometres south of Kabul, consists of 240 million tons of material with a grade of 2.3 per cent copper in the central portion of the deposit.

But this is no mere building of a copper mine.

International forces, including Canada, continue to battle Taliban insurgents. As guerrilla tactics like suicide bombings, roadside bombs and kidnappings become the backbone of the insurgency, the country seems a more dangerous place than ever.

Mr. Schafer is not shaken. If Hunter Dickinson wins the bid, news he hopes to have by the end of next month, he will move there, along with his wife. In developing the bid, he says he met with 25 local community leaders.

The Afghan government emphasized that the mineral rights would go to a bid offering infrastructure improvements benefiting not just the mine, but the country as a whole. Without giving a dollar value, Mr. Schafer said his company has committed to building schools, health clinics and a trades college in the area as well as providing jobs and major infrastructure investments.

The mine tender has also attracted bids from China, Russia and Kazakhstan.

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# The Globe And Mail

## Bloc sets out tough demands

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Page: A4

Section: National News

Byline: Daniel Leblanc

Dateline: OTTAWA

Source: With a report from The Canadian Press

OTTAWA -- The Bloc Québécois will lay down five seemingly impossible conditions today to continue supporting the Harper government, hoping the tough talk will help the party rebound from this week's tough by-elections results.

Reserved.

Bloc Leader Gilles Duceppe is scheduled to give a speech this morning calling on Prime Minister Stephen Harper to adopt Bloc positions on Afghanistan, agriculture, forestry, the environment and Ottawa's spending power in areas of provincial jurisdiction.

Otherwise, Mr. Duceppe will say, the Bloc will vote against next month's Speech from the Throne.

His speech comes on the heels of three by-elections in which Bloc support fell sharply, with the party keeping one stronghold with a reduced margin and losing another.

The results, according to many Bloc supporters and analysts, are forcing the party to toughen its positions in Parliament and sharpen its attacks against the government, which accuses the Bloc of being "useless" in Ottawa.

The next sitting of the House of Commons starts on Oct. 16 with a Throne Speech that needs to be supported by at least one opposition party to go through Parliament. The Bloc position will be closely watched because the NDP has already drawn its line in the sand - an immediate pullout from Afghanistan - that the Conservatives are unlikely to cross.

With today's speech, Mr. Duceppe hopes to create a situation in which the Liberals are seen as the ones who decide whether the government survives. Behind the scenes, senior Liberal strategists have said it is extremely unlikely the Liberals could vote for the Tory agenda.

In his speech, Mr. Duceppe will call for the elimination of Ottawa's spending power in the areas of provincial jurisdiction.

Such a move on spending power would be untenable for the Harper government, which has promised only to "limit" its use of the social-policy tool.

Mr. Duceppe will also state that the Throne Speech must promise a full pullout of military forces in Kandahar in February of 2009, government support for the Kyoto Protocol and the creation of a carbon-emission trading system in Montreal.

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# Cape Breton Post

## The Iraq war, life in Afghanistan

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Page: C4

Section: New Beginnings

Political and social stories again take centre stage at the San Sebastian film festival - the oldest and most prestigious in the Spanish-speaking world - which kicked off Thursday evening.

The Iraq conflict gets high-profile attention with Nick Broomfield's "Battle for Haditha" in the official competition, an investigation into the 2005 killing of 24 civilians in Haditha by Also featured: 18-year-old Iranian director Hana Makhmalbaf's film "Buddha Collapsed Out of Shame," about a girl's daily struggle to go to school in Bamiyan, the Afghan village where Taliban soldiers demolished centuries-old Buddha statues in 2001. Sixteen films will vie for the festival's top prize, the Golden Shell, awarded by a jury presided over by U.S. novelist-director Paul Auster.

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# Cape Breton Post

## Car bomb kills two

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Page: A12

Section: International

Source: AP

Heavy battles punctuated by a barrage of airstrikes killed 75 suspected Taliban and at least six civilians in southern Afghanistan, while a suicide car bomb in the capital killed two people, including a French soldier.

The bomb attack in western Kabul came against a convoy of French troops travelling in armoured vehicles, killing one soldier and an Afghan civilian and wounding many other Afghans, hospital and NATO officials said. The blast blew the windows out of a civilian bus and set at least one vehicle on fire.

NATO's International Security Assistance Force confirmed that one French soldier was killed in the blast, but a spokesman said he had no other information. A hospital official said one Afghan civilian also was killed by the blast.

Heavy fighting in the south, meanwhile, killed about 75 Taliban militants over the last 48 hours, the U.S.-led coalition said. Six civilians were also killed after Taliban fighters sought shelter in their homes, which were then targeted by air strikes, an Afghan official said.

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# Edmonton Journal

## Gov't, Taliban strike immunization deal; One million Afghan children to be vaccinated

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Page: B14

Section: News

Byline: Jon Hemming

Dateline: LASHKAR GAH, Afghanistan

Source: Reuters

Illustrations: Photo: Reuters / A man marks the hand of a child after administering a polio drop in the southern province of Kandahar on Friday. Afghan health officials said on Friday they had brokered a deal to allow the immunization of children in rebel-held areas.

LASHKAR GAH, Afghanistan - Afghan health officials said Friday they had brokered a deal with Taliban leaders to allow the immunization of children in rebel-held areas in a rare sign of co-operation between the warring sides.

The deal was made as part of a program by UNICEF to vaccinate more than a million Afghan children against polio after a recent outbreak of the debilitating viral infection that has been eliminated from all but four countries in the world.

The Taliban insurgency against the Afghan government and its mainly Western allies has hampered the construction of hospitals and clinics after 30 years of war and prevented health workers reaching many of the sick and injured.

But even as fighting raged in the most violent southern province of Helmand, government health officials in the provincial capital Lashkar Gah decided to try to help children on both sides of the frontlines and extend their polio vaccination program to the rebel-held town of Musa Qala.

"We approached elders and tribal leaders and went to Pakistan to get a religious ruling from a mullah, but still the Taliban refused to allow us to conduct immunizations," said Dr. Enayatullah, Helmand director of public health.

Then they hit on the idea of contacting the only medical professional they knew on the Taliban side -- Mullah Ahmad who used to run a 400-bed emergency hospital under the Taliban.

He then persuaded the Taliban governor of Musa Qala.

"Before we couldn't vaccinate because of just one or two people in charge," Dr. Enayatullah told a meeting with UN workers. "When they changed their minds, it all became possible." Other health workers in Lashkar Gah also contacted the medical Mullah Ahmad to use his influence to overturn a threat by one Taliban commander to burn down a clinic in government-held territory because male doctors there had helped women give birth.

Helmand, a long, fertile river valley etching its way through parched barren desert, has been the scene of some of the fiercest fighting in Afghanistan since the Taliban rebounded from their 2001 defeat and resumed large-scale attacks two years ago.

The UNICEF vaccination program was aimed to coincide with United Nations peace day, but came as mainly British troops launched a major offensive between Musa Qala and Lashkar Gah.

Musa Qala was the scene of intense fighting last year between British forces holed up in the town and besieging Taliban fighters until British troops pulled out in a deal under which tribal elders took control and agreed to keep the Taliban out.

But in February the rebels moved in and have set up a shadow fiefdom with their own administrators, courts and officials.

# The Hamilton Spectator

## Bloc planning hard line that could force early election

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Page: A3

Section: Canada/World

Dateline: OTTAWA

Source: The Canadian Press

The Bloc Quebecois appears poised to vote against the throne speech, increasing the possibility of a general election this fall.

In a speech obtained by The Canadian Press and to be delivered to Bloc members today, Leader Gilles Duceppe outlines five conditions the Conservative government will find almost impossible to accept.

And Duceppe reiterates several times in the speech he is ready to adopt a hardline position that could send Canadians to the polls before the holidays.

"For Stephen Harper's Conservatives, who have so far survived with half-truths and half-met promises, the next throne speech will be a real test," Duceppe says in notes for his speech, which will be delivered in Rimouski, Que.

The Bloc's five conditions for supporting the throne speech are:

- \* The elimination of all federal spending powers in provincial jurisdictions.
- \* The Conservative government to respect the Kyoto Protocol.
- \* The continuation of supply management in the agriculture sector.
- \* Promises from the Tories to help Quebec's battered forestry industry.
- \* And a clear commitment from the government that Canadian soldiers will leave Afghanistan when the current mission ends in February 2009.

Duceppe's conditions indicate the Bloc has decided it no longer wants to be seen as an ally of the government on critical issues.

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# The Daily Gleaner (Fredericton)

## Army needs to grow to avoid soldier burnout, says colonel

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Page: A6

Section: News;News

Byline: By MICHAEL STAPLES staples.michael@dailygleaner.com

Increased demands on the Canadian military may be resulting in some soldiers suffering from mental burnout.

Col. Stephen Bowes, the commander of the Combat Training Centre at Canadian Forces Base Gagetown, said that while such afflictions aren't new to the army, it remains an ongoing concern.

"Burnout is always an issue and it always has been," Bowes said in an interview. "I saw guys burning out in the '80s."

Bowes said some military personnel have done as many six tours abroad and have been in Afghanistan at least twice, and that is a concern to leadership.

Every effort is being made to shift high-intensity tasks around, but it isn't always possible, he said.

"Our army has been too small for the appetite of the Canadian people for 15 years, as expressed by the government of Canada," Bowes said.

The army needs to continue to grow if it's going to meet the demands being placed on it, said Bowes.

"The army is at war. We have soldiers in combat operation that are in a very difficult, very austere environment and we have a high number of people involved."

This type of thing has been going for the last 15 years, Bowes said, with Canadian soldiers being deployed to places such as the Balkans, Africa, Haiti and Afghanistan.

"This is at the end of the 15th year of an exceptional operational tempo," Bowes said.

Cpl. James McDonald served in Bosnia in 1999 and in Afghanistan in 2005, where he sustained an injury.

He said burnout can lead to other problems such as post-traumatic stress disorder.

"It's the amount of rotations that we do for the tours -- like you do one tour and a year later you go back again," McDonald said. "You don't have a lot of time with your family before you're back on another tour. If you're on the road to burnout, there are definitely going to be signs of post-traumatic stress disorder."

One thing the military could do more of to help prevent post-traumatic stress disorder is to give soldiers more information on the symptoms and more support once they're back home, he said.

Robin Geneau, a Fredericton based psychologist, said having too many stressors without enough recovery time in between is a recipe for burnout.

"I am concerned about it because people don't get home and get time to rest and recover and their off again to another tour or another stressful posting," Geneau said. "It has an accumulative effect. It can be prevented with rest, if they get sufficient recovery time between stressful situations."

But if it goes too far, the burnout victim may require medical treatment such as psychotherapy, Geneau said.

Bowes said the military needs to keep its soldiers and not have them leave because they feel they are being overworked. In many cases, the military has invested 20 or more years into its soldiers and officers and to lose them hurts, he said.

"Our first and foremost challenge is making sure that we've got the human-resource piece right," Bowes said.

"That we have enough people in the army to do the things that the Canadian people want them to do and be able to do it the right way."

Five years from now, Bowes said, he sees the army being in the midst of the same type of demanding environment, whether it's in Afghanistan or elsewhere.

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# CBC.CA Video

## Hecklers disrupt minister's speech on Afghanistan

Broadcast Date: Saturday, September 22, 2007  
Network: CBC

Two protesters were arrested and others detained after they heckled Canada's newly minted foreign affairs minister during his inaugural speech on the country's role in Afghanistan.

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# Bbc Monitoring South Asia

## UN supports peace talks with Afghan Taleban - agency

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Published by PAJHWO Afghan independent  
Pajhwok news agency website

New York, 22 Sept: The UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan Tom Koenigs has said that the war-battered country needs more troops - foreign as well as local - and greater commitment from the international community for long lasting peace and all round development.

Addressing a press conference at the UN headquarters in New York, Koenigs said the police and the national security forces needed better training, which could be done in Afghanistan rather than elsewhere due to the heavy international presence.

Based on his talks with the generals of the US-led international forces, he said there was the need for more forces to take on the insurgents in the country.

Asked how much money Afghanistan needed, Koenigs said there were no specific numbers, but there were certain definite needs. "For example, stepping up the national security forces went well beyond the issue of money to touch on such matters as mentors and better coordination," he said.

"The need for better coordination, in turn, applied both to agencies, for maximum effectiveness and minimum overlap, and to security forces so as to minimize the incidence of civilian casualties," he said.

Referring to the country-wide celebrations of the International Peace Day wherein hundreds and thousands of people participated in peace rallies in cities across the country, Koenigs said there is a "cry for peace" in Afghanistan. "We have been overwhelmed by this," he said.

The country-wide celebrations of the International Peace Day were an impetus for securing a reinforced commitment to the peace process during the high-level meeting on Afghanistan to be held at the UN on Sunday, he said.

About the peace talks with the Taleban, he said the UN would certainly support that. "We from the United Nations would certainly support peace talks (between the Taleban and the Afghan government)," said Koenigs, who added that the war could not be won through military means only and "we have to keep the door open for negotiations".

Source: Pajhwok Afghan News website, Kabul, in English 0824 gmt 22 Sep 07. "BBC" and the BBC logo are trademarks of the British Broadcasting Corporation and are used under licence. (c) BBC 2006.

# Bbc Monitoring South Asia

## Two police officers killed in rocket attack in northern Afghanistan - agency

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Published by PAJHWO Afghan independent Pajhwok news agency website

Konduz, 22 Sept: Two policemen were killed and three more wounded in a rocket attack on their checkpoint in northern Konduz province last night, officials said.

Engineer Mohammad Omar, the province's governor, told Pajhwok Afghan News the casualties emerged when a police checkpoint at the eastern gate of the city was attacked with rockets last night.

Dr. Hodayun Khamush at the Konduz Civil Hospital said the one dead and four injured were brought to the hospital. He said one of the wounded later succumbed to his injuries.

Claiming responsibility, Taleban spokesman Zabihollah Mojahed said four policemen were killed and three injured in the rocket attack. He said the rockets on the post were fired from Khan Abad district of the province.

[Passage omitted: Separate report]

Source: Pajhwok Afghan News website, Kabul, in English 0825 gmt 22 Sep 07. "BBC" and the BBC logo are trademarks of the British Broadcasting Corporation and are used under licence. (c) BBC 2006.



# The Hamilton Spectator

## Saudi mentor censures Osama bin Laden; 'Are you happy to meet Allah with this heavy burden on your shoulders?'

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Page: A6

Section: Canada/World

Byline: Fawaz A. Gerges

Dateline: NEW YORK

Source: The Hamilton Spectator

Illustrations: Photo: Hamilton Spectator File Photo / Osama bin Laden is directly criticized by Saudi cleric Salman al-Oadah.

After Osama bin Laden reappeared on the world's television screens on the sixth anniversary of Sept. 11, commentaries focused on his newly blackened beard and his changed message. But more important was the reaction of a Saudi cleric.

In an open letter, one of bin Laden's most prominent Saudi mentors, the preacher and scholar Salman al-Oadah, publicly reproached bin Laden for causing widespread mayhem and killing.

"How many innocent children, elderly people, and women have been killed in the name of al-Qaeda?" asked al-Oadah in a letter on his website, Islamtoday.com, and in comments on an Arabic television station.

"How many people have been forced to flee their homes, and how much blood has been shed in the name of al-Qaeda?"

Al-Oadah is a prominent Salafi preacher with a large following in Saudi Arabia and abroad. In the 1990s, he was imprisoned by the Saudi regime along with four leading clerics for criticizing the kingdom's close relationship with the United States, particularly the stationing of American troops there after the 1991 Gulf war.

It is worth noting that the decision to post American forces in Saudi Arabia, the birthplace of Islam, was the catalyst for bin Laden's murderous journey. Throughout the 1990s, he frequently cited al-Oadah as a critic of the Saudi royal family and fellow Salafi who shared his strict religious vision and world view.

Although al-Oadah and other senior Muslim scholars condemned the Sept. 11 attacks, until now they had refrained from direct criticism of bin Laden.

Now, with al-Oadah's new frontal assault on bin Laden, there is no longer any ambiguity.

In his statement, al-Oadah holds bin Laden personally accountable for the occupation of Muslim lands in Afghanistan and Iraq, the displacement of millions of Iraqis and the killings of thousands of Afghans, for deluding young Muslims and tarnishing the image of Islam and Muslims all over the world.

"Are you happy to meet Allah with this heavy burden on your shoulders?" al-Oadah asks bin Laden. "It is a weighty burden indeed -- at least hundreds of thousands of innocent people, if not millions (displaced and killed). And it is all because of the

'crimes' perpetrated against civilians by bin Laden's al-Qaeda on Sept. 11."

Al-Oadah also reminds his former disciple that Islam prohibits the killing of any bird or animal, let alone "innocent people, regardless of what justification is given."

The open letter to bin Laden has received considerable publicity in the Arab media, including the Al Jazeera network and Islamonline.com, and has already elicited angry reactions from al-Qaeda supporters.

Indeed, the attack on bin Laden and his group by a respected religious authority is lethal, especially coming at a critical juncture for al-Qaeda and like-minded militant factions worldwide.

Al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia -- the group in Iraq that is largely independent of bin Laden -- is facing an internal revolt by Sunni tribes and fighters fed up with its sectarian terrorism and fanaticism.

Another militant group, Fatah al-Islam, which subscribes to al-Qaeda's ideology and was formerly located in the Palestinian refugee camp of Nahr el Bared in northern Lebanon, was dealt a mortal blow by Lebanese authorities and was met with universal rejection by Palestinian and Lebanese opinion.

Al-Qaeda's affiliate in Saudi Arabia has also suffered major setbacks and is hard pressed.

For the first time in his address to the American people, bin Laden borrowed the language of Marx and anti-globalization to try to galvanize Americans against their purported tormentors -- big capital, multinationals and globalization.

Bin Laden's use of secular-political language was a conscious yet naive attempt to drive a wedge between Americans and their leaders who, he said, served the interests of the capitalist system and the war industry.

By trying to join the debate raging in the United States over the war in Iraq and due legal process, bin Laden thought to broaden his global constituency and score gains in the war of ideas.

But he evidently did not expect a direct rebuke from one of his Salafi mentors. Dispensing with formalities, al-Oadah assailed bin Laden over the Sept. 11 spark that lit fires throughout the world.

"You are responsible, brother Osama, for spreading Takfiri ideology (excommunication of Muslims) and fostering a culture of suicide bombings that has caused bloodshed and suffering and brought ruin to entire Muslim communities and families."

Never before has bin Laden been subjected to this sort of censure from a Salafi scholar, and especially from one who cannot simply be dismissed as a vessel of the ruling regime. Al-Oadah's record of defiance of the Saudi royal family speaks volumes for his independence and moral courage.

His credibility as a defender of Muslim rights worldwide is also unassailable. In November 2004, al-Oadah and 25 prominent Saudi religious scholars posted an open letter on the Internet urging Iraqis to support fighters waging legitimate jihad against "the big crime of America's occupation of Iraq."

Now the same al-Oadah heaps praise on those jihadist "brave hearts" and "courageous minds" that have defected from al-Qaeda and distanced themselves from its terrorism.

"Many of your brethren in Egypt, Algeria and elsewhere have come to see the end of the road for al-Qaeda's ideology," al-Oadah said. "They now realize how destructive and dangerous it is."

Al-Oadah's public censure of bin Laden deepens internal fissures within the Salafi universe, which has supplied al-Qaeda group with many of its foot soldiers.

And although al-Qaeda seems to be revitalizing its infrastructure in the Pakistan-Afghan tribal areas, it faces insurmountable challenges in the Arab hinterland, its historic social base of support.

"O Allah! I plead my innocence to you from what Osama is doing, and from those who affiliate themselves to his name or work under his banner," concludes al-Oadah's letter.

Time will tell whether al-Qaeda is affected more by bin Laden's new leftist attitude or by this new display of Islamic disenchantment.

Fawaz A. Gerges, professor of international affairs and Arab and Muslim politics at Sarah Lawrence College, recently returned from 15 months in the Middle East. His books include *Journey of the Jihadist: Inside Muslim Militancy* and *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global*.

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# New Brunswick Telegraph-Journal

## AT LEAST 81 KILLED IN FIGHTING IN AFGHANISTAN

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Page: A5

Section: News;News

An Afghan police officer runs near a civilian vehicle that caught on fire after a car bomb exploded near a convoy of French troops in western Kabul, Afghanistan, Friday. The attack killed one soldier and injured many Afghans near the blast, while heavy fighting in southern Afghanistan killed about 75 Taliban fighters and six civilians, officials said. Meanwhile, U.S. Admiral William Fallon said Iran's Revolutionary Guard is supplying roadside bomb parts for the type of sophisticated and deadly bombs known as 'explosively formed penetrators.' While, Iran has denied that it is supplying arms to fighters in Afghanistan, Fallon said the country is trying to ensure that it has a role in the region's politics.

© 2007 Telegraph-Journal (New Brunswick)

# New Brunswick Telegraph-Journal

## Bloc likely to reject throne speech, increasing possibility of fall election

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Page: A4

Section: News;News

Byline: Isabelle Rodrigue THE CANADIAN PRESS

The Bloc Québécois appears poised to vote against the throne speech, increasing the possibility of a general election this fall.

In a speech obtained by The Canadian Press and to be delivered to Bloc members today, Leader Gilles Duceppe outlines five conditions the Conservative government will find almost impossible to accept.

And Duceppe reiterates several times in the speech he is ready to adopt a hardline position that could send Canadians to the polls before the holidays.

Since the Bloc's crushing defeat by the Conservatives in a byelection in the staunchly sovereigntist Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region last Monday, party insiders have been saying the Bloc needs to reinforce the traditional view that it is best placed to defend Quebec's interests in Ottawa.

"For Stephen Harper's Conservatives, who have so far survived with half-truths and half-met promises, the next throne speech will be a real test," Duceppe says in notes for his speech, which will be delivered in Rimouski, Que.

"Quebecers will see whether the openness of the Conservatives is real or just a facade."

The Bloc's five conditions for supporting the throne speech are major with the party calling for:

- \* The elimination of all federal spending powers in provincial jurisdictions.
- \* The Conservative government to respect the Kyoto Protocol.
- \* The continuation of supply management in the agriculture sector.
- \* Promises from the Tories to help Quebec's battered forestry industry.
- \* And a clear commitment from the government that Canadian soldiers will leave Afghanistan when the current mission ends in February 2009.

Duceppe's conditions indicate the Bloc has decided it no longer wants to be seen as an ally of the government on critical issues. Since the Tories were elected in January 2006, the Bloc has helped them survive three confidence votes, including two on federal budgets.

The House of Commons resumes sitting Oct. 16 and the pressure will be on the Liberals or the New Democrats to support the Conservatives if they don't

want the government to lose the vote on the throne speech.

But neither party may want to back it.

The NDP has been demanding the immediate withdrawal of Canadian soldiers from Afghanistan, a position Harper has dismissed as unrealistic.

The Liberals, meanwhile, have asked that the troops leave Afghanistan in February 2009. They also want Bill C-30 on air quality to be reintroduced in the Commons as amended by the opposition parties.

The government has said C-30 will not be revived.

Several Liberals have also said it is highly improbable that the party will support the throne speech.

The opposition parties could amend the speech in order to avoid an election but that scenario remains hypothetical and nothing indicates there would be consensus among them.

The current standings in the 308-seat Commons are: Conservatives, 126; Liberals, 96; Bloc, 49, NDP, 30; three Independents; and four vacant.

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# The Record (Kitchener, Cambridge And Waterloo)

## Afghanistan mission must be re-evaluated

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Section: Insight  
Byline: JAMES TRAVERS  
Dateline: OTTAWA  
Source: TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Stephen Harper wisely changed his defence minister this summer. Unwisely, his government is hesitating to change the Afghanistan channel this fall.

Peter MacKay, Gordon O'Connor's younger, more media-savvy replacement, is mouthing a familiar sound bite as he pleads for support. Reduced to its essence, the new defence minister is saying now what U.S. President George W. Bush said before toppling governments first in Kabul, then Baghdad: Fighting them over there keeps us safe over here.

That the argument is suspect is no longer the point. Watching complex plots unfold in two war zones is creating a more sophisticated North American audience. Few today believe, as many did after the Taliban fled and Saddam Hussein fell, that decisive military victories are still possible.

Generals now compete with academics for airtime to argue for political solutions. Not just a tonal adjustment, accepting that accommodation is necessary alters the picture. Demonizing future negotiating partners no longer makes any more sense, or is any more convincing, than attacking the patriotism of those who question the mission.

Facing a debate and a decision on Canada's combat role after February 2009, this government needs to fast-forward its rhetoric to catch up to shifting reality. Canadians who knew next to nothing about Afghanistan in 2001 now know too much about the region to risk more lives and billions on the strength of the simplistic notion that killing Taliban insurgents will stop terrorism incubating.

Along with forgetting history and ignoring that extremists have many other nesting options -- al-Qaida festers in Africa's horn 20 years after embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania -- the Conservative argument skips too lightly over what Canadians have learned since the previous Liberal government first sent troops to Afghanistan.

Endemic corruption, a booming opium trade, and the duplicity of allies who leave borders open to enemies have stripped away the good versus evil illusions. At home it's become patently obvious the mission has layers of motives stacking from reassuring Washington that Ottawa is serious about security to the military remaking its peacekeeping image as it rearms.

Each element has a place in a public debate that to be

complete must also include an unflinching look in mirror. If politicians can find enough courage to face the reflection, Canadians will discover that, along with imperfections, there are notable improvements.

A mission dominated by the military but marketed as combining the three Ds of defence, development and diplomacy is glacially morphing into a broader, more disciplined effort that accepts generals have agendas and writing aid cheques doesn't guarantee measurable improvements in impoverished lives.

That's progress. So is recognition that reconstructing failed states is painfully slow work with uncertain results. Six years of watching the grimmest reality TV has better prepared Canadians to answer questions about what they are willing to do for Afghanistan when the current commitment ends.

Instead of looping fuzzy terrorism tapes, Harper and his new ministers need to make two new candid arguments in favour of a continuing role. The first, that more time is needed to find a political compromise, one that inevitably includes the Taliban and excludes al-Qaida. And the second, that development will only continue in Afghanistan's north as long as the military contains most of the insurgency in the south.

Along with moving the debate from fantasy to facts, that would finally change the channel from today's cartoon images to something more suitable for adults.

James Travers covers national issues.

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# The Record (Kitchener, Cambridge And Waterloo)

## Bloc likely to reject throne speech

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Source: Associated Press

The Bloc Qu b cois appears poised to vote against the throne speech, increasing the possibility of a general election this fall.

In a speech obtained by The Canadian Press and to be delivered to Bloc members today, Leader Gilles Duceppe outlines five conditions the Conservative government will find almost impossible to accept.

And Duceppe reiterates several times in the speech he is ready to adopt a hardline position that could send Canadians to the polls before the holidays.

Since the Bloc's crushing defeat by the Conservatives in a byelection in the staunchly sovereigntist Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region last Monday, party insiders have been saying the Bloc needs to reinforce the traditional view that it is best placed to defend Quebec's interests in Ottawa.

"For Stephen Harper's Conservatives, who have so far survived with half-truths and half-met promises, the next throne speech will be a real test," Duceppe says in notes for his speech, which will be delivered in Rimouski, Que.

"Quebecers will see whether the openness of the Conservatives is real or just a facade."

The Bloc's five conditions for supporting the throne speech are major, with the party calling for:

The elimination of all federal spending powers in provincial jurisdictions.

The Conservative government to respect the Kyoto Protocol.

The continuation of supply management in the agriculture sector.

Promises from the Tories to help Quebec's battered forestry industry.

And a clear commitment from the government that Canadian soldiers will leave Afghanistan when the current mission ends in February 2009.

Duceppe's conditions indicate the Bloc has decided it no longer wants to be seen as an ally of the government on critical issues. Since the Tories were elected in January 2006, the Bloc has helped them survive three confidence votes, including two on federal budgets.

The House of Commons resumes sitting Oct. 16 and the pressure will be on the Liberals or the NDP to support the Conservatives if they don't want the government to lose the vote on the throne speech.

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